A Descriptive Study of Assigned and Unassigned Mentoring Relationships

of First Year Special Education Administrators in Virginia

by

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A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF ASSIGNED AND UNASSIGNED
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ADMINISTRATORS IN VIRGINIA

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(ABSTRACT)

First year special education administrators in Virginia school systems are assigned experienced special education administrators as mentors. In most instances the mentors are not employed by the same school system as the first year administrators. Case studies of six mentors revealed that each was involved in more than one mentoring relationship. Four mentors had successful assigned relationships. Two mentors had assigned relationships which did not develop. Four of the six mentors were also involved in successful unassigned relationships. Findings indicated that, with appropriate selection of mentors, matching of pairs for similar experiences, and a mechanism for regular contact, assigned relationships can provide benefits to mentors and proteges.

Unassigned mentoring relationships among these six cases typically occurred between individuals who were employed by the same school system. The mentor was often the protege's direct supervisor. Pairs in unassigned relationships observed one another performing job duties which enabled the
mentor to function as a role model. Unassigned mentors functioned as career
enhancers, providing their proteges with challenging opportunities and
exposure. Assigned and unassigned relationships provided specific information,
general survival skills, and overall support to the proteges.

The case studies of the six mentors suggest that the Virginia Department
of Education should continue Project SEAM as both mentors and proteges
benefit from the networking and pooling of resources between their school
systems. Proteges in the assigned relationships were provided with accurate
information and general support. However, the process could be improved by
offering training to proteges and insuring a commonality of experience in the
matching of pairs. A joint meeting of the assigned pairs in the Spring of each
academic year should be held. At this meeting, the pairs could share their
successes, failures, and ideas for facilitating relationships.
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Dr. Philip R. Jones without whose encouragement and support this endeavor would not have begun.

As I begin my career in the administration and supervision of special education, may he serve as my mentor in spirit.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Thanks to the many friends and family members who offered their love, support, and child care services. Daddy, Mama, and Woody, I’m sorry that I missed those family reunions. Granny Zelma, thanks for watching the girls. Yes, the paper is finished.

Laurin and Danielle, you don’t have to call me Dr. Mom.

Arlin, I will always love you.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract ................................................................. ii

Dedication ............................................................... iv

Acknowledgements ...................................................... v

Table of Contents ...................................................... vi

List of Tables .......................................................... xii

List of Figures .......................................................... xiii

Chapter

1 INTRODUCTION ......................................................... 1

Defining Mentoring ..................................................... 2

Benefits of Mentoring ................................................ 5

The Administration of Special Education ......................... 10

   Job Complexity ..................................................... 10
   Isolation ........................................................... 12
   Lack of Training ................................................ 13
   Role Ambiguity .................................................... 14
   Turnover .......................................................... 14

   Assigned versus Unassigned Relationships .................. 15

Purpose and Research Questions .................................. 19

Method ................................................................. 20

Limitations of the Study ............................................. 21
Significance of the Study ........................................ 21

Outline of the Study ............................................. 22

2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ................................. 24

Foundations of Mentoring ......................................... 24

   Adult Development ........................................... 25
   Career Development .......................................... 25

   Initiation of Relationships .................................. 28

   Initiation of Informal Relationships ......................... 28
   Selection and Matching in Formal Programs ................. 30
      Mentor selection ........................................... 32
      Matching of mentor-protege pairs ......................... 35

   Stages within Relationships ................................. 37

   Stages within Unassigned Relationships ................... 37
      Initiation stage ........................................... 38
      Cultivation stage ......................................... 39
      Separation stage ......................................... 39
      Redefinition stage ....................................... 39

   Stages within Assigned Relationships .................... 40
      Gray and Gray model ...................................... 40
      Walker and Stott model .................................. 41
      NASSP model .............................................. 42

   Functions of Relationships ................................ 42

   Functions within Unassigned Relationships ............... 43
   Functions within Assigned Relationships .................. 44

Termination of Relationships ................................. 47

Termination of Unassigned Relationships ................. 47
Termination of Assigned Relationships .................. 48
Problems in Mentoring Relationships ........................................... 49
  Problems in Unassigned Relationships ........................................ 49
  Problems in Assigned Relationships ......................................... 50
Development of Formal Programs .............................................. 51
  Program Development .............................................................. 52
  Program Implementation ........................................................ 53
  Program Evaluation ............................................................... 55
Alternatives to Formal Mentoring Programs .................................. 55
  Change in Organizational Structure ......................................... 56
  Peer Relationships .................................................................... 57
Summary .............................................................. .......................... 57

3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY ................................. 59
Conceptual Framework .................................................................. 59
The Population and the Sample ................................................. 60
Research Design ......................................................................... 62
Measurement .............................................................................. 63
  Instrument .............................................................................. 63
  Interview Procedures .............................................................. 64
Analysis ................................................................................. 66
  Coding ................................................................................... 66
  Inter-rater Agreement ............................................................ 67
Summary ................................................................................. 68
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS 102

Discussion .......................................................... 102

Research Questions .................................................. 102

First year administrators and assigned mentors .................. 102
First year administrators and unassigned mentors ............... 106
Assigned relationships that did not develop ...................... 109
Assigned versus unassigned ...................................... 111
Assigned relationships that developed and those that did not 114

Emerging themes ..................................................... 115
Job challenges ....................................................... 116
Resource sharing ..................................................... 117
Project SEAM ........................................................ 118
Profiles of mentors and proteges .................................. 119

Conclusions .......................................................... 121

Mentoring Relationships of Special Education Administrators 121
Mentoring Relationships ............................................. 123

Recommendations ................................................... 124

Assigned Mentoring Programs ..................................... 124
Project SEAM ......................................................... 124
Formal programs .................................................... 125

Future Studies ......................................................... 126

Summary ............................................................. 127

LITERATURE CITED ................................................ 129
Appendix A  Sample Interview Guide  .................................. 143
Appendix B  Informed Consent Form  .............................. 152
Appendix C  Personal Information Form  ....................... 154
Appendix D  Sample Letter of Appreciation ...................... 157
Appendix E  Contact Summary Form  ............................ 159
Appendix F  Page One of Interview Write-up  .................. 161
Appendix G  Coding Lists  ............................................... 163
Appendix H  Research Question Matrix ......................... 170
Appendix I  Individual Interviews  ............................... 176
Appendix J  Mentor Characteristics  ............................. 184
Appendix K  Graphic Representation of Cases .................. 186
Appendix L  Mentor Training Agenda  ............................ 188
Appendix M  Project SEAM Activities  ......................... 190

Vita  ................................................................................. 192
List of Tables

Table 1  Three Key Components of Mentoring Relationships ............... 4
Table 2  Areas of Concern in Special Education Administration ........... 16
Table 3  Functions in Assigned Mentoring Relationships ................. 45
Table 4  Comparison of Functions in Assigned and Unassigned Relationships ................................. 46
List of Figures

Figure 1  Representation of the three functional characteristics of a mentor ............................................. 6

Figure 2  Model for the study of assigned and unassigned mentoring relationships ............................. 61
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 1992, the Virginia Department of Education and the Virginia Council of Administrators of Special Education (VCASE) added Project SEAM (Special Education Administrator Mentorship Program) to the support services available for administrators of special education in local school divisions\(^1\) across the Commonwealth. This project was begun to offer "the assistance of mentors" to new special education administrators (Spagnolo & Martin, 1992, p.1). In prior years, beginning special education administrators had access to regional "Special Education Leadership and Training Academies", direct technical assistance from Department of Education staff, and contact with other administrators at monthly regional meetings. Evaluation feedback from the academies and VCASE conferences, along with individual discussions, indicated that some needs of new special education administrators were not being met. Specifically, additional information was being requested regarding "processing state reports, legal issues, program standards/alternative service delivery models and innovative programming for students with disabilities" (Spagnolo & Martin, 1992, p.1).

A survey of the state directors of special education in the fifty states and the District of Columbia indicated that Virginia was one of only four states in which the department of education offered a formal mentoring program for new\(^1\) School districts in Virginia are called school divisions. The word division will be used when referring to a school district in Virginia.
special education administrators. Formal mentoring programs were defined as those in which a third party (in this case the state education agency) assigned the mentor-protege pair. However, 30 state directors of special education indicated that their departments encouraged informal mentoring in which the relationships developed naturally (Goad, 1994).

Defining Mentoring

A review of the literature indicates that mentoring relationships can be differentiated from similar personal or work-related relationships (Jeruchim & Shapiro, 1992; Shapiro, Haseltine, & Rowe, 1978). To be labelled mentoring, three components must be present. (1) role modeling with direct involvement, (2) career navigation and enhancement, and (3) emotional support. Murray and Owen (1991, p.xiv) define mentoring as: "a deliberate pairing of a more skilled or experienced person with a lesser skilled or experienced one, with the agreed upon goal of having the lesser skilled person grow and develop specific competencies". When the deliberate pairing is made by a third party, the relationship is said to be assigned or formal. When the deliberate pairing occurs on the initiative of the less experienced person, the mentor, or mutually, the relationship is natural or unassigned.

Anderson and Shannon (1988) have argued that mentoring is an "intentional process" (p. 38). The intention of both parties to participate in a mentoring relationship differentiates the role of mentor from that of a role
model. Whereas an individual may emulate a role model from a distance, a mentor is involved directly with the less experienced person (Bolton, 1980; Collins, 1983; Murray & Owen, 1991).

However, mentors are not defined simply as intentional role models. Mentors have been described as sponsors, guides, tutors, coaches or promoters. A review of the literature, illustrated briefly in Table 1, reveals that career navigation and enhancement is one of three central components of the mentoring process. According to Kram (1985b), the career functions of a mentoring relationship include: sponsorship, exposure-and-visibility, coaching, protection, and challenging assignments. Due to a wealth of experience and status in an organization, the mentor is able to provide for upward mobility for the less experienced person's career. This is accomplished by giving direction and focus, making introductions to the corporate culture, and sharing "inside information" (Collins, 1983).

The third primary component vital to a mentoring relationship is emotional support. Whereas bosses may be good training coaches and sponsors may facilitate advanced placement in organizations, mentors are persons who possess "genuine generosity, compassion, and concern" (Woodlands Group, 1980, p.920). The nurturing process and an "ongoing caring relationship" (p. 40) are vital to Anderson and Shannon's (1988) definition of mentoring. Trust has been identified as an important factor in the mentoring
### Table 1

**Three Key Components of Mentoring Relationships**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Intentional role modeling</th>
<th>Emotional support</th>
<th>Career navigation and enhancement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levinson et al. (1978)</td>
<td>-exemplar</td>
<td>-counsel</td>
<td>-sponsor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-teacher</td>
<td>-moral support</td>
<td>-host and guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolton (1980)</td>
<td>-role model with direct involvement</td>
<td>-confidant</td>
<td>-guide and tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-coach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klauss (1981)</td>
<td>-role modeling</td>
<td>-monitoring and giving feedback</td>
<td>-career strategy advising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-sponsoring and mediating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-career counseling with individual development plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collins (1983)</td>
<td>-serves as a role model with commitment to protege</td>
<td>-believes in protege</td>
<td>-provides upward mobility to career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-teaches by example</td>
<td>-provides advice, counsel and support</td>
<td>-gives vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-introduces corporate structure</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-shares information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-coaching</td>
<td>-counseling</td>
<td>-exposure-and-visibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-friendship</td>
<td>-protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-challenging assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burke (1984)</td>
<td>-role model functions</td>
<td>-psychosocial functions</td>
<td>-career development functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowen (1985)</td>
<td>-senior person offers advice and information</td>
<td>-emotional support</td>
<td>-influence on career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anderson &amp; Shannon (1988)</td>
<td>-serves as a role model</td>
<td>-nurturing process</td>
<td>-sponsors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-teaches</td>
<td>-encourages, counsels, befriends</td>
<td>-promotes professional or personal development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-on-going caring relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murray &amp; Owen (1991)</td>
<td>-role model</td>
<td>-confidant</td>
<td>-sponsor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zey (1991)</td>
<td>-teaching</td>
<td>-counseling</td>
<td>-oversees career and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-providing psychological support</td>
<td>-protecting, promoting, sponsoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In a factor analysis, Burke (1984) found that mentor functions cluster in three areas which he labelled: role model functions, career development functions, and psychosocial functions. Concluding a review of the literature, Jacobi (1991) has suggested that mentoring occurs when any or all of the following are present: (a) role modeling, "(b) direct assistance with career and professional development," and (c) psychological and emotional support (p. 513). In summary, mentoring can be said to exist when three components are present: (1) intentional role modeling, (2) career enhancement, and (3) emotional support. However, it is the proposition of this author that all of these components, at one time or the other, serve as the primary focus in a mentoring relationship, but taken singly none of these constitute mentoring.

Figure 1 provides a graphic depiction of this conceptualization; mentor defined as a merging of the three vital roles: intentional role model, career enhancer, and emotional support.

Benefits of Mentoring

Benefits appear to flow from mentoring functions. In general, there are benefits to the persons involved and to the organization when mentoring
Figure 1. Representation of the three functional characteristics of a mentor.
relationships are successful. Benefits to new or transitional employees include the development of interpersonal and technical skills, increased self-confidence, greater knowledge of the organization, higher performance ratings, greater job satisfaction, and friendship (Bova & Phillips, 1984; Burke, 1984; Murray & Owen, 1991; Phillips, 1977). Mentoring has also been identified as a way to reduce or deal with the isolation experienced by new employees (Daresh & Playko, 1989; Maddex, 1993).

Benefits specific to beginning teachers have included: job satisfaction (Fagan & Walter, 1982; Krupp, 1985); assistance with career development (Gehrke & Kay, 1984); improved skills and behaviors (Fagan & Walter, 1982; Littleton et al., 1992); and increased self-confidence (Fagan & Walter, 1982; Krupp, 1985). According to Maddex (1993), mentoring of beginning teachers addresses "the issues of isolation, abandonment, neglect, and lack of preparation" (p. 121). Kueker and Haensley (1991) suggest that a formal mentoring program for beginning special education teachers will assist in reducing stress and promoting retention.

Comparing mentoring relationships of administrators and teachers, Daresh and Playko (1989) conclude that mentoring: "will increase the likelihood of immediate survival as well as long-term success" (p. 95) of both groups. In addition, mentoring is a means of reducing "the tremendous isolation frequently experienced by any organizational newcomer" (p.95). Ashby (1991) identified
mutual benefits: (a) professional renewal, (b) decreased feelings of isolation, and (c) expanded informal networks, when principals were paired with mentors from other school systems. Mentoring of educational administrators has facilitated the transition from theory to practice (Daresh & Playko, 1993; Keller, 1994).

Personal satisfaction is mentioned as a benefit for mentors. The recognition of being a mentor, the chance to teach again, the sense of pride in seeing others develop, and enhanced self-esteem are benefits for mentors (Burke, 1984; Daresh & Playko, 1992; Keller, 1994; Maddex, 1993; Murray & Owen, 1991). A key to benefits for mentors appears to be the exposure to a professional who is new to the profession or the organization. By contact with this person, the mentor is exposed to ideas from other school districts, to research, and/or to fresh perspectives (Burke, 1984; Daresh & Playko, 1992; Keller, 1994; Murray & Owen, 1991). The experience is often described in terms of job rejuvenation (Krupp, 1985; Maddex, 1993). According to Newby and Heide (1992), the addition of the mentoring role to a current position "creates new responsibilities and adds variety to tasks that otherwise may have become routine" (p. 8). Zey (1991) contends that in addition to personal satisfaction, individuals become mentors because of the benefits to themselves including: assistance in doing their job, access to information, loyalty from protégés, and prestige within the organization.
Organizations benefit from mentor-protege relationships by the improved performance and job satisfaction of the individuals involved, as well as by a reduction in turnover (Bova & Phillips, 1984; Carruthers, 1993; Moorhead & Griffin, 1992; Zey, 1991). Mentoring may assist with "plateauing among midcareer individuals" (p. 160) and with entry into the organization by non-dominant groups such as women and minorities (Kram, 1985b). Having interviewed 100 managers, Zey (1991) developed the Mutual Benefits Model. In the model, Zey identified seven areas in which mentoring benefits the organization: integration of individuals into the organization, reduced turnover, increased organizational communication, improved development of managerial skills, smoother transitions among managerial positions, increased productivity, and an easier socialization to power by managers.

School districts are one of the organizations that may benefit from a formal mentoring program when administrators are allowed to serve as mentors. According to Daresh and Playko (1990), administrators in formal programs become part of a network which allows for and encourages the sharing of new ideas across school districts. Having an administrator or administrators selected as mentors is seen as indicative of a top quality educational program (Daresh & Playko, 1990). In addition to the benefits for individual staff (i.e., increased capability, motivation, job satisfaction, and self-esteem); the school district is rewarded with higher productivity and "an attitude
of lifelong learning" (p. 7) among administrative staff (Daresh & Playko, 1993).

The Administration of Special Education

Leaders of national special education organizations have recommended that special education teachers desiring to become administrators find a model ("Moving up," 1994), a mentor, or several mentors ("Chart a Course," 1995) with whom to work and learn. However, the research literature is limited to a description of one program for aspiring special education administrators (Friedman, 1991). Typically, the literature focuses on mentoring of beginning teachers, mentoring programs for aspiring principals, and induction programs for beginning principals. In order to conceptualize the decision to utilize mentoring with beginning special education administrators, one has to identify areas of concern in special education administration which might be addressed by mentoring of entry level administrators. Individuals and organizations providing leadership in the administration of special education programs face the following challenges: complex and difficult tasks, isolation from other administrators, lack of adequate training, role ambiguity, and frequent turnover in positions.

Job Complexity

Beginning and experienced special education administrators are faced with a staggering array of responsibilities and challenges including (but not limited to): the understanding and implementation of the Individuals with
Disabilities Education Act (1990) and its corresponding regulations (Assistance to States, 1992); an awareness of and response to interpretations of the Act (IDEA) by the courts and federal agencies; implementation of state statutes and regulations; the administration of funds designated for special education; the supervision of special education teachers and programs; collaboration with families; interagency collaboration; and the development of programs for the successful transition of students into adult life. Among the challenges that Special Education Administrators may face are: avoiding unnecessary due process hearings, collaborating with central office and building level administrators in the movement to restructure schools, providing leadership in the facilitation of the inclusion of students with disabilities into the regular classroom, planning positive programs for behavior management, dealing with shortages of both teaching and related services personnel, and "arranging institutional resources to support special education" (Lashley, 1994, p.52).

The literature has been consistent over time in identifying the skill areas for the administration of special education: legal issues; fiscal management; the selection, development, and evaluation of personnel; program evaluation; and relationships with internal and external constituencies (Arick & Krug, 1993; Finkenbinder, 1981; Gillung, Spears, Campbell, & Rucker, 1992; Howe, 1981; Podemski, Price, Smith, & Marsh, 1984; Rude & Sasso, 1988; Sage & Burrello, 1986). Lashley (1991) has identified ten categories for performance evaluation
of district level special education administrators: advocacy; policy and planning; leadership; compliance management; fiscal management; human resources management; curriculum, instruction and related services; community relations; improving the educational process; and promoting growth/self actualization. In a recent study, Gillung and his colleagues (1992) identified 75 competencies and suggested that they serve as the focal point for training programs and as the "basis of programs for the evaluation and continued professional growth of special education administrators" (p. 90). In executing these competencies, administrators of special education programs must deal with identified "restraining forces" (Esposito & Burbach, 1974 in Tuning, 1979, p. 21) such as insufficient time, budget restrictions, and resistance or pressure to change by stakeholders. Therefore, the tasks of leadership in special education have been described as "tremendous" (Finkenbinder, 1981, p. 493), "numerous" (Tuning, 1979, p. 47), "demanding", and "diverse" (Prillaman & Richardson, 1985, p. 235).

**Isolation**

Despite suggestions that school systems be organized in such a way that different personnel are responsible for the administrative and supervisory functions of special education (Tuning, 1979), there are many systems in which one individual has the responsibility for both functions. Daresh and Playko (1989) point to the limited number of peers available to school administrators
and suggest that mentoring is an effective means of dealing with the isolation which may be felt by new administrators. In the case of special education, administrators have even fewer peers than do school level administrators with some systems having only one individual designated for leadership in special education.

**Lack of Training**

Despite the intensity and extensiveness of administrative responsibilities in special education, Arick and Krug (1993) found that some individuals in special education leadership roles had not received adequate training. Of the special education administrators responding to their survey, 42% did not hold certification in special education administration. Twenty-four percent had less than one term of teacher training and less than one year of teaching experience in special education (Arick & Krug, 1993). There were "significantly higher inservice training needs and . . . significantly lower levels of mainstreaming occurring" (p. 362) in the school districts of the administrators who lacked teaching experience in and teacher preparation for special education (Arick & Krug, 1993). Furthermore, there continues to be a limited number of college or university programs (11 in 10 states) which offer advanced degree programs in administration or supervision of special education (Jones, Robinett, & Wells, 1993/94).
Role Ambiguity

There is evidence that special education administrators must deal with issues of role ambiguity (Dannemiller, 1994; Robson, 1981). Pointing to the large numbers of special education administrators who developed their skills through on-the-job training during the late 1970's, Finkenbinder (1981) has stated that wide variance in administrative roles and functions is the result. Recent shifts to site-based management and the unification of regular and special education (CASE, 1993; Sage & Burrello, 1994) will add to role ambiguity issues. In addition, preparing special education teachers for inclusive schools will be the responsibility of administrators (Sage & Burrello, 1994). Linking high role ambiguity with high levels of burnout, Dannemiller (1994) has recommended that state education agencies provide "personal and professional support activities" (p. 46) for special education administrators.

Turnover

There is a frequent changing of the guard in special education administrative positions at the local school division level in Virginia. At the end of the 1992-93 school year in Virginia, there were eight new administrators participating in Project SEAM. There were 17 new administrators at the beginning of 1993-94, 16 at the beginning of 1994-95, and 8 at the beginning of 1995-96 identified by the Department of Education. Virginia has 133 operating school divisions, therefore, the rate of turnover each year has ranged from
6.0% to 12.8%. Likewise, turnover has been a concern with state level leadership in Virginia (Schnaiberg, 1995; "Stress, Red Tape," 1991).

An individual assuming the role of special education administrator faces a complex job with the additional frustrations of (a) isolation as a special educator and an administrator, (b) lack of adequate training, and (c) role ambiguity. School divisions in Virginia have found frequent turnover of special education administrators to be a concern. Mentoring has: (a) facilitated skill development, (b) increased self-confidence, (c) increased productivity, (d) reduced isolation, (e) increased job satisfaction, and (f) provided friendship for proteges. Table 2 illustrates this match between mentoring benefits and career needs of special education administrators.

It seems reasonable that individuals entering special education administration may benefit from the practical experience and emotional support of a mentor. Likewise, the experienced administrator approaching burn-out may benefit from a relationship with an entry level administrator. Special education administrators providing support, encouragement, and new ideas to one another appears to benefit the school divisions involved.

Assigned versus Unassigned Relationships

Despite recommendations and the encouragement of state education agencies to utilize mentors, there is yet to be significant discussion in the literature concerning mentorships of leadership in special education. In other
### Table 2

**Areas of Concern in Special Education Administration with Corresponding Benefits of Mentoring**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits of Mentoring Relationships</th>
<th>Areas of Concern in Special Education Administration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proteges:</strong></td>
<td><strong>New administrators:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill development</td>
<td>Tremendous job responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increased self-confidence</td>
<td>Training and experience issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increased productivity</td>
<td>Role ambiguity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater job satisfaction</td>
<td>Isolation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction of isolation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentors:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Experienced Administrators:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings of pride and empowerment</td>
<td>Tremendous job responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revitalization and rejuvenation</td>
<td>Role ambiguity and burnout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizations:</strong></td>
<td><strong>School Divisions:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved performance and increased</td>
<td>Turnover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>job satisfaction of employees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in turnover</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
words, the literature is lacking in descriptions of mentoring relationships of special education administrators. In addition, there is the possibility of two types of relationships: those assigned by a third party (school district, state education agency, or professional organization) and those which develop naturally (are not assigned).

In mentoring literature, there is considerable discussion of the effectiveness of mentoring relationships in formal programs with assigned pairs in contrast to mentoring relationships which occur naturally. Assigned mentorships are referred to as "shotgun" weddings (Daresh & Playko, 1989, p.89), arranged marriages (Carruthers, 1993), and blind dates (Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992; Kizilos, 1990) with the opinion that mentoring relationships cannot be assigned, "forced or contrived" (Fagan & Walter, 1982. p. 117; Keele, Buckner, & Bushnell, 1987; Kram, 1986). According to Merriam (1983), the assigning of pairs appears to ignore "a characteristic crucial to the more intense mentor relationships—that the two people involved are attracted to each other and wish to work together" (p.171).

In a comparison of formal and informal mentorships, Durlap and Pence (1990) found that informal relationships were more highly rated than formal relationships. In addition, "where choice existed, formal mentorships were rated as more successful that formal mentorships where no selection choice was extended" (p. 6). Thus a primary criticism of formal programs has been the lack
of choice with the argument that formal programs are most effective when individuals are given two choices: (a) the choice to participate and (b) a choice in mentor selection (Ashby, 1991; Klauss, 1981; Kram, 1986; Zey, 1991).

Noe (1988), in a study of assigned mentoring relationships which "involved 139 educators and 43 mentors" (p.464), found that aspiring educational administrators received psychosocial benefits but limited benefits in terms of career functions. Chao et al. (1992) concluded that individuals in unassigned mentorships (212 proteges) received somewhat more support on the career function than did individuals in assigned relationships (53 proteges) with no significant differences on the psychosocial function. Comparing outcomes with those of 284 nonmentored individuals; significant differences were found between nonmentored individuals and those in unassigned relationships for each of the socialization, satisfaction, and salary subscales with significant differences between nonmentored individuals and those in assigned relationships being present in only three of the socialization subscales (Chao et al., 1992).

However, it has also been argued that formal mentoring programs provide opportunities for mentoring relationships to women and individuals of cultural, ethnic, or racial groups who are not typically represented in administrative positions (Fleming, 1991; Wilson & Elman, 1990). According to Kram (1986), formal programs can provide organizational support to the mentor-
protege pairs and make the relationship legitimate. Providing stronger support for organization facilitated mentoring programs, Bowen (1985) found that identification of the protege with the mentor is highest at the start of a relationship and does not seem to be vital for successful mentoring results. In a similar vein, Zey (1991) argues: "that chemistry is often a result, not a cause, of the mentor-protege connection" (p. 174).

Purpose and Research Questions

Mentoring is one means of facilitating the growth of special education leaders. The purpose of this study is to describe mentoring relationships as they function for special education administrators. Mentoring relationships occur naturally or are assigned by state education agencies, professional organizations, or local school systems. The nature and outcomes of a mentoring relationship may vary depending upon the initiation process (assigned or unassigned). Assigned relationships either develop or fail to develop.

Therefore, it was the intent of this study to explore and describe mentoring relationships which: (a) resulted from the implementation of Project SEAM, (b) were assigned but did not develop, or (c) were unassigned. The research questions guiding this study were:

1. What is the nature of the mentoring relationship between a first year special education administrator and an assigned mentor in Project SEAM?
2. What is the nature of the mentoring relationship between a first year special education administrator and an unassigned mentor?

3. What is the nature of relationships that are assigned in Project SEAM but do not develop?

4. What are the similarities and differences between assigned and unassigned mentoring relationships?

5. What are the similarities and differences between assigned relationships which develop and those which do not develop?

Method

To explore and describe mentoring relationships between special education administrators, a case study research design was used. The case study has been described as an empirically based inquiry that examines a current phenomenon within its actual context when the lines between the phenomenon and its context are blurred and in which several sources are utilized (Yin, 1989). The sources of information in this study included focused interviews with selected participants, program documents, and observation of program components.

Six case studies involving mentors were conducted. The mentors were individuals assigned to more than one relationship in the course of Project SEAM and/or participants in additional unassigned relationships. Therefore, each case represented more than one type of mentoring relationship. There were two or more of each type of relationship (assigned, unassigned, and failure to develop) represented. Cross-case analysis among the six cases and
the three types of relationships were conducted utilizing specific techniques: contact summary sheets, thematic coding, and conceptually clustered matrix displays (Miles & Huberman, 1994). By describing these relationships it is intended that the foundation be laid for future studies addressing career development issues of special education administrators specific to mentoring and state education agency involvement.

Limitations of the Study

As with any study, there were limitations. This study was designed to provide a comprehensive description of mentoring relationships which developed in a specific formal program and to make comparisons with relationships which evolved naturally. The study does not comprise an evaluation, nor is it expected to answer all questions related to mentoring of special education administrators. Typical of descriptive case studies, it does provide insights into assigned and unassigned mentoring relationships of special education administrators and may serve as a foundation for further study (Mernam, 1988).

A second area of limitation was the use of self-reporting in which interviewed participants were asked to recall and report events. Therefore, the study serves as a reflection of participant perceptions (Silverman, 1993).

Significance of the Study

Special education administrators have the responsibility to provide
appropriate educational services to students with disabilities and their families. Mentoring may be a means of fostering survival and facilitating professional growth of special education administrators. Limited information is available which describes mentoring of special education administrators.

In the Special Education Leadership Program at Long Island University, mentoring was an effective program component facilitating the transition into the administrative role (Friedman, 1991). The program featured two mentors for nineteen students and program evaluation recommended that the process be individualized. Lowenbraun (1990), advocating the merger of general and special education leadership preparation programs, identified the lack of mentors having expertise in both areas as a barrier to joint programs.

The limited literature has mentioned mentoring as a program component. The significance of this study is found in its description of the nature of individual mentoring relationships. In addition, this study explores the similarities and differences between assigned and unassigned relationships providing additional information for the study of third party involvement in mentoring relationships. This study provides insights for entry level and experienced special education administrators, organizations providing support to special education administrators, and developers of formal mentoring programs.

Outline of the Study

The following chapter provides a review of the literature as it relates to:
(a) the background of mentoring in adult and career development, (b) the nature of mentoring relationships (i.e., initiation of the relationship, stages of the relationship, functions of the relationship, termination of the relationship, and problems with mentoring), (c) guidelines for developing and implementing formal programs, and (d) alternatives to formal programs. Chapter Three provides the specific methods by which the research questions were answered. The research design included the use of in-depth interviews, review of documents, and observation in a descriptive case study. Chapter Four provides the results of the study consisting of six case studies. Chapter Five consists of comparisons and discussions of the three types of relationships (assigned pairs, unassigned pairs, and assignments that did not develop), conclusions, and recommendations.
Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter provides an overview of mentoring relationships beginning with foundations in adult and career development and proceeding to the nature of relationships. Included in the discussion of the nature of relationships are: initiation of the relationship, stages of the relationship, functions of the relationship, termination of the relationship, and possible problems within relationships. Each of these topics are discussed for both assigned and unassigned relationships. In addition, two options available to organizations for initiating mentoring relationships are described: (a) developing formal programs (assigned mentor pairs) and (b) alternatives to formal relationships (unassigned pairs).

Foundations of Mentoring

The mentor has historically been a transitional figure guiding a younger individual on a "transformational journey" (Daloz, 1986, p. 16). The mentor has fulfilled a role in the development of adults and in their career development. The mentors described in adult development literature have been referred to as primary (Phillips, 1977) or life (Dodgson, 1986) mentors indicating intense, often lifelong relationships while secondary (Phillips, 1977) or career (Dodgson, 1986) mentors have been involved with only career guidance.
Adult Development

According to personality development theory, mature adults pass through a number of stages as they grow and develop (Erikson, 1963; Sheehy, 1976). Erikson has identified the central feature of adulthood as "generativity vs. stagnation" (pp. 266-267) with generativity referring to a need to establish and guide the next generation. Erikson has asserted that not only do young adults need guidance from mature adults; mature adults grow and develop through their assistance to young adults.

Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, and McKee (1978) have categorized these life stages as transitions and stress the importance of a transitional guide or mentor in the life of an adult male. Whereas an adult man may benefit from the guidance of a mentor in early adulthood transition, a man in middle adulthood may benefit from being that mentor. The mentor of Levinson et al. represents "a mixture of parent and peer" (p. 99) which approximates the good enough parent necessary for growth and development in childhood. Likewise, mentors have been vital to the development of adult females, especially in terms of career growth (Hennig & Jardim, 1981; Kanter, 1977; Phillips, 1977).

Career Development

With almost fifty years of study in career development, Super (1990) has taken the work of Levinson and his colleagues (1978) a step further describing stages within each transition. According to Super (1990), individuals move
through the following life stages: (a) growth, (b) exploration, (c) establishment, (d) maintenance, and (e) decline. Super (1990) refers to each of these five major life stages as a *maxicycle* (p. 206). Each stage or maxicycle consists of substages or phases called *minicycles*. Minicycles or a recycling of growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline occur with each transition from one stage to another. In Super's view, life stages are not rigidly sequential but consist instead of a constant cycling and recycling as individual roles and circumstances change.

Hall (1990) has integrated the works of Erikson (1963), Levinson et al. (1978), and Super (1990) and transferred that knowledge into the organizational setting. Needs of individual employees differ as they move through different stages in the organization (Hennig & Jardim, 1981; Katz, 1978; Schein, 1978). Katz (1978), in a study of 3,085 employees, found that entry level employees were concerned with becoming effective members of the organization and valued task significance over autonomy. Job satisfaction of employees who were established within an organization but new to a position was related to feedback on job performance (Katz, 1978). Socialization has been recognized as the process whereby individuals become established in their profession or organization with the first year in an organization being critical in the socialization process of managers (Berlew and Hall, 1966).

Among 550 employees trained in professions, Dalton, Thompson, and
Price (1977) discovered four distinct career stages. Individuals who moved through these stages successfully had high performance ratings. Stage I individuals functioned in an apprenticeship role: helping, learning, and following directions. Stage II persons worked as colleagues and were independent contributors. The mentor role occurred in Stage III where training and interfacing were the primary activities. Stage IV persons, called sponsors, were responsible for providing the direction for the entire organization (Dalton et al., 1977).

Employees or management personnel at midcareer have reported feelings of depression, loss of motivation, lack of excitement, or feelings of being trapped in an organization (Schein, 1978). Individuals at this career stage may face: (a) a choice between technical or supervisory career paths, (b) the need to be "somebody" in the organization, (c) disappointment in career progress, (d) the need to balance work with family, and (e) a desire for continued growth (Schein, 1978). Buchanan (1974) has stated that managers at this stage "need personal confirmation and reinforcement of the career choice" (p. 543). Kram (1985b) has suggested that for midcareer adults faced with the need to reassess and reflect, mentoring may allow them to "review past decisions as they relive" them with younger individuals (p. 15).

Mentoring relationships are advocated as a means of dealing with career stages in organizations with experienced mentors fulfilling their need for
generativity by facilitating the socialization of a newcomer or transitional employee. In addition to the intangible rewards of mentoring relationships found in adult development literature, Zey (1991) in the Mutual Benefits Model has proposed that tangible benefits to mentors, proteges, and organizations lead to the development of mentoring relationships (Jacobi, 1991). Following the logic of mutual benefits to all parties, organizations have attempted to replicate natural mentoring relationships (Levinson et al., 1978; Phillips, 1977) by assigning mature mentors to newcomer proteges.

Initiation of Relationships

Initiation and evolution of relationships, stages of mentoring, functions of mentoring relationships, and resolution (termination) of relationships are topics mentioned in the discussion of natural or unassigned mentoring relationships (Collins, 1983; Hunt & Michael, 1983; Kram, 1983; Phillips, 1977). Descriptions of assigned mentoring relationships typically mention program development (selection and matching of pairs), program implementation, and program evaluation (Gaskill, 1993). Costs or problems and benefits (outcomes) are listed for each type of relationship.

Initiation of Informal Relationships

The primary difference between natural mentorships and those which are assigned by organizations is inherent in the initiation of the relationships. The majority of unassigned relationships simply emerge (Burke, 1984) or are
established by serendipity or chance (Dodge, 1986). For example, two individuals get to know one another by working together, begin to like each other, grow to trust one another, and the initial relationship evolves into a mentoring relationship (Dodge, 1986).

According to Dodge (1986), the second most frequent manner of initiating a mentoring relationship involves mentor-seeking, in which a mature authority figure is "on the lookout for people" with potential (p. 31). Mentors reportedly look for potential proteges who demonstrate above average performance, talent, and/or potential (Missirian, 1982). Mentors appear to select individuals similar to themselves (Fleming, 1991; Kanter, 1977; Moore, 1982). In addition to competent performance and future potential, mentors have selected proteges based on four factors: (a) how well they fit into the organization, (b) a lack of risk in associating with the protege, (c) the predictability of the protege's actions, and (d) the potential pay-off to the mentor (Mertz, 1987 in Fleming, 1991, p. 30).

The third and least frequently used method of initiating relationships involves the seeking of a mentor by a protege (Burke, 1984; Dodge, 1986). According to Olian, Carroll, Giannantonio, and Feren (1998) in their series of three experimental simulations, proteges sought out mentors who demonstrated high levels of "interpersonal competence" (p. 15). The level of the potential mentor in the decision-making network of the organization was more
attractive to the protege only when the potential mentor's interpersonal skills were not as strong. The gender and age of potential mentors were not significant factors in protege attraction; however, younger proteges were more attracted to a potential mentor than were older proteges (Olian et al., 1988).

Kram (1985 b, 1986), following biographical interviewing of 25 relationship pairs, has suggested that not all individuals will seek out mentoring relationships as either mentors or proteges. Specifically, an individual's level of comfort with mentoring may relate to his or her attitudes toward: (a) authority figures, (b) intimacy, (c) competence and self-esteem, (d) conflict and competition, (e) commitment to work, and (f) learning. Individuals who seek out mentoring relationships are likely to: (a) desire approval from authority figures; (b) share personal or professional concerns with others at work; (c) feel comfortable with their own abilities; (d) manage conflict well; (e) feel that work is important; and (f) perceive of learning as an interactive, not solitary, process (Kram, 1986). Some midcareer individuals sought out by younger adults "may not want the responsibility of being a mentor and/or may not exercise it responsibly if it is accepted" (Schein, 1978, p. 177).

Selection and Matching in Formal Programs

In contrast to natural or unassigned relationships, formal mentoring programs involve identification or selection of proteges, recruitment and/or selection of mentors, training of mentors, and matching of mentor-protege pairs
(Burke & McKeen, 1989; Gaskill, 1993; Kram, 1986; Murray & Owen, 1991). Organizations identify or select proteges based on a perceived need or needs of the protege. Typically, the protege is at a career stage which involves preparation (Daresh & Playko, 1992; Dunlap & Pence, 1990; Walker & Stott, 1994), induction (Daresh & Playko, 1990; Phillips-Jones, 1983; Wilmore, 1995), or transition (Ashby, 1991; Dodgson, 1986). Likewise, the protege may be a member of a group (i.e., women, racial, ethnic, or cultural group) perceived to need the assistance of mentors (Fleming, 1991; Pence, 1989).

In addition to perceived needs, proteges have been selected based on personal characteristics or competencies. Proteges in Gray and Gray (1985) were: receptive, responsive, self-analyzing, and valued mentor help. Cobble (1993) recommended that proteges in a principal preparation program demonstrate a commitment to assuming the principal role as mentors valued this commitment. Likewise, mentor principals valued the proficient teaching experience of proteges (Cobble, 1993). Personal characteristics of proteges highlighted by Keller (1994) were: (a) desire for close, personal relationships, (b) initiation of personal interactions, (c) preference for following orders, and (d) comfort in social settings. Keller's (1994) proteges were also: "capable, responsible, and democratic persons who had no problems with power or control" (p. 178).

Organizations may select proteges based on organizational needs.
Lawrie (1987) suggests that mentors are appropriate for individuals in positions that involve: (a) extensive use of company funds, (b) major customer relations, (c) looming retirement, or (d) collaboration across groups to complete a task. Organizations have varied in the process of selecting proteges choosing to: (a) require all newcomers to participate, (b) offer mentoring to all newcomers, or (c) offer mentoring only to persons selected by the company (Phillips-Jones, 1983; Zey, 1985). Organizations have offered mentoring as part of a professional development program which includes a needs assessment of, and desire to participate by, the protege (Ashby, 1991; Wilmore, 1995).

**Mentor selection.** Criteria given for selecting mentors can be grouped into the following categories: (a) personality characteristics, (b) demonstration of mentoring behaviors, (c) appropriateness as a role model within the organization, and (d) ability to serve as an effective mentor. To be selected, potential mentors should demonstrate personality characteristics such as: (a) strong interpersonal skills, (b) an orientation to people and helping, (c) open mindedness, (d) flexibility, (e) patience, (f) risk-taking, and (g) empathic listening (Gaskill, 1993; Gray & Gray, 1985; Murray & Owen, 1991). However, among assigned mentors, Keller (1994) found the following preferences: (a) business-like relationships, (b) structure, (c) making decisions and giving orders, and (d) selectivity of close associates. Of primary importance in the selection of mentors is the potential mentor's commitment to the process of mentoring.

Organizations may expect existing mentoring behaviors or may plan to offer training to facilitate the development of specific behaviors. A study of 29 mentoring pairs and 21 non-mentoring pairs conducted by Alleman, Cochran, Doverspike, and Newman (1984) indicates that: "mentoring relationships can be established . . . by learning . . . mentor-like behavior rather than by selecting certain types of people" (p. 332). Mentoring behaviors may include: (a) active listening, (b) problem solving, (c) giving feedback, (d) sharing, (e) facilitating reflection, (f) modeling, (g) supporting, (h) challenging or prodding, and (i) providing vision (Ashby, 1991; Burke, 1984; Daloz, 1986; Gaskill, 1993; Hersey & Hersey, 1990; Lawrie, 1987; Zey, 1991).

In terms of mentors as role models, organizations are likely to select mentors who are the embodiment of the organization’s beliefs and values (Lawrie, 1987). Effective mentors have been described as: (a) competent, (b) resourceful, (c) politically wise, (d) proficient at networking, (e) committed, and (f) motivated (Burke, 1984; Gaskill, 1993; Gray & Gray, 1985; Zey, 1991). To provide assistance to proteges, mentors must: (a) have time, (b) be available and accessible, (c) have status in the organization, (d) be supported by the organization, (e) have power within the organization, and (f) be secure in their positions (Gaskill, 1993; Murray & Owen, 1991; Zey, 1991).
In a preparation program for principals, experience on the part of mentors was critical (Cobble, 1993; Keller, 1994). The mentors' administrative experience provided credibility and a source of knowledge not available to the proteges (Cobble, 1993). Keller (1994) found that the ability of mentor principals: "to plan meaningful activities and experiences based on their administrative experience was more important to the development of the relationships than were demographic factors such as age and gender" (p. 188).

In educational administration, four types of individuals who should not serve as mentors have been identified: (a) individuals extensively involved with school district politics with all attention directed toward self-survival, (b) individuals in new positions, (c) administrators whose own effectiveness is marginal, and (d) persons who display "know-it-all" behaviors (Daresh & Playko, 1993).

Zey (1985) recommends that organizations select mentors and proteges based on the goals of the mentoring program. The goals of the program should determine the most appropriate position of the mentor in relation to the protege (i.e., same/different department and/or same/different chain of command). The selection of mentors by organizations may serve to maintain the status quo rather than to facilitate the introduction of new ideas (Carden, 1990; Wilson & Elman, 1990). Considering all aspects of mentor and protege selection, Zey (1991) reports that being able to work together is crucial with the following being essential: "loyalty, trust, cohesiveness of action, competence, and
cooperativeness" (pp. 173-174).

**Matching of mentor-protege pairs.** Following the selection of proteges and mentors, mentors typically receive training. Mentor training and/or orientation will be discussed as a component of recommendations for formal programs later in this chapter. Following training, mentors and proteges are matched or a *linkage* is made (Gaskill, 1993). According to Chao et al. (1992), matches have ranged “from random assignment to committee assignment to mentor selection based on protege files” (p. 621). It has been conjectured that assigned mentors may not perceive of the protege as being worthy of specialized treatment and that formal relationships require a longer period of time for the parties to get to know one another (Chao et al., 1992). Assigned pairs have described their initial feelings about the match as: “uncomfortable, uncertain, formal or tense” (Keller, 1994, p. 169).

Among the four assigned relationships studied by Cobble (1993), mentors and proteges gave "mutual benefit, philosophical views, ethnic similarities, and being from the 'same era' . . . as significant to their developing relationships" (pp. 83-84). Daresh and Playko (1993) have recommended matching mentors and proteges based on a review of: (a) learning styles, (b) leadership styles, and (c) educational platforms. Cobble (1993) and Keller (1994) found that confidence and trust developed gradually leading to positive relationships. Mutually rewarding learning experiences, mutual respect and
expectations, openness, and commitment were factors contributing to relationship development (Cobble, 1993; Keller, 1994). According to Dunlap and Pence (1990), traits "of trust, mutual respect, openness, commitment, and friendship" were critical (pp. 4-5).

As was mentioned in Chapter 1, a primary recommendation for mentor-protege matching is "choice" of participants (Ashby, 1991; Burke & McKeen, 1989; Cobble, 1993; Dunlap & Pence, 1990; Maddex, 1993; Wilmore, 1995; Zey, 1985, 1991). According to Klauss (1981), proteges who were involved in selecting their mentors were more likely to expect their mentoring relationship to continue than were proteges who were not involved in the selection process. In addition, proteges who were involved in selection rated their mentors' effectiveness at a higher level than did the proteges who were not involved in selection (Klauss, 1981).

In terms of educational administration, certain contextual factors have facilitated successful mentorships. Pence (1989) found that utilizing retired administrators as mentors of beginning principals was effective as those individuals knew the ropes and had extra time, but were not involved in the evaluation of the protege. Likewise, in a program established by a professional organization, mentors and proteges were paired across school districts with proteges reporting more freedom to "ask all kinds of questions because their mentor was from a different district" (Pence, p. 21). Additional considerations
included: size of school districts, availability of potential mentor within the school district, school district support, program design, professional networking, time available, family support, and geographic proximity (Cobble, 1993; Keller, 1994; Pence, 1989).

Therefore, the initiation of assigned relationships is different from the initiation of unassigned relationships. Unassigned relationships typically began with an initial attraction followed by growth and development. When choice in selection was not provided, assigned relationships began with skepticism. However, growth and development were possible through mutual learning experiences. Selection choice in assigned relationships has been advocated to facilitate more effective relationships. Beginning with initiation, assigned and unassigned relationships go through a number of stages.

Stages within Relationships

Beginning with the initiation of the unassigned relationship, phases of development or evolution have been identified. This topic (stages within relationships) becomes another area for comparison between unassigned and assigned relationships. The earliest discussion of mentoring stages in unassigned relationships is found in Phillips (1977). Likewise, Walker and Stott (1993) have identified stages in assigned relationships.

Stages within Unassigned Relationships

Phillips (1977) in a study of female managers and executives identified
six phases within naturally occurring relationships: initiation, sparkle, development, disillusionment, parting, and transformation. Likewise, O’Neil (1981 in Bova & Phillips, 1984) postulated six slightly different "developmental stages" (p. 18) of mentoring: entry, mutual building of trust, risk taking, teaching of skills, professional standards, and dissolution. According to Moore (1982), mentoring in academe followed a similar path: (a) Mentor recognizes the protege’s performance, (b) mentor watches or tests protege, (c) mentor recruits protege, (d) protege is put to work, (e) protege develops, (f) protege is introduced into the inner circle, and (g) mentor teaches standards and learns to trust the protege.

**Initiation stage.** Subsequent researchers narrowed the number of stages, broadening each stage. Missirian (1982), in a study of 100 successful corporate women, described three phases: initiation, development, and termination. Frequently cited descriptions of mentoring stages are those of Kram (1983). Kram conducted an in-depth study of 18 mentor-protege relationships as they were occurring. Kram has called her first phase initiation, like that of Phillips (1977) and Missirian (1982). Initiation refers to the starting of the relationship and covers the first six to twelve months. During this stage, there are fantasies of what the other party can do, "concrete expectations" (p. 622), and finally the meeting of expectations as mentors provide: challenging work, coaching, and visibility. Proteges respond with assistance, respect, and the "desire to be
coached" (Kram, 1983, p. 622).

**Cultivation stage.** As expectations are met, the next stage begins to evolve. Lasting from two to five years is the *cultivation* phase (Kram, 1983). Expectations are tested with the emergence of career then psychosocial functions being provided by the mentor. The protégé "acquires critical technical skills and learns the ropes of organizational life" (p. 617) along with experiencing support and confirmation. The mentor is empowered, feeling his importance to the protégé and the organization (Kram, 1983).

**Separation stage.** Following cultivation and occurring six months to two years after a significant structural or emotional change in the relationship is the *separation* phase. This stage is characterized by "turmoil, anxiety, and feelings of loss" (Kram. 1983, p. 618). Promotions or other job changes may initiate or accelerate the separation phase. Typically, the protégé desires autonomy and the mentor re-evaluates his role (Kram, 1983). Hunt and Michael (1983) have labeled this "the breakup stage" (p. 483).

**Redefinition stage.** "Lasting friendship" (Hunt & Michael, 1983, p. 483) or *redefinition* is the final mentoring stage which lasts indefinitely (Kram, 1983). At this stage, the relationship either ends or develops into a "peerlike friendship" (Kram, 1983, p. 622). Typically, both parties agree that the relationship is no longer needed in its present form. Feelings of anger or resentment subside and feelings of gratitude or appreciation are restored. This stage signifies the
changes that have occurred: the protege functions as an effective peer and the mentor is ready to provide coaching to other beginning managers (Kram, 1983).

**Stages within Assigned Relationships**

Stages have also been described in assigned relationships. In assigned relationships, mentors may or may not have met one another before the mentorship begins. They may or may not have volunteered to participate in the relationship.

**Gray and Gray model.** In a program for beginning teachers, Gray and Gray (1985) have illustrated the mentoring process in a matrix format cross-referencing five levels with eight mentor functions. In the "Mentor-Protege Helping Relationship Model", levels 1 through 5 are represented graphically with M(m) representing the mentor and P(p) the protege:

\[ M \rightarrow M_p \rightarrow M_P \rightarrow m_P \rightarrow P \]

(p. 41). Level 1 (M) involves mentor training and features directive leadership; i.e., Hersey and Blanchard's (1977) telling leadership style. Level 2 (M_p) utilizes a selling approach (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977) and includes more instruction and feedback specifically for the protege. In both of these levels, the mentor is in the more powerful position (Gray & Gray, 1985).

An effective mentor will recognize the protege's need to move on to the next level. Level 3 (M_P) involves Hersey and Blanchard's (1977) participating style, "joint problem solving, brainstorming, consensus reaching, open
discussion, and contracting" (Gray & Gray, 1985; p. 42). Level 4 (mP) utilizes the final leadership style of delegating and includes support and encouragement of protege initiated and developed projects. Level 5 (P) finds the protege self-directing, self-educating, and self-evaluating (p. 41).

**Walker and Stott model.** A second model of assigned mentoring relationships has been presented by Walker and Stott (1993) using their knowledge of a training program for aspiring principals in Singapore. The continuum of relationship stages: (a) formal, (b) cautious, (c) sharing, (d) open, and (e) beyond, is presented with two distinct dimensions: (a) developmental descriptors and (b) interpersonal descriptors. In the formal stage, proteges perform only routine tasks (developmental descriptor) with interpersonal relationships described as "friendly or distant" (p. 82). Moving into the cautious stage, the protege takes on more important tasks and personal concerns are discussed between mentor and protege.

A developmental descriptor of the sharing stage is "frank exchanges about tasks and performance" with "mutual trust" (p. 82) in the interpersonal arena (Walker & Stott, 1993). The protege completes tasks without supervision and trust is high in the open stage. In the beyond stage, proteges may seek advice occasionally and a friendship is maintained even though the assignment has been completed. The effective mentorships or internships are those that move quickly to the sharing and open stages in which "real growth" (p. 83).
takes place (Walker & Stott, 1993).

**NASSP model.** In a training manual for mentors of aspiring principals, three phases of mentoring relationships are outlined: (I) Establishing the Relationship, (II) Implementing the Individual Development Plan, and (III) Cultivating a Collegial Relationship (Hersey & Hersey, 1990, p. 14). Phase I involves the identification of mentors and proteges, mentors and proteges getting to know one another, and the development of the protege’s individualized plan for accomplishing specific goals and objectives. Central to Phase II is the implementation of the plan with observations and feedback provided by the mentor. The mentor offers suggestions, shares his knowledge, and introduces the protege to other administrators. Phase III concerns the transition to a supportive and helpful peer relationship (Hersey & Hersey, 1990).

**Functions of Relationships**

According to Levinson and his colleagues (1978), the crucial function of the mentor is to "support and facilitate the realization of the Dream" (p. 98) on the part of the protege. Bolton (1980) has stated that the mentor's primary function is: "to provide a transition from the child-parent relationship to the adult-peer relationship in the course of development" (p.199). Seemingly single functions have evolved into long lists of specific tasks in both assigned and unassigned relationships.
Functions within Unassigned Relationships

A comprehensive list of functions for unassigned relationships has been furnished by Jacobi (1991). Similar mentor roles are listed by Schein (1978), Collins (1983), and Daloz (1986). The fifteen mentor functions listed by Jacobi (1991) are: (a) acceptance/support/encouragement, (b) advice/guidance, (c) bypass bureaucracy/access to resources, (d) challenge/opportunity/plum assignments, (e) clarify values and goals, (f) coaching, (g) information, (h) protection, (i) role model, (j) social status/reflected credit, (k) socialization/host and guide, (l) sponsorship/advocacy, (m) stimulate acquisition of knowledge, (n) training/instruction, and (o) visibility/exposure (p. 509).

This extensive list has been studied and sorted into two broad areas of function (Kram, 1983; Olian et al., 1988). Kram (1983) has divided the functions into two categories: career and psychosocial. Career functions include: sponsorship, exposure-and-visibility, coaching, protection, and challenging assignments. Psychosocial functions include: role modeling, acceptance-and-confirmation, counseling, and friendship.

Olian and colleagues (1988) have categorized functions as instrumental or intrinsic. The instrumental dimension includes behaviors that further "the reputation of the protege in the eyes of those external to the relationship" (p. 19) and is similar to the career functions of Kram (1983). Behaviors in the intrinsic dimension enhance "the quality, intensity, and depth of the . . .
relationship without regard for the impact of these behaviors on outsiders" (p. 19) and are similar to Kram's psychosocial functions (Olian et al., 1988).

Zey (1991) has taken a slightly different approach in organizing functions of mentoring relationships. Using benefits to proteges and investment/risk on the part of mentors as criteria, Zey has developed a "Hierarchy of Mentoring" (p. 8) with four levels: (a) teaching, (b) psychological counseling/personal support, (c) organizational intervention, and (d) sponsoring (p. 8). Sponsoring is the optimum level of mentoring in Zey's (1991) model.

Functions within Assigned Relationships

It has been suggested that the functions of assigned mentoring relationships are identical to those of unassigned relationships. Gaskill (1993) asserts that career and psychosocial functions as identified by Kram (1985b) "should be taking place" (Gaskill, p. 156) during the program implementation of formal mentoring programs. Assigned proteges in Noe's (1988) study; however, "reported receiving beneficial psychosocial outcomes but limited career functions" (p. 473) from their mentoring relationships.

A review of literature revealed numerous functions within assigned mentoring relationships (see Table 3). The functions identified in Table 3 for assigned mentoring relationships have been compared to the list of functions for unassigned relationships provided by Jacobi (1991, p. 509, Table 2). This comparison is located in Table 4. The functions appear to be similar. Three
### Table 3

**Functions in Assigned Mentoring Relationships**

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role modeling</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling/problem-solving</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing Individual Development Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching specific skills</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsoring/mediating/sharing influence/protecting</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guiding, providing information, social and political insights</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging/motivating/befriending/supporting</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring/giving feedback/communicating</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career advising/facilitating professional growth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting indirect mentoring/building a network</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging/giving responsibility/nurturing/coaching</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4

Comparison of Functions in Assigned and Unassigned Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functions</th>
<th>Unassigned relations</th>
<th>Assigned relations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance/support/encouragement</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice/guidance</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bypass bureaucracy/access to resources</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge/opportunity/plum assignments</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarify values/clarify goals</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role model</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social status/reflected credit</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialization/host and guide</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship/advocacy</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulate acquisition of knowledge</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training/instruction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visibility/exposure</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Promoting indirect mentoring &amp; networking</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Implementing Individual Development Plan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Monitoring/giving feedback/communicating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

functions seem to be unique to assigned mentoring: (a) promoting indirect mentoring and networking, (b) developing and implementing an IDP, and (c) monitoring, giving feedback, and communicating. Several functions appear to be unique to unassigned mentoring: (a) bypass bureaucracy/access to resources, (b) clarify values or goals, (c) social status/reflected credit, and (d) visibility/exposure.

Some of these differences may relate to differences in terminology. For example, promoting indirect mentoring and networking may lead to visibility and exposure. During the development and implementation of an IDP, the mentor may assist the protege in clarifying values and goals. Monitoring and giving feedback may be included within the function of coaching. Taken together the separate functions of unassigned and assigned relationships provide a comprehensive listing of mentoring functions.

Termination of Relationships

Mentoring relationships serve a function for the mentoring pair and/or the organization. However, mentoring relationships eventually come to an end. Whereas informal relationships evolve and terminate naturally, formal programs are usually for a specified purpose or time period (Phillips-Jones, 1983).

Termination of Unassigned Relationships

Termination or dissolution is a natural expectation of the mentoring relationship as the gap closes between the mentor and protege in terms of skill
level, experience, or power (Carruthers, 1993). Among unassigned mentors and proteges, termination involves the stages of separation, redefinition (Kram, 1983), and termination (Missirian, 1982) with the expected anxiety and turmoil. Termination is often the result of the mentor "letting go" (p. 65) or recommending the protege for a promotion (Missirian, 1982). According to Collins (1983), a protege should make the transition from protege to colleague when they "make it" rather than prolonging the relationship.

Termination of Assigned Relationships

Wilson and Elman (1990) have recommended a mechanism for "polite termination" (p. 92) of formal mentoring programs. Assigned mentorships are usually for a specific time period or purpose; therefore, termination or transition to a peer relationship may be a more legitimate and subsequently less anxious process. An additional difference between assigned and unassigned terminations is the existence of a formalized evaluation component in assigned relationships (Gaskill, 1993; Kram, 1986). The extent and type of evaluation should be based on the desired outcomes of the program. Evaluations have ranged from “happiness” surveys to more comprehensive comparison with other professional development strategies (Murray & Owen, 1991).

Murray and Owen (1991) have recommended baseline and multiple measures of the following components in an evaluation plan: (a) progress of the proteges, (b) experiences of mentors, (c) turnover rate within the target group,
(d) development and training costs, and (e) administrative costs. Evaluations may consist of analysis of "information collected through on-going monitoring" (p. 97) and participant ratings (Hersey & Hersey, 1990). Mentorships which are part of a pre-service training program or internship may involve ratings of protege performance (Carruthers, 1993; Hersey & Hersey, 1990).

Problems in Mentoring Relationships

Benefits to proteges, mentors, and organizations; such as those listed in Chapter 1, can result from unassigned and assigned mentoring relationships. Likewise, due to personal and/or contextual factors, there can be problems in mentoring relationships. A common concern with both assigned and unassigned relationships is the amount of time and effort needed to develop and maintain successful relationships (Burke & McKeen, 1989).

Problems in Unassigned Relationships

According to Myers and Humphreys (1985), problems in mentoring fall into three categories: selection, process, and outcome. Selection problems include: preselection, the "old-boy" network, discrimination, and nepotism. These practices foster the self-interests of specific groups and lead to resentment of the protege. Process problems may relate to incompatibility, but frequently the problems have a more specific origin. Origins of problems include: (a) protege treated as a "go-for", (b) mentor as tyrant, (c) sexual harassment, (d) teaching of incorrect or unethical behavior, and (e) possessive
mentors (Myers & Humphreys, 1985). Phillips has found (1977) that problems or a failed relationship result when mentors are jealous, "half-hearted", or do not have "the proteges' best interest in mind" (pp. 100-101).

Myers and Humphreys (1985) have identified outcome problems which relate to the protege being identified with the mentor. If a mentor becomes "sidetracked" (Myers & Humphreys, p. 13) or falls into disfavor, the protege may suffer the "black halo effect" (Zey, 1991, p. 137). Likewise, if a protege is perceived as disloyal, the mentor may be held accountable. Role reversal is another area of concern as a protege bypasses the mentor. Problems can also arise when proteges do not grow and mentors advocate for incompetent proteges (Myers & Humphreys, 1985). Emotional over-dependence and failure on the part of the mentor to protect the protege are two additional problems (Zey, 1991).

**Problems in Assigned Relationships**

In assigned relationships, Klauss (1981) has found problems in four areas: "role responsibilities, matching processes, hierarchial tensions, and quality of relationships" (p. 493). The specific problems noted were: (a) unclear role definitions for both proteges and mentors, (b) limited involvement of mentors and proteges in selection and matching processes, and (c) tensions between mentors and supervisors of proteges. In addition, mentors or proteges who have not been selected feel left out and "pessimistic about their futures"
(Burke & McKeen, 1989; Kram, 1986, p. 183). Murray and Owen (1991) list additional concerns of mentors: (a) pressure to take on the mentor role; (b) lack of mentoring skills, including coaching, giving feedback, and risk-taking; and (c) lack of perceived rewards or benefits.

Cobble (1993) described an assigned relationship, ending in disengagement, which both parties found disappointing. The expectations of neither the protege nor the mentor were met. The mentor described the protege as not being committed to becoming a principal. The protege stressed their different views of mentor and protege roles, expecting more specific advice and direction from the mentor. In addition to the unmet expectations, incompatibility and "apathetic conflict" (Cobble, 1993, p. 87) were factors in the disengagement.

Development of Formal Programs

Aware of possible problem areas, advocates of formal programs have made specific suggestions in the areas of program development, implementation, and evaluation. According to Zey (1985, 1991), the first step in any mentoring program should be the establishment of clear, specific goals and program guidelines. It is vital that top management endorses and supports formal mentoring (Kram, 1985b) which should be part of an overall professional development program (Murray & Owen, 1991; Phillips-Jones, 1983).
Program Development

The primary recommendations from program participants in the area of program development are (a) voluntary participation and (b) choice in the selection of both mentors and proteges (Ashby, 1991; Burke & McKeen, 1989; Dunlap & Pence, 1990; Klauss, 1981; Kram, 1985b, 1986; Maddex, 1993; Phillips-Jones, 1983; Zey, 1991). Wilson and Elman (1990) have described an ideal scenario for an initial meeting between potential proteges and mentors in which the interested parties mingle, are served refreshments, and hear an inspirational presentation delivered by an organizational leader. Multiple small group meetings are held and potential proteges are encouraged to interview several individuals desiring to be mentors in a 1:1 setting prior to making the mutual decision to form a relationship (Wilson & Elman, 1990). Newby and Heide (1992) have recommended that the mentor and protege work together for a trial period before a long-term commitment is made.

Orientation for both parties is recommended in any formal program (Keller, 1994). An orientation, as described above, which takes place prior to the matching stage is preferred. Potential mentors and potential proteges should each leave their respective orientation with the following: purpose and goals of the program, clear and realistic expectations of the program, an understanding of the mentor role, knowledge of protege responsibilities, awareness of the time commitment, and a full understanding of the program.

Specific training is recommended for mentors in addition to the program orientation. Interpersonal skills, listening skills, problem-solving strategies, skills in providing feedback, principles of adult learning, mentoring concepts, and mentor responsibilities are vital areas of training (Gaskill, 1993; Henry et al., 1994; Murray & Owen, 1991; Walker & Stott, 1994). Mentors should receive a manual or written materials to use as a resource and guide when meeting with proteges (Phillips-Jones, 1983).

Program Implementation

Prior to implementation of the program with the individual pairs, program developers are encouraged to establish certain guidelines. Length of the program, expected types of interaction, minimum frequency of contacts, responsibilities of the mentor, and a possible mechanism for withdrawing from the relationship should be discussed and guidelines developed (Zey, 1985, 1991). Murray and Owen (1991) are strong advocates of utilizing a coordinator to oversee and facilitate the mentoring program. This allows for the program monitoring, follow-up, counseling, and on-going evaluation encouraged by others (Bell, 1987; Bowen, 1985; Phillips-Jones, 1983; Wilson & Elman, 1990; Zey, 1985, 1991).
Two levels of agreements have been advocated as individual pairs begin their relationship: (a) contracts and (b) developmental plans. The proposed contract contains the operating procedures of the relationship; i.e., type and frequency of meetings, meeting times and locations, initiation of meetings, assurance of confidentiality, individual responsibilities, duration of the relationship, and procedure for termination of the relationship (Henry et al., 1994; Murray & Owen, 1991; Phillips-Jones, 1983; Wilson & Elman, 1990).

The development of individual protege plans may follow a self-assessment or third-party assessment of skills relevant to the goals of the mentoring program (Murray & Owen, 1991; Wilmore, 1995). The assessment is utilized in identifying strengths and targeting areas for improvement which make up the protege's Individual Development Plan (IDP) (Hersey & Hersey, 1990; Murray & Owen, 1991; Wilmore, 1995). After the development of the IDP, the mentor assists the protege in meeting the plan's goals through planning, observation, coaching, and feedback (Hersey & Hersey, 1990; Murray & Owen).

Realizing that limited time, conflicting work schedules, and geographic distance are the most often given reasons for failing to interact, program developers should seek to ensure mentor accessibility (Keller, 1994; Moore, 1982; Noe, 1988). Additional recommendations for program implementation include the creation of networks for proteges and acknowledgement of successful mentors (Farren, Gray, & Kaye, 1984; Moore, 1982). Daresh and
Playko (1993) recommend regular gatherings of mentors for purposes of social interaction and skill development. Lastly, structured flexibility provides the freedom necessary for each relationship to grow and develop (Farren et al., 1984; Phillips-Jones, 1983; Walker & Stott, 1994).

Program Evaluation

According to Zey (1985), "although structured evaluation is the final phase of the formal mentor program, some form of assessment should be incorporated as an ongoing activity" (p. 57). A plan for continuing evaluation and monitoring should be developed when the program is first planned with monitoring overseen by the coordinator or facilitator (Hersey & Hersey, 1990; Phillips-Jones, 1983). Continuous evaluation should include: interviews with participants at set times, regular quantitative organizational surveys, solicitation of suggestions, and procedures for anonymous "airing of grievances" (Zey, 1985, p. 57). Furthermore, the program should be given an extended test period in order to allow for its full development (Zey, 1991). Murray and Owen (1991) have suggested three years as the minimum for a trial period.

Alternatives to Formal Mentoring Programs

Advocates of mentoring as a career development practice have recommended alternatives to formal mentoring programs. Fagan and Walter (1982) encourage unassigned mentoring relationships as they are "more natural" (p.117). Keele and associates (1987) recommend the establishment of
social networks. An opponent of mentoring recommends having the immediate supervisor serve as coach with self-recruiting of sponsors only as needed (Clawson, 1985).

Change in Organizational Structure

Kram has presented two alternatives to formal mentoring programs. One recommendation is the diagnosis of obstacles to the facilitation of unassigned mentoring relationships (1985a; 1965b). To facilitate mentoring, organizations must: (a) provide "opportunities for frequent and open interaction between managers at different career stages and hierarchical levels"; (b) have members who have interpersonal skills, willingness, and interest necessary "to build supportive relationships"; and (c) have a "reward system, culture, and norms" that support and encourage developmental relationships (Kram, 1985b, p. 160).

Typically, both education and changes in organizational structure; i.e., "reward system, task design or other management practices" (p. 40) are needed to remediate an organization (Kram, 1985a). The steps involved in this process are: (a) identify the focus of the mentoring program; i.e., socialization of newcomers or involvement of plateaued managers; (b) collect data on factors which are inhibiting or promoting developmental relationships; (c) implement changes, and (d) evaluate and make modifications. This alternative will "support rather than force the mentoring process" (p. 42).
Peer Relationships

Kram and Isabella (1985) began to study peer relationships based on the assumptions that peers: (a) may be able to provide some of the same functions as mentors, (b) are more available in organizations than mentors, and (c) may relate to one another more easily than to mentors who are situated higher in the organization. They have found that peer relationships provide the following career functions: information sharing, career strategizing, and job-related feedback. Psychosocial functions provided by peers include: confirmation, emotional support, personal feedback, and friendship. These functions are very similar to functions of mentoring relationships with one unique difference: peer relationships provide a "degree of mutuality that enables both individuals to experience being the giver as well as the receiver" of the functions (p. 118). Perhaps for that reason, peers appear to be helpful at all career stages.

Summary

A review of the literature has revealed the foundations of unassigned relationships in adult and career development. Unassigned mentoring relationships were described in terms of stages, functions, and problems. Formal programs and assigned relationships have been initiated and developed by organizations for the socialization of newcomers, the rejuvenation of midcareer persons, and overall benefits to the organization. Assigned relationships have stages, functions, and problems that are similar to
unassigned relationships. Noticeable areas of difference are the initiation and termination periods of the relationships. Alternatives to, and guidelines for, formal mentoring programs have been discussed.
Chapter 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to describe mentoring relationships as they function for special education administrators. This chapter describes the development of the research design and the specific procedures utilized in answering the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of the mentoring relationship between a first year special education administrator and an assigned mentor?

2. What is the nature of the mentoring relationship between a first year special education administrator and an unassigned mentor?

3. What is the nature of a relationship that is assigned but does not develop?

4. What are the similarities and differences between assigned and unassigned mentoring relationships?

5. What are the similarities and differences between assigned relationships which develop and those which do not develop?

Conceptual Framework

Conceptual frameworks for the study of mentoring (Hunt & Michael, 1983), formal mentoring programs (Gaskill, 1993), and personal versus contextual variables in mentoring relationships (Keller, 1994) have been provided. Comparing assigned and unassigned relationships requires an additional framework. This framework addresses personal and contextual variables in each of the three relationship types (assigned, unassigned, and did not develop), relationship development, and outcomes (benefits and concerns)
and is based on the assumption that differences in the initiation process may indicate differences in relationship development and outcomes (Chao et al., 1992). The framework is illustrated in Figure 2.

The Population and the Sample

The population of this study consisted of special education administrators in the Commonwealth of Virginia who participated in Project SEAM during the 1992-95 academic years. During the course of the three years, a total of 74 individuals were identified as new administrators or mentors by the Department of Education. Four of these individuals were affiliated with special education programs in state-supported institutions as opposed to school divisions. Among the 70 public school personnel, there were 34 new administrators (including assistant directors); 29 mentors; two persons who were in both roles; and five new administrators for whom mentors were not assigned. Some individuals were mentors for more than one protege resulting in a total of 36 pairs or dyads. Within the group of program participants, there were two individuals who were new administrators in one academic year and assigned as mentors the following year.

A pilot study was initiated which involved interviewing one triad and two dyads representing assigned and unassigned pairings. The triad and dyads were selected based on three criteria: (a) multiple perspectives, (b) type of relationship, and (c) diversity of school divisions. Individuals were selected for
Figure 2. Model for the study of assigned and unassigned mentoring relationships.
in-depth interviews who were involved in more than one mentoring relationship and were likely to provide multiple perspectives. The sample was purposely selected to include: an assigned triad, an assigned pair, and an unassigned relationship.

Purposeful sampling was used in order to facilitate comprehensive data collection across several dimensions. Two mentors were selected for the pilot study because of their unique case, that is, they were in both protege and mentor roles during the first three years of the program. A triad selected for the pilot study included one protege who was assigned two mentors. During the pilot study, assigned pairs which did not develop relationships were revealed. Likewise, snowball sampling occurred when additional unassigned relationships were discovered. The resulting sample centered around six mentors with a total of 11 persons being interviewed (nine face-to-face and two by phone). The six mentors represented assigned relationships, unassigned relationships, and assignments which did not develop. The interviewed participants represented four distinct geographic areas and nine school divisions (urban, suburban, and rural) in Virginia. Therefore, the purposeful sampling consisted of extreme or deviant case and snowball sampling (Patton, 1990; Silverman, 1993).

Research Design

This descriptive case study utilized information from a variety of sources: literature review; observation of mentor training, the academy for new special
education administrators, and regional meetings; written materials provided as part of Project SEAM; access to Department of Education personnel; and a preliminary survey of 1994-95 participants. This information was utilized in sample selection and in the development of interview guides. Interviews with the selected sample were taped, transcribed, and coded. Using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), coded data were sorted into categories which described emerging themes and patterns (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Cross-case analysis revealed similarities and differences between relationship types (assigned pairs, unassigned pairs, and assigned pairs which did not develop relationships).

Measurement

Measurement or data collection involved the development of interview guides, the establishment of an interview process, and the implementation of the interview process.

Instrument

The interview guides were developed with the consideration of two types of requirements: qualitative research and mentoring content. In terms of research requirements, the guides for the focused interviews featured open-ended questions which were similar for all individuals interviewed (Patton, 1990; Yin, 1989). In other words, question content and sequence were the same with guides for individuals in different roles having appropriate format changes.
In terms of mentoring content, the interview guides were developed following: (a) review of the literature; (b) observations of mentor training sessions, the academy for new special education administrators, and regional meetings over a two year period; (c) review of training documents; and (d) informal conversational interviews (Patton, 1990) with new administrators and mentors. Knowledge gained from review of literature and documents established the framework of the interview guides. In addition, information gathered through observation and informal conversations led to an understanding of common terminology used and experiences shared by program participants.

The interview guides addressed: initial knowledge of Project SEAM; decision to participate; initiation of the relationship; functions of the relationship; roles of the mentor, the protege, and third parties; changes in the relationship; and benefits or concerns within the relationship. The interview guide used for individuals who participated as both a mentor and a protege is located in Appendix A. Interview guides for participants who only functioned in one role or relationship were shorter in length.

**Interview Procedures**

Prior to conducting interviews, a procedure was developed to insure the anonymity and confidentiality of participants. Individuals interviewed were informed of their rights and given two copies of the informed consent form.
located in Appendix B. The participants signed and returned one copy, retaining a copy for their own information.

The actual interview process began with phone calls to the sample of prospective participants. Due to previous observations at regional and state meetings, there was prior contact with some participants. Individuals contacted by phone agreed to be interviewed and interviews were scheduled at their convenience. The interviews, with one exception, were conducted in the participant's work environment. One interview was conducted at the site of a regional meeting.

The first person interviewed in each dyad was the mentor. In triads, the individual common to each dyad was interviewed first. Each face-to-face interview was audio-taped and notes were taken throughout the interview. Notes were taken during the two telephone interviews that were conducted to collaborate face-to-face mentor interviews. Notes taken during the interviews included descriptions of the interviewee's behavior and surroundings.

At the conclusion of the interview, each individual was asked to complete a background information sheet which included: (a) current position title and time in position, (b) number of students in school division, (c) number of students with IEPs, (d) number of special education personnel, (e) previous positions and time spent in the same division, (f) previous positions and total years in special education, (g) previous positions and total years in
administration, (h) degrees completed, (i) certifications/endorsements, (j) age, and (k) gender. The administrators were asked to respond to three questions related to their personality, their strengths as a director, and their limitations as a director. This form is located in Appendix C. Following the interviews a personalized letter of appreciation was mailed to each participant. A sample letter can be found in Appendix D.

Analysis

Immediately following each interview, the audio-tape was played and additional notes taken. As soon as possible after each interview, a contact summary form (Miles & Huberman, 1994) and the first page of the interview write-up were completed. Blank versions of the contact summary form (Appendix E) and write-up form (Appendix F) are located in the Appendix. Following the completion of the two forms, the audio-tapes were given to a paid typist for transcription.

Coding

After transcripts were prepared, they were reviewed and corrections made. Transcripts were prepared in a consistent format. Transcripts included conversational events (i.e., silences, overlapping conversation, in-breaths and out-breaths) in addition to words spoken (Silverman, 1993). Initial coding involved the open coding of concepts directly on the transcripts with the highlighting of words or phrases and dividing the transcripts into segments.
related to concepts or topics.

An initial list of codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994) was developed utilizing the information from this on-transcript coding process (see Appendix G). The next step involved more extensive coding on index cards and writing reflective memos (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Coding cards were sorted into more abstract categories. This process alternated between question asking, coding, and sorting among different cases until themes and patterns were identified.

**Inter-rater Agreement**

During the coding and sorting of index cards, the initial list of codes was modified to reflect patterns and themes which emerged from the data. The revised list of codes was then used to code clean copies of transcripts. One transcript sample was coded by the researcher and by a third party. The third party had knowledge of special education, but not of administration or mentoring. The inter-rater agreement between the two parties was 80.0%. At this point, the coding list was reviewed and certain changes made. The changes either simplified the list or eliminated codes which were not distinguishable by the third party.

The revised coding list (Appendix G) and a sample transcript were then given to an individual with knowledge of special education administration and research techniques. This individual and the researcher reached agreement on
90.5% of the coded items. At this point, all transcripts were coded. The transcripts, contact summary forms, and index cards were used in answering research questions and identifying emerging themes. Matrix displays (as in Appendix H) were used for purposes of data reduction (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Summary

This study was a series of case studies of special education administrators involved in mentoring relationships. Information was gleaned from multiple sources with special emphasis on interviews of participants. A review of literature and participant observation of program components provided the foundation for the interview guides. Systematic coding and sorting of interview data (transcripts) was accomplished followed by a written narrative record.
Chapter 4

RESULTS

This chapter consists of case studies of six mentors. The cases are written in a manner recommended by Wolcott (1990) which recognizes the presence of the researcher within the study. The information is based on interactions with 11 people through six individual face-to-face interviews, one group interview, and two telephone interviews. Among the mentors there were four women and two men who ranged in age from 41 to 48 years. The proteges ranged in age from 35 to 55 and included four men and three women. Two of the women had been mentors and proteges, but at different times. Summaries of individual interviews (Appendix I), a table of mentor characteristics (Appendix J), and a graphic representation of the cases (Appendix K) are provided.

Case 1: Margaret

Margaret, a 46 year old woman with more than 20 years in the same school division, came into the directorship in special education administration in the 1993-94 academic year. She was assigned a mentor (Jean). In the 1994-95 academic year, she became a mentor for David, who was assigned as part of Project SEAM, and for Fred. Being in a school division of 17,000 students (2,500 students having IEPs), Margaret answered to a superior responsible for all student services while supervising Fred and 15 teacher specialists.
Assigned to David

Margaret was somewhat surprised when she was approached about being a mentor. "I laughed because . . . for somebody who had only been in the position for a little bit more than a year, I did not feel qualified. . . . I thought they needed somebody with a little more seasoning." However, she agreed to the task and began by contacting her protege and planning to meet him at the mentor training/management academy. The meeting times did not overlap such that they could meet. At a later date, Margaret phoned her protege and arranged a lunch meeting. She and David continued to meet for lunch on a monthly basis.

At the onset of the relationship, Margaret shared information with David about regulations which were specific to Virginia. David had 20 years experience as a special education administrator in another state, but this was his first year as a director in Virginia. Margaret and David agreed that a high point of their relationship was the joint meeting between their staffs. According to Margaret, the meeting involved presentations of "how we did business, some things we were really pleased with . . . [and] some issues that we had concerns about." The groups were "looking for interesting solutions from other people's situations or just agreeing that we both had a problem with the same things." As a result of the meeting, plans were made for the two divisions to schedule a joint staff development activity.
According to David, another high point came at their second meeting when Margaret provided him with a "copy of her . . . personal long range plan for her system." Margaret shared that 75% of her contact with David consisted of one-to-one meetings. The remainder of the time consisted of activities such as the joint staff meeting. David asked for and received help from Margaret in preparing the annual plan (an important document required by the state education agency). David did not identify any drawbacks or less than satisfactory aspects of their relationship. He identified two benefits of their relationship: "I gain from her experience and . . . I am able to see that other people have the same problems that I do."

Margaret revealed that the least satisfactory event in the relationship also occurred at the event that was considered a high point:

when we brought the two staffs together. . . . I could sense from his staff, and his staff in fact communicated with my staff, that they weren't very happy with their work environment, and their school system just . . . didn't have it together. They were in a sense not pleased with his leadership.

This was disconcerting for Margaret as she: "hadn't necessarily gotten that out of our conversations." She added, "Maybe it's something that I can be of some use to him, if we could get to that as an issue, but it also limits what I hoped would be an opportunity to learn from his district."
Along those same lines, Margaret felt that: “mostly the give is on our part and we don’t . . . have the give or take, . . . maybe that’s my role as a mentor, to do more of the giving.” Another concern Margaret voiced was that she was “not sure what he is getting out of it.” When I specifically asked Margaret about benefits, she said:

I think that you always have benefit just by being able to talk to somebody who’s going through essentially the same issues . . . that you are . . . because there is nobody else in the school system with comparable concerns. Somebody who is director of special education because . . . that’s a singleton . . . position. It’s nice to be able to . . . share frustrations . . . with somebody else . . . that is helpful. I don’t know if it’s really constructive . . . but it’s nice to . . . beef about things.

Margaret stated, “Time is the drawback . . . and it’s an additional responsibility.”

**Relationship with Fred**

During the course of the interview, Margaret revealed that she was mentoring someone within her system. When Margaret learned of the management academy and the mentoring program, she shared the information with Fred. He attended the management academy at Margaret’s urging, but was not listed on any of the program materials prepared by Department of Education personnel. Fred was assigned to Margaret after she brought him to
the attention of Project SEAM coordinators. Fred and Margaret agreed that the mentoring aspect of their relationship would have existed whether it was assigned or not.

Margaret felt that "being a supervisor is being a mentor . . . that is part of the style I use to supervise people." She included Fred in some of the luncheon meetings with David. Her best experience with Fred was watching his growth. Her mentoring of Fred was "as a supervisor of special education but also . . . as an administrator in the system." In addition:

the other thing that's more rewarding . . . I have been with [this] school system for 24 years, I have a . . . commitment to this system, so my commitment to the system makes me more invested in him. He's in my office, he is part of my program, he's part of my school system, so how he evolves . . . impacts me. The better I make him, the more opportunity I have to share some responsibility.

In identifying the least satisfactory aspect(s), Margaret said that there might have been "a very little bit of frustration . . . of wanting him to come up to speed faster." In addition, she felt that she could not "drop the mentoring supervisory role completely with him" and admit to feelings of total frustration because he was part of her team. However, she could admit those feelings to David, because he was not employed in her system.
Margaret drew comparisons between the two relationships. According to her, she got a better sense of Fred's growth because she could observe his performance. She met with Fred more frequently than with David. She met with Fred twice a month for lunch and they had "a regular habit of dropping in on each other." With Fred Margaret noted:

what's more important to me . . . is how he does business on a day-to-day basis . . . I'm trying to set a tone and a climate for this office, and he is very much a part of that . . .

That . . . plays very little into my other . . . relationship.

Margaret had responded earlier in the interview that her relationship with David had not changed over the course of the year. However, in speaking of Fred, she said, "It has evolved into a closer relationship . . . more like a partnership."

According to Fred, he and Margaret "have known each other for many years, [and] already have a lot of respect for each other." He made a distinction between supervision and mentoring. Fred described mentoring in the following way:

Margaret and I have lunch together a couple times a month and it's often at those times that we don't talk about real specific cases . . . We talk about . . . how I'm doing with the job, and how I'm feeling . . . My first year has been difficult . . . Margaret has played a real important part in
helping me begin to wear my job, rather than my job wearing me.

The most helpful aspects for Fred were "having sessions with Margaret where I can vent . . . and ask questions about frustrations that I'm having either with myself or with the work" and "watching her operate" in difficult situations. He identified the following key benefits: "helping me keep my perspective and my sense of humor, and helping me . . . learn to do triage." The low points of the relationship for Fred came when he or Margaret had "to cancel . . . scheduled times . . . [due to] the demands of the job." At that point in the interview, Fred shared that he had another mentor - Margaret's boss, Linda. Linda's role was one of valuing Fred. He felt "support, glad to have you here . . . never a sense of criticism" from Linda.

Case Summary

Margaret, David, and Fred do not typify classical mentor relationships on the basis of their gender and ages. The female mentor and male protege pair is not typical in the literature (Bolton, 1980; Collins, 1983; Levinson et al., 1978). David was 9 years older than Margaret and she was only 1 year older than Fred. Typically, mentors have been older than their proteges, usually by 8 to 15 years (Levinson, et al., 1978). Likewise, David is a protege with experience in the field although not in that specific position.

As Margaret pointed out, there were some differences between the two
relationships. However, in addition to the difference in the matter of assignment, there were differences in systems. David was a colleague in another system, while Fred was a subordinate in the same system. Margaret's perceived role in Fred's development was to facilitate his socialization into the administrative role and into his place on her team. Mentoring is a recognized means for facilitating the socialization of individuals into their positions (Schein, 1978; Van Maanen, 1975). Likewise, the benefits of an in-system mentoring relationship are reflected in Zey (1991): the protege helps the mentor with the job, at the same time, the organization has a "smoothly functioning managerial team" and a "properly socialized employee" (p. 10).

Although mentors and proteges are typically in the same organization, Pence (1989) has described assigned mentoring programs for administrators in which the mentor and protege are not in the same system. That author has noted that proteges may be more comfortable asking questions because their mentors are in different systems.

Case 2: Jean

Jean was a 42 year old woman with approximately 20 years experience in the same school division, 4 1/2 years as the director of special education. She worked with five supervisory staff in a school division of more than 18,000 students. Of those students, 2,068 had IEPs. She was assigned as a mentor in Project SEAM for 1993-94 (Margaret) and 1994-95 (Rhonda). Margaret and
Rhonda were employed by other school divisions in Jean's region. According to Jean, she had a mentor assigned to her about four years before; however, Project SEAM was not in place at that time.

**Assigned to Margaret**

Jean was asked to be a mentor and agreed. At the beginning of the mentorship, Jean's initial thoughts were that the program was helpful. She "felt very positive about it." Of her relationship with Margaret, Jean said they had: "the opportunities to discuss . . . I would say both fiscal as well as . . . headaches types . . . 'this is happening . . . what would you do in this situation?' . . . I always said . . . if you have a question, I am available." Jean mentioned, "One of the drawbacks is . . . when you get into directors and you are learning the job . . . you may have some needs [yet] sometimes those needs may not be addressed because you are in a react mode." During a later portion of the interview, Jean referred back to the relationship with Margaret: "Last year most of our contact was by phone . . . occasionally they stay" after the meeting. From the context of her comments, Jean seemed to be referring to the attendance by Margaret and her staff at the regional directors' meetings.

When Margaret was asked about her relationship with Jean, she said, "The woman and I never made contact . . . I never spoke with my mentor at all." With further questioning, she stated, "We played telephone tag, maybe two rounds and . . . that was it. I haven't met the woman yet." I asked Margaret
who she relied on as a sounding board. She referred to two individuals at the state Department of Education: the technical assistant for her region and the compliance officer. During Margaret's interview, I asked about the regional directors' meetings. Her reply was: "I attend those on occasion, but I really have never found them very helpful. . . . [We] have a different group of people there all the time . . . because, like in this department, people . . . take turns going to them."

Assigned to Rhonda

Jean described her relationship with Rhonda during the current year:

'We have had the opportunity to have more . . . formalized meetings than last year. . . . This year we have our regional directors' meetings once a month, and she always comes early and stays late and we have a chance to sit down and talk about what's going on and . . . she calls me on the phone as well. . . . I've given her information on . . . this is how we're doing it.'

She added:

'It has been more structured this year, but I think if I see a difference between the two experiences it's because of what the person is bringing to the position and how they feel about it. . . . If you're feeling somewhat comfortable with administration . . . here's another administrative hat I am wearing and who are
my supports.

Answering a question about the most helpful aspect of the mentoring relationship, Jean said, "I've told . . . the people . . . what you're feeling is quite normal. . . . [I try] to reassure a person that . . . it's just growing pains that the longer you do it you will feel more comfortable with your decisions." In response to a question about the typical mentoring experience, Jean described a general process for problem solving: identifying the issue, listing options, and so forth.

According to Jean, the key benefit of the mentoring relationship for her was: "the availability of a colleague . . . in a similar role with similar responsibilities and being able to share and reflect on the decisions that you have to make." One of the drawbacks would be "feeling as though you are not being as much of a support as you can be." Jean said that one word she would use to describe a good mentor-protege relationship was "approachable."

With the discrepancy between Jean's and Margaret's accounts, I contacted Rhonda and asked her to describe her mentoring experience. During the telephone interview, she described Jean as a "positive resource" and a "contact person." Specifically, Rhonda reported going early on one occasion to the regional meeting and "just talking" with Jean for about ten minutes on another occasion. Rhonda never received any calls from Jean and "didn't expect any." At one point Rhonda surveyed the directors in her region concerning budgeting. Jean was one of a number of directors who responded.
Rhonda would have preferred a relationship that included either reflecting upon her job performance with, or being trained by, her mentor. She stated that information was available from other resources or databases, but that new directors needed someone with whom they could brainstorm and bounce ideas. Rhonda called on individuals with specific expertise within her own school system for assistance, but she had no one for overall support. Rhonda commented that she needed someone who could have walked her through the process of developing the annual plan.

Rhonda felt that Jean was busy and always in a rush. Rhonda’s perception of Jean was that she “felt like I was using too much of her time” and that Jean’s manner indicated that her time was not for Rhonda. In Rhonda’s words, a good mentor should be a “reflective listener, willing to share, and flexible enough to give back.”

**Case Summary**

The perceptions of the mentor and the proteges differ in this case. Neither protege feels that her expectations were met; however, the mentor reports being involved in positive relationships. There are two possible explanations for this discrepancy: (a) Jean was not completely honest or (b) Jean defined mentoring as information sharing. In Rhonda’s case, her expectations of a mentoring relationship included brainstorming, reflecting, and training activities. The difficulty in the relationship with Rhonda and the lack of a
relationship with Margaret reinforces certain recommendations made about formal programs. Among these recommendations are: insuring the time and commitment on the part of the mentor, clarifying expectations of both parties going into the relationship, and monitoring pairs to enable re-assignments or transfers when necessary (Phillips-Jones, 1983).

There are two descriptions in the literature which may describe Jean's relationship with Rhonda. One of these is the responder style of mentoring conceptualized by Huling-Austin (1990). The responder mentor provides assistance when asked, but does not initiate assistance or contact. Secondly, Jean's role in her relationship with Rhonda is similar to the information peer identified by Kram and Isabella (1985). The relationship between information peers is based on the exchange of job-related information and involves little self-disclosure or development of trust. Contact is typically infrequent for information peer relationships.

Case 3: Sarah

Sarah, a 41 year old woman, was in her sixteenth year as a special education administrator and in her seventh year in the present school division. Sarah was assigned as a mentor for the 1993-94 academic year. Her school division had approximately 9,000 students with 1,200 of those students receiving special education services. Sarah has served in a leadership role among special education administrators at the regional level.
Assigned to Amanda

Sarah had heard that "there was going to be a mentor program for new special ed[ucation] directors." Her involvement began when she was contacted by the state Department of Education and was asked to be a mentor. There were four new directors in her regional area that particular year. Her initial thoughts were:

kind of mixed bag . . . I wasn't sure that I really wanted to get involved because if it was not well planned or thought out . . . it could be a waste of time . . . I also thought it would be a good idea because I had mentored a couple of other . . . directors informally . . . and I thought it does need to be done. . . . I thought it was good, and . . . overwhelming.

Sarah revealed: "I was asked to do a different school division initially and I refused because I knew . . . that school division . . . I could very well direct that director into a difference of opinion . . . [from] their superintendent and their division."

Likewise, Amanda, as the protege, was ambivalent about the relationship initially:

. . . had mixed feelings. I was pleased . . . that there was someone . . . if I had a question about special ed[ucation]. . . . I think it's a little difficult when you don't know that person
and you're in a busy job already so it's real hard . . . to utilize
that person. . . . I . . . relied more on my in-house staff.

In addition to relying on her in-house staff, Amanda felt that it was necessary to
develop a rapport with the mentor and become comfortable with her before the
relationship could be effective. She added, " . . . at that level you . . . talk about
surface issues. I think if you develop a sense of confidence and trust in that
individual then . . . you're going to get into stickier issues . . . talking about
decisions and . . . strategies."

Sarah was impressed by her protege: "Amanda Barnes is just an
exceptional person to begin with. I don't know if I mentored her a whole lot
except she knew I was there." Their first contact came when Sarah called
Amanda and set up a meeting. Sarah and Amanda described the meeting as
Sarah visiting Amanda's school division and their going to lunch together. From
then on, the contact was mostly through phone calls, regional meetings, and
occasional lunches following the regional meetings.

The first assistance that Amanda asked for was "general survival
strategies." Sarah shared with Amanda "some resources I thought she should
connect up with." Amanda described these as "resources that were available,
[and] organizations that were helpful to belong to." The women shared that
Amanda's first year involved what Sarah called "real significant issues" including
an administrative review in the Fall, due process cases, and an investigation by
the Office of Civil Rights.

Asked to describe the best thing that Sarah did for Amanda, Sarah said, "It was really minute, I think it was the fact that . . . I told her she needed to get some good legal help and not to rely on the legal assistance of the city." She shared with Amanda the name of an attorney and gave her assistance in presenting a case for expert legal assistance before the school board. According to Amanda, the best aspect of the mentoring was "the friendship that developed . . . a professional friendship." She added that it is "good to hear that you're not out there by yourself that . . . everybody [in the regional group] is . . . dealing with the same kind of issues."

The only least satisfactory or "disheartening" aspect of the mentoring for Sarah was that "you always feel like you should have spent more time . . . with the person." For Amanda, the difficulty was related to the nature of their jobs, the least satisfying aspect was "playing phone tag."

The benefit of the relationship for Sarah stemmed from Amanda and the resources of her larger school division. Sarah described the relationship as one of "give and take." By working together and with their regional group, they were able to deal with a particular group of "carpetbaggers" who were "gouging" the school divisions in terms of related services. Sarah's division provided information on Medicaid and Amanda's staff assisted with a program for students with severe and profound disabilities. The drawbacks for Sarah were
"very little . . . maybe not enough time for each other and the distance"

between divisions.

Sarah and Amanda discussed their current relationship. According to
Sarah, "We've become friends, closer friends and she's somebody that I feel
confident to discuss issues with." Their relationship had "continued to grow and
develop into more respect" with Sarah "leaning on . . . [Amanda] to find out
things." In Amanda's words: "We've become much more comfortable with each
other and . . . we've been able to identify the strengths between the two of us
and know what resources to pull from."

Relationships with Others

Sarah described her experience of mentoring individuals from a school
division near her former division. The particular division tended to hire
inexperienced persons for the director's position. Sarah described offering
assistance to:

a social worker who didn't want the job but . . . she retired there.

. . . She called me frequently. . . . After that they put in a LD
teacher . . . she lasted one year. We tried to work together,
but the girl just did not like . . . [the job]. I would say that I gave
her a great deal of help. . . . Then they hired a girl who was from
corrections . . . I remember calling her and . . . saying . . . if you
need any help let me know and that really meant a lot to her. . . .
After her came the psychologist . . . and now they've hired a visiting teacher so I have been doing all of them along the way . . . up until now.

In addition, Sarah "did a little bit" with the person who took her former position. That relationship did not develop, according to Sarah, because: "my heart was in [the school division] and I felt like everything she did was wrong . . . I knew that was not true and . . . I needed to . . . let her do it her way".

Case Summary

This relationship indicates that an assigned relationship can be mutually beneficial when the individuals involved develop a level of confidence and trust in one another. This confidence seems to be based on the abilities and competency of both parties. The protege is unlikely to put her trust in a mentor who is not skilled at her job. Likewise, the mentor benefits from a protege who shows initiative and skill. This relationship seems to reflect Zey's (1991) conclusion that: "a crucial component of the mentor relationship is the ability to work together. This ability is a multifaceted characteristic that involves the broad elements of mutual trust, respect, and a belief in each other's ability to perform competently" (p. 173).

Case 4: Amanda

Amanda, a 45 year old woman, had 23 years experience in a single school division. Amanda had spent seventeen of those years in administration
but was in her second year as a special education administrator. During her first year in special education administration, Sarah served as Amanda's assigned mentor. For the 1994-95 academic year, Amanda was assigned to mentor Mark. Her school division was made up of 34,200 students with 4211 students having IEPs. She had nine individuals in her supervisory staff.

 Assigned to Mark

Amanda shared how the assigned mentorship with Mark began: "I received a letter requesting that I serve as a mentor... I certainly didn't mind doing it." Her initial thoughts were:

My first question was, this is only my second year in the job, are you sure?... although I felt like we had been through just about everything... that first year... I guess the biggest concern I had was the distance and we did talk about that but they... felt like that because of the sizes of our school divisions that would be beneficial.

The distance between Amanda and Mark's offices required from 1 1/2 to 2 hours of travel time and was the largest distance between any assigned pair.

Amanda was "embarrassed to say" that she and Mark did not "have much of a relationship." According to Amanda:

We've played phone tag... I did go to the meeting... at Ashland [mentor training] and unfortunately the person that
I was mentoring didn't come until late and could only stay about an hour. . . . We did talk briefly during a break, but I think at the . . . time this . . . person had been in the department just in a different level of responsibility . . . I got the sense . . . that things were going really well and that . . . if he needed me he'd give me a call.

She had assumed that things were "going real well" for Mark. She added: "I called a number of times . . . [and] said I'm here if you need me . . . if you want me to come up or . . . if you have a question." Amanda and Mark were in different regional groups. According to Mark, he had not experienced any significant problems and had not required assistance from his mentor. He stated that he knew the support was available if he needed it.

Amanda said she would have felt better about the relationship if she had done some things differently. First of all, she would have approached Mark in terms of what she could learn from him. Specifically, "there are a couple things that if I had it to do over, I might at least offer to do and then . . . if I was told no then certainly back off." Looking back, she would have offered to visit his school division and his regional meeting.

Earlier in the interview, Amanda shared that she used her own staff as resources and mentors during her first year. In discussing Mark, she said: "I think . . . [he] has the same kind of situation that I do . . . there's lots of support
within . . . [his] division." She commented further that if "you have people you can count on and you have a really busy job, it makes a much faster way to deal with an issue than trying to build a relationship with someone."

Mark volunteered that he used in-house resources. He had a staff of eleven specialists in five areas, only one area of which was special education. He saw his superintendent as a mentor to an extent. In addition, Mark had access to an in-house staff development program which included a mentoring component.

Relationships with Others

Amanda benefited from informal mentoring during the course of her career. Her first experience was the principal who allowed her, as a teacher, to "dabble into everything" from the master schedule to new programs. She felt that she had "a real strong mentor . . . that . . . sort of found me. . . . he was the one that twisted my arm to leave the classroom" for administration. She added, "He never made my job easy, he's always made it challenging . . . [he] saw a spark in me and has really pushed me to the limit."

As a principal, Amanda had reached out to beginning principals and encouraged "teachers or . . . assistant principals . . . [who] had good leadership ability . . . to go to school and get training. I tried to put them in situations in my building that would give them leadership, management experience." In terms of her staff as a director of special education, she stated:
There's good people I'm pushing because I don't want to lose them but I think they're too good to be locked in here. ... We're picking ... what they want to do in terms of career and we're talking about what their strengths are and what areas we need to work on.

Amanda compared assigned and unassigned mentoring relationships: "I think the informal ones for me personally have been better ... you ... find people that you respect." In that case, according to Amanda, "You've already developed a sense of respect ... and a level of confidence in that individual ... you've already gotten through that [first] layer." Amanda described an informal relationship which she felt would be a rarity in an assigned relationship: "We will spill our guts to each other and I am 100% confident that it never goes anywhere else and she feels the same way about me."

**Case Summary**

This case exemplifies the issue of proximity in assigned mentoring programs. When mentors are assigned in different school systems, there is already the lack of frequent, unscheduled contact which is available when the pairs are in the same systems. In this case, the chance of meeting at a regional meeting is absent. Proximity has been recognized as being critical in assigned relationships (Daresh & Playko, 1989).

In this case, Amanda and Mark seemed to perceive that Mark did not
need the assistance of an outside mentor. This may be related to two factors: his access to in-house resources and the absence of significant problems or concerns. However, Amanda feels that she should have taken more initiative in the relationship. With her informal relationships she describes mentors, including herself, who encourage and challenge their proteges. This type of mentor is described by Huling-Austin (1990) as an initiator.

Case 5: James

James, a man in his forties, was a special education administrator for 13 years in the same school division. Prior to his tenure as a special education director, James was a visiting teacher. James was involved in a leadership role at regional and state levels within the special education administration community. James and Bob were assigned as George’s mentors for 1994-95. Bob is an assistant supervisor of special education in James’ office. The school division served by both men had approximately 6,300 students with 970 of those having IEPs. James attended the mentor training and the management academy sponsored by the state Department of Education. These three gentlemen were interviewed as a group which allowed for observation of their interaction. The interview took place immediately following a regional meeting.

Assigned to George

James anticipated a difficult eligibility meeting later that afternoon and was interviewed first in order for him to return to his school division. Asked
about the mentoring program, James said: "I'd been made aware of the
program for a couple of years... this past year it was at the request of...
state ed[ucation] folks" that he became a mentor. James had these thoughts
about the program:

a good thing and i wish i had it available to me when i was
coming along... [However], being the person to provide some
assistance, even though thinking it was a good thing, it also will
add... a lot to what i'm doing now... Some questions about how
effective i am... hesitancy about largely the time it might take to
keep my head above water as it is... but feeling that it is important
and... planning to do my part.

I asked James to describe the type of activities or events that had
happened during the mentorship. He was hesitant and responded:

I have not put a lot of time into it or felt like probably the person
receiving my help may perceive it [as] pretty limited... what i
have tried to do... would be at least make it known, give me
a call, I'll be glad to talk it over with you.

He added, "Initiating a lot of things or... coming in and looking over shoulders
... was not... [what] we intended to do, but we... wanted to... say, 'You
are not going to impose on us to give us a call'."

I asked if James and George had known each other before they were
assigned. They reported knowing each other over the telephone. In his previous position, George was an assistant administrator in a residential program. In terms of concerns, James related that his biggest concern was in finding time for the relationship. Due to the time factor, most of their communication was by phone. George interjected, "and these meetings have helped too." James agreed that the contact at regional meetings facilitated regular communication. George added that the relationship "ends up being more or less a permanent arrangement" when the individuals are part of the same regional group.

According to James, the relationship had not been:

formalized and I'm not sure I would advise that, because the
new person is going . . . to be . . . snowed under . . .
and to . . . take time out to fill out forms and be formal about
it . . . that's going to add more stress and . . . time is going
to be an issue.

James revealed: "The first year was the worst year of my life. it put me under, because I was not familiar with administration." He added: "You run a real risk of . . . losing some fairly capable people if you don't give them some support early on." James continued: "I really feel . . . the special education administrative position is one of the tougher administrative positions in the school division. . . . You can't afford to mess up." George commented:

But . . . even in my place . . . I'm extensively trained in this,
but I just, for example, spent the last two days re-submitting tuition reimbursement requests and Title VI-B... [requests]... it's a matter of not putting the numbers in the right column.

... You... certainly learn a lot of things by the back of the hand.

In terms of seeking a mentor, James felt that the protege should feel free to contact the mentor and "would expect to have some direction" when they asked for an opinion. George added that the desired mentor "would have a high probability of having similar experiences and I think that our school divisions are similar enough by virtue of being in the same geographic region, the same special ed[ucation] region, same state."

James shared that he had not been involved in any other formal mentoring programs. He expressed his thoughts on the flexibility of the assigned program:

The state did have a pretty good... conference. It outlined some things that have been helpful... Time, I think they understood is of the essence. They presented information and gave us opportunity to take it as far as we felt comfortable in doing it and didn't require a whole lot of time beyond that but yet gave us the option to go with it as far as we wanted to which... I appreciated.

George agreed:
at least on one occasion you did just call me and . . . say
. . . "How're things? Is there anything new going?" and we had
talked a half dozen times before that about substantive issues
. . . I think that's as much prompting as anybody deserves
maybe or needs. . . . I think that the state has been somewhat
wise about backing off from it and saying, "Here's a relationship
that you could have if you want, we'll formalize it by paying for
you both to come to this conference where you take it from there
. . . is up to you."

At this point, James had to leave. As he left, he joked about contacting George
later and asking for advice on the hot topic he was leaving to address.

Case Summary

James reflected ambivalence initially. He recognized the needs of a first
year person, but questioned if he would be able to find time to meet those
needs. Uncertainty has been identified before as an initial feeling in assigned
pairs (Keller, 1994). James recognized that a protege must feel comfortable in
approaching the mentor and seemed to understand the need for a mentor to be
receptive and helpful which are identified characteristics of mentors (Gaskill,
1993; Gray & Gray, 1985; Murray & Owen, 1991). James's protege stressed the
importance of matching similar experiences through matching school divisions
which are similar in size, geographic location, and regional grouping. These
matching considerations are reflected in other studies of assigned mentoring with educational administrators (Cobble, 1993; Keller, 1994; Pence, 1989).

James and George stressed the importance of flexibility. Structured flexibility provides the freedom necessary for each relationship to develop according to individuals who have established formal mentoring programs (Farren et al., 1984; Phillips-Jones, 1983; Walker & Stott, 1994).

Case 6: Bob

Bob, a 48 year old man, had been in a position as assistant supervisor of special education for five years. He had a background of 17 years as an elementary principal and 1 year as a visiting teacher prior to entering special education administration. Bob was assigned as a mentor along with James, but did not attend the mentor training. He was present at the group interview with James and George.

Assigned to George

Earlier in the interview, Bob agreed with a statement by James that special education administration was one of the tougher administrative jobs in education. He also echoed James' comments that a mentor should be accessible. He added: "If you're tied up a particular day... a person calls at least you should try to get back to them as soon as possible."

Initially, Bob liked the idea of the mentoring program and "felt that we could probably learn from George as well as our experiences." George added
that his initial reaction was: "I'll take anything I can get and . . . my experience led me to not be . . . naive" in terms of thinking he was trained and could handle the job without assistance.

I asked Bob and George to describe their typical mentoring interactions. George labelled their experience as "information sharing and experience . . . sharing in a similar situation this is what happened with us . . . We've had . . . those situations of saying . . . this has never happened exactly like that but we think it sounds like this." Bob referred to advising George in terms of the best practice response to situations. George and Bob, in overlapping conversation, described the benefits of the relationship for George as having the opportunity to check things out before doing them. Bob called the mentoring interactions a "safeguard." George added that mentoring increased his confidence, while Bob added that it increased knowledge.

According to Bob, he and James learned from George's experiences: "I know of a couple [situations] that . . . [George] called us about this year that we had not had that happen in our division. . . . We actually were in the learning chair at that point." George added that his mentors would be better prepared when the same thing happened to them. The men were not able to identify any drawbacks as the matching of their school divisions allowed for similar experiences. Bob reassured George that the relationship had not "been a drain" on either of the mentors. George referred to the relationship as being able to
"discuss things out loud that might help all of us."

Regarding the future, Bob and George agreed that they would continue calling one another and conferring with each other at the regional meetings. According to Bob, "This . . . [is] to me the most worthwhile meeting that I ever go to, to get the very latest from state department, to share, I think that's the word share." George referred to the regional directors' meeting as a "support group." In addition, George had called on his former boss and his trainer in special education administration as informal mentors.

George commented that every first year administrator in special education should have someone "designated to check with." Bob agreed: "I would echo those same sentiments that first year everyone should be assigned a mentor." They agreed on another point: the relationships should not involve evaluation of the protege. George volunteered:

I don't think it cost the state department anything. I think it has the opportunity to be helpful for everybody involved including the persons who are doing the mentoring because it establishes the possibility of a colleague relationship. If the forethought is there about who you match with whom . . . then you may have done something for . . . a significant . . . extended period of time, long beyond the identified mentoring period. . . . You've created an aspect of network that isn't going
to go away.

**Mentored by James**

During the interview, Bob shared:

As an elementary principal, I did not have a mentor. I had to trial and error . . . jump right in . . . and in this position when I moved in . . . 5 years ago, I had a cohort [James] in the same office that I was able . . . [to] compare notes or say have you had this happen before.

Concerning his relationship with James, Bob said, "it was a big help and I think that's another reason that we were willing to help . . . one of our friends out because we'd been through that for ourselves." He stated that having two individuals in the office made the sharing of responsibilities possible. Later in the interview, Bob responded:

I had the luxury of having the person next door to me. So I've used the same person in the same division that I'm from rather than out of the division. If he had not had the experience of what I was asking, he or I would call another person in our region.

George added that Bob knew that he was not going to have the option of an experienced special education administrator in his school division. George was replacing "somebody who had been in the position for a long time as a single administrator." He stated, "I hope it will change at sometime in the future
and ... I will have the opportunity to train someone else who will come in and assist me."

Case Summary
In terms of program development, it has been recommended that mechanisms for mentor accessibility be implemented to deal with the problems of limited time, conflicting work schedules, and geographic distance in assigned programs (Kelley, 1994; Moore, 1982; Noe, 1988). It appears that regular regional directors' meetings may be such a mechanism for mentor accessibility with special education administrators.

The protege and mentors in this case seem satisfied with the relationship. It appears that it met their expectations. Again, it seems that a mutual understanding of and agreement to expectations is important in assigned relationships (Phillips-Jones, 1983). In this situation, the benefits appear to be mutual and similar to those identified by Ashby (1991) in a study of principals and their mentors from other school systems: (a) professional renewal, (b) decreased feelings of isolation, and (c) expanded informal networks.

Summary
This chapter has provided descriptions of the assigned and unassigned relationships of six mentors. Two mentors were involved in assigned relationships which did not develop. A number of contextual factors may have
affected these relationships: (a) proximity, (b) size of school system, (c) attendance at regional directors’ meetings, (d) access to other resources, (e) whether mentor and protege were employed by the same or different school systems, and (f) whether mentors served as peers or supervisors.

Personal characteristics of mentors and proteges emerged as factors in each relationship. Functions and benefits of these relationships were identified. Drawbacks of assigned and unassigned relationships were noted. The mentors had varied experiences in special education, administration, and mentoring relationships. Whether man or woman, unassigned or assigned, successful or unsuccessful, there is something to be learned from each case. The following chapter will look specifically at the types of relationships and the unique or commonplace features of each.
Chapter 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter begins by addressing research questions and disclosing emerging patterns and themes. Previous studies are addressed in relation to the research questions and themes which emerged from this study. The conclusions section discusses mentoring in general and the mentoring of special education administrators. The recommendations address assigned mentoring programs and future research.

Discussion

The research questions are answered through analysis of individual cases and cross-case analyses. The analysis for each research question involved coding of individual transcripts and recording of data on a matrix. Several themes emerged in addition to those generated by the research questions.

Research Questions

Each type of relationship (assigned, unassigned, and assigned which did not develop) is described below. Assigned and unassigned relationships are compared. Assigned relationships which developed are compared to those that did not develop.

Question 1. Relationships between first year administrators and assigned mentors. Mentors were selected and matched with proteges based on
geographic proximity and recommendations by the Technical Assistant
assigned to their regional group. None of the six mentors in this study reported
volunteering for the mentorship. They were asked to serve as a mentor by
representatives from the state Department of Education. With one exception,
y they agreed to be assigned. One mentor refused an assignment because of
differences in philosophy with the school division of the potential protege.

Four of the six mentors and one protege recalled ambivalent feelings
prior to beginning the relationship. The mentors agreed that the mentorship
could be beneficial to the proteges and should be done. However, they
expressed concerns about their own abilities to mentor due to the demands on
their time and the responsibility involved. Two of the mentors were in only their
second year as special education administrators and questioned their own level
of experience and knowledge. Amanda, a protege, voiced her opinion that it
was time consuming to build a relationship while taking on a new and difficult
position. She expressed the need to build a level of confidence and trust before
seriously considering the mentor's advice and assistance.

Four of the six mentors were involved in assigned relationships which
developed and continued. Of these four mentors, two initiated contact with their
assigned proteges which resulted in face-to-face meetings. Margaret and David
met for lunch on a monthly basis. These meetings constituted 75% of their
contact. At their first meeting, Sarah visited Amanda's school division and had
lunch. According to Amanda, 98% of her contact with Sarah was through the "regional meetings or the fax machine." Sarah reported going to lunch with Amanda following the regional meetings and having phone contact. James and Bob had regular communication with George through phone calls and regional meetings. They had not initiated a scheduled meeting, but were responsive to George's requests for assistance.

With the exception of Margaret, the mentors or their proteges commented that regular communication at the regional directors' meetings facilitated their relationships. In Margaret's case, the regional directors' group was viewed as not helpful and was not attended regularly. Margaret's one-to-one meetings with her assigned protege were on a monthly basis. Sarah, James, and Bob saw their proteges at least once a month at the regional meetings.

The assistance offered by the mentors ranged from specific information to general survival strategies. In terms of specific information, mentors guided proteges in developing their annual plan, following state regulations, presenting budgets, and interpreting legal issues. George used his mentors to address the "nuts and bolts" issues that were not covered at the management academy. Amanda asked her mentor to provide her with "general survival strategies." Margaret assisted David with long range planning. James and Bob provided George with best practice scenarios. Sarah shared her network of resources.
with Amanda: legal experts, contact persons, and organizations she should join.

In two of the relationships, the mentors and proteges facilitated interaction between their school divisions. Margaret and David brought their staffs together for joint activities. Sarah and Amanda shared staff resources with one another. Amanda commented that the sharing and interaction with Sarah spread to their entire regional group.

Benefits were identified for proteges and mentors. Proteges listed the following benefits: increased knowledge, increased confidence, and establishment of a network. Benefits for both parties stemmed from having contact with someone in the same position. Mutual benefits included: brainstormed solutions to common problems, pooled resources, stress reduction, improved coping, and protection from unwise decisions.

The drawbacks for mentors were the time investment and the feeling that they could have done more. A drawback for proteges was the difficulty of accessing the mentor (i.e., playing phone tag) due to the hectic nature of their positions. Appropriate matching was an issue. If the pair had similar size school divisions, were in the same regional group, and were in close geographic proximity; there were few difficulties. One mentor, Margaret, did not feel that she was learning with her protege.

The evolution of each relationship varied. Margaret and David reported no change in their relationship but changes in the topics that they discussed.
Amanda and Sarah reported a relationship which evolved into a professional friendship with both parties assisting one another. Having known one another over the phone prior to the relationship, George and his mentors developed a face-to-face relationship. In all but one of these relationships, the mentors reached a point of viewing their proteges as sources of information and support. All of the mentors and proteges in the successful relationships anticipated that their relationships would continue to some extent. The continuation would be dependent upon a mechanism for regular contact either through regional meetings or mentor-initiated meetings.

Ambivalent feelings prior to the relationship (Keller, 1994), the expectation that the mentor is experienced and knowledgeable (Cobble, 1993; Keller, 1994), and the eventual development of assigned relationships are recognized in other studies (Cobble, 1993; Keller, 1994). Mutual benefits to educational administrators in mentoring relationships have been identified (Daresh & Playko, 1989; Ashby, 1991). The importance of matching (school division size, geographic proximity, and availability of mentor) in assigned relationships has been discussed by other authors (Cobble, 1993; Keller, 1994; Pence, 1989).

**Question 2. Relationships between first year administrators and unassigned mentors.** The majority of the unassigned relationships described by mentors and proteges involved individuals employed by the same school.
division. There were two exceptions. In a prior position Sarah offered assistance and support to a series of new directors in another school division. George identified two mentors in addition to his assigned mentors: his university trainer and his former boss. Three of the mentors and one protege had mentored individuals within their own school divisions. Three mentors and two proteges described having a mentor who was a supervisor or co-worker.

Typically, the potential mentor and protege worked together and knew one another. The mentor was the protege's supervisor or in a superior administrative position. In the case of a direct supervisor and protege, such as Margaret and Fred, mentoring involved the socialization of the employee into the new role. The concern of the mentor was the manner in which the protege performed his or her job duties. In Margaret's case, she took time to have lunch with Fred on a biweekly basis. According to Fred, it was at these meetings that Margaret discussed his general concerns and feelings about the new position.

In the case of an administrative superior, not necessarily the direct supervisor, the protege was encouraged to move into a new role. The mentoring aspect of the relationship began when the mentor recognized the protege's leadership potential. Frequently, the protege was a teacher who was urged to enter the field of administration by the mentor. Amanda described having and being such a mentor. The mentors provided proteges with opportunities to gain experience, assisted them in setting career goals,
challenged them to try out new skills, and facilitated their exposure.

Proteges and mentors benefited from the unassigned relationships. Proteges observed mentors as they were involved in difficult issues. They also had access to someone who answered their questions and listened to their concerns. Fred stated that Margaret assisted him in keeping his perspective and his sense of humor. She also taught him how to sort out and prioritize issues. His other mentor, Margaret's boss, supported and valued him. Mentors benefited from the relationship as their proteges learned more quickly and took on more of the mentor's workload. At least one mentor expressed pleasure at watching the protege's growth.

The only least satisfactory aspect of the unassigned relationship identified by a protege was having to cancel scheduled meetings with the mentor due to demands of the job. A drawback mentioned for pairs within the same school division was the lack of exposure to other perspectives. Margaret as a mentor and supervisor commented that she could not admit her frustrations to her protege because of being his supervisor.

The unassigned pairs reported becoming closer with the relationships becoming more like partnerships. The mentors and proteges stated that their relationships would continue, especially if they remained in the same school division.

These unassigned relationships demonstrate the career enhancement
and intentional role model components of mentoring (Burke, 1984; Jacobi, 1991). In these relationships, mentors are involved in furthering their proteges' careers. There is also an opportunity for the proteges to observe their mentors in action as they work in the same system. Several authors have mentioned the benefit to mentors of seeing the protege grow and develop (Burke, 1984; Daresh & Playko, 1992; Keller, 1994; Maddex, 1993; Murray & Owen, 1991).

However, one identified benefit (Burke, 1984; Daresh & Playko, 1992; Keller, 1994; Murray & Owen) is less likely to occur in relationships within the same system: the exposure to ideas from other school systems.

**Question 3. Assigned relationships that did not develop.** Three assigned relationships, two with the same mentor, did not develop. One mentor (Jean) did not express that the relationships had not developed. She only alluded to the failure when she stated that a drawback of the relationship was feeling that she did not do enough. The protege that was assigned to Jean in 1993 (Margaret) did not recall any contact with Jean beyond failed attempts to reach one another by telephone. The protege assigned in 1994 (Rhonda) recalled only a few conversations with Jean at regional meetings.

During the interview with Jean, she expressed positive thoughts about mentoring and the relationships. However, her answers were general and did not provide insights into the specific relationships with Margaret and Rhonda. Jean stated that a mentor should be approachable. However, Jean's behavior
indicated to Rhonda that she was very busy and had little time to spare for a relationship. Jean's perception was that answering questions at regional meetings was mentoring. Rhonda's expectations for the relationship involved sharing with, learning from, and reflecting with a mentor.

The other relationship that did not develop was between Amanda and Mark. Amanda and Mark gave similar explanations for the failure of a relationship to develop. The most obvious difficulty in their assignment was the distance between their divisions which required travel time of almost two hours. In addition, the divisions were not in the same regional group. The pair was assigned based upon having similar size school divisions.

The relationship also failed to develop due to a perception that the protege did not require a mentor. There were two reasons given for this perception: in-house resources and lack of significant problems. Amanda and Mark commented on Mark's access to resources within his system. Mark had been in a similar position in the system prior to the directorship. He looked to his superintendent as a mentor and to his staff for assistance. Amanda and Mark noted the lack of serious problems during that academic year. Looking back, Amanda stated that she should have offered to visit Mark's school division and/or his regional meeting to determine for herself that he did not require her assistance.

Again, the issues of appropriate mentor selection and matching are
significant. It has been recommended that mentors be selected who have the
time available (Gaskill, 1993; Murray & Owen, 1991; Zey, 1991) and who are
committed to the process of mentoring (Klauss, 1981; Murray & Owen, 1991;
Wilmore, 1995). It appears that close geographic proximity facilitates the
development of assigned relationships (Cobble, 1993; Keller, 1994; Pence,
1989). An issue that has not been raised in the literature is a possible
relationship between access to in-house resources and the perceived need for
an outside mentor.

Question 4. Assigned versus unassigned relationships. The distinction
between assigned and unassigned relationships is confounded by the fact that
the majority of unassigned relationships occur between individuals employed by
the same school division. The unassigned relationships between Sarah and
directors from a nearby division appear similar to assigned relationships. The
differences between assigned and unassigned relationships in the cases
studied are also the differences between within school division and across
school division mentoring relationships. With that in mind, the following will
describe the similarities and differences between the assigned and unassigned
relationships studied.

initially, the unassigned pairs knew one another and worked together.
The working relationship evolved into a mentoring relationship as part of the
mentor’s supervisory style and/or because of the protege’s potential for
leadership or administrative roles. The unassigned pairs usually had a certain level of comfort with and respect for one another prior to the introduction of the mentoring component. The assigned pairs usually did not know one another. The initial phase of their relationship revolved around getting to know one another and the development of respect and trust.

The pairs, whether assigned or unassigned, usually spent the majority of their contact in one-to-one situations. However, the unassigned pairs met or talked with one another more frequently. The unassigned pairs had more frequent access to unplanned day-to-day contact as they worked together. In unassigned relationships, the mentor and the protege reported being able to observe one another performing their job duties. With both assigned and unassigned pairs, the mentor took the leading role in facilitating the relationship.

The most significant consequence of unassigned relationships was the growth of the protege as he or she became a competent member of the mentor’s team. In contrast, the aspect of greatest value to assigned relationships was the networking and pooling of resources between the two school divisions. Both assigned and unassigned proteges benefited from having an experienced person to provide guidance and support. Unassigned mentors tended to be involved in promoting the career goals of their proteges.

The unassigned relationship described in this study has the potential to be more effective due to several factors. The pair have already developed a
respect for one another and will not need to spend time building a basis for the relationship. They are able to meet more frequently. They work in the same organization with the same policies, both spoken and unspoken. They are able to observe one another and to assist one another with job duties.

However, unassigned relationships are not always possible among special education administrators. Administrators of special education are often in a singleton position where there is no one else with the needed expertise within the same school system. Assigned relationships have the benefit of providing the mentor and protege with fresh perspectives as they network and pool resources between systems. With appropriate matching of the mentor and protege, assigned relationships have provided support networks.

It is difficult to compare the similarities and differences between assigned and unassigned relationships of this study with other studies. The reason for this is the overlying factor of whether or not the individuals are employed by the same or different school systems. Typically, in the literature, both assigned and unassigned pairs are employed by the same organization.

The literature has recognized some benefits when mentors are outside of the protege's organization (Pence, 1989). For example, a retired mentor has more time for the protege and is not involved in performance evaluation of the protege. Likewise, proteges have felt more freedom in terms of asking questions (Pence). In Project SEAM, Margaret felt that she could discuss her
frustrations with the protege outside of her system, but not with the protege whom she supervised.

**Question 5.** Assigned relationships that developed and those that did not develop. The assigned relationships that developed involved regular face-to-face contact which was initiated by the mentor. In the case of James, Bob, and George, the contact was limited to phone conversations or regional meetings and was initiated by both parties. The assigned relationships that did not develop involved limited, if any, contact. The contact occurred as a result of coincidental attendance at meetings. The mentors did not succeed in initiating regular contact.

In one relationship which failed to develop, the mentor provided information. However, the protege felt that the information was available through other resources. The protege expressed a need for a person with whom she could discuss information, brainstorm solutions, and reflect upon her own performance. The protege in this same relationship did not feel comfortable approaching the mentor for assistance.

The assigned relationships which developed involved mutual sharing of ideas and resources. The pairs were within the same regional groups. There was a travel time of thirty minutes or less separating the divisions. It was the perception of the mentor and the protege that the protege desired assistance.

Amanda and Mark's relationship involved different regional groups and
an inconvenient travel time. The relationships between Amanda and Mark and between Jean and Margaret involved proteges who were established in large school divisions with access to in-house resources.

The relationships which did not develop seem to reflect two areas of concern: mentor characteristics and matching of the pairs. The literature has recognized that mentors must be available and committed to mentoring (Klauss, 1981; Murray & Owen, 1991; Wilmore, 1995). Mentors should display: (a) strong interpersonal skills, (b) open mindedness, (c) flexibility, (d) patience, and (e) empathic listening (Gaskill, 1993; Gray & Gray, 1985; Murray & Owen, 1991). Mentors in successful relationships were described as listeners who were flexible, receptive, and tolerant. Relationships were facilitated when pairs were matched for access, geographic proximity, and similarity of experiences.

**Emerging themes**

During the course of the interviews and continuing through the data analysis, it became apparent that special education administrators were eager to share their job experiences. Following data analysis, two themes emerged: the challenging nature of the job and the importance of sharing resources. When asked if they had any other comments to make about mentoring, the mentors and proteges offered comments about Project SEAM. They preferred either the current flexibility or desired a change. Questions about seeking a mentor and the responsibilities of proteges led to descriptions of mentors and
proleges in successful relationships.

**Job challenges.** Mentors and proteges involved in this study were eager to share their perceptions of their administrative positions. They frequently pointed out ways in which their position was unique. There were two primary job characteristics identified. The administrator of special education was referred to as being "under the gun" or on a "hot seat". The administrators identified difficulties in addressing issues and constituents. In addition to students, parents, teachers, building administrators, superintendents, and school boards; special education administrators have to respond to legal requirements which are specific to special education.

The second job characteristic mentioned was the isolation of the position. In small school systems, there is often only one individual to direct the entire realm of special education. In larger systems with teams of staff, the director may still be the single person to make final decisions.

Due to the nature of the position, new and experienced administrators of special education expressed the need to have another person with whom they could share ideas and anticipate best and worst case scenarios. However, the nature of the job has made mentoring difficult due to: (a) the additional time involved, (b) the additional responsibility, and (c) the difficulty of accessing or communicating with the other person.

The complexity of the administrative role in special education has been
recognized by others, especially in terms of the number of constituent groups (Arick & Krug, 1993; Finkenbinder, 1981; Gillung et al., 1992; Howe, 1981; Podemski et al., 1984; Rude & Sasso, 1988; Sage & Burrello, 1986). Daresh and Playko (1989) discussed the limited number of peers among educational administrators, in general.

**Resource sharing.** According to one protege (Mark), to survive as a special education administrator, one must "look for support, breed off others' ideas, and reconfigure" their solutions to solve your problems. Likewise, a mentor (Sarah) said, "A good special ed[ucation] director is always asking peers questions." Having been a protege and a mentor, Amanda stated, "Special ed[ucation] is so fluid that everything's always changing . . . . why not rely on the resources that are available rather than trying to think you're going to be able to do it all and have any kind of life."

Perhaps due to the isolation and challenging nature of their job, special education administrators seek assistance from and share resources with one another. Another reason for sharing was noted by an assigned mentor. She stated that, if policy or legal precedent is set in one school division, it will impact all of the divisions in the region. In addition to their mentors and proteges, the administrators listed among their resources: (a) in-house staff, (b) special education administrators within their region, (c) regional group meetings, (d) former bosses, and (e) department of education staff.
Project SEAM. The five mentors who attended Mentor Training volunteered that the training was beneficial. The training, adapted from *Mentoring and Coaching* (Hersey & Hersey, 1990), addressed mentor responsibilities and functions, phases of mentoring relationships, values of mentoring, and potential problems. Half of the training time was devoted to interpersonal communication techniques and practice through role plays. (See Appendix L for Mentor Training Agenda). One mentor (Amanda) recommended that the training include strategies for facilitating the mentoring relationship. She suggested identifying these strategies by talking with previous program participants. One protege asserted that proteges need information about the mentoring process, especially in terms of their role and the mentor’s role.

The two mentors and one protege in the group interview and the individual with two undeveloped assignments (Jean) commented on the flexibility of Project SEAM. They preferred being assigned/matched, having the mentor trained, and then determining the content and future of the relationship themselves. Specifically, they felt it was in the best interest of the mentor and the protege that evaluation not be a part of the process. They also preferred not being mandated to meet for specific purposes or with designated frequency.

However, a protege commented that someone should oversee the process and re-assign pairs if relationships were not working. Sarah commented that a mentoring program could not be formalized completely. She
stated that perhaps the state could structure Project SEAM to the extent that
they "outlined the information that you need to go over so that by the end of the
year you've discussed everything" with your protege.

Program monitoring (Beli, 1987; Bowen, 1985; Phillips-Jones, 1983;
Wilson & Elman, 1990; Zey, 1985, 1991), and training for proteges (Burke &
McKeen, 1989; Gaskill, 1993; Henry et al., 1994; Klauss, 1981; Murray &
Owen, 1991; Phillips-Jones, 1983; Zey, 1985, 1991) have been recommended
by facilitators of formal mentoring programs. Authors have stated that structured
flexibility provides the freedom necessary for assigned mentoring relationships
to develop (Farren et al., 1984; Phillips-Jones, 1983; Walker & Stott, 1994). Zey
(1985; 1991), however, has recommended that program guidelines specify the
expected types of interaction and the minimum frequency of contacts. Project
SEAM guidelines (see Appendix M) recommended meeting at least monthly.
The Mentor Training addressed interactions including listening and providing
feedback.

Profiles of mentors and proteges. Mentors and proteges provided
descriptions of effective mentors. According to mentors and proteges, the
mentor should have significant experience. The mentor should be
knowledgeable. According to one individual who was both a mentor and a
protege, the mentor should model qualities that the protege thinks are important
in an administrator. Proteges felt that effective mentors are those who are
willing to share and who take their role seriously. Mentors and proteges agreed that mentors should be available, accessible, and approachable.

Mentors were described as listeners who were flexible, receptive, and tolerant. Helping the protege to laugh and to relax were mentioned as mentor roles. A protege in an unassigned relationship mentioned that a mentor should find creative ways of getting together. His suggestions included: going for a walk, rollerblading, eating lunch in different or unusual places, or visiting the state Department of Education office. The ideal mentor described was knowledgeable and committed to facilitating the mentoring relationship.

If the mentor is responsible for facilitating the relationship, at least one protege believes that it is the protege's responsibility to identify issues and personal concerns. The protege should: "take responsibility for the agenda to a certain extent." Mentors and proteges agree that the relationship should not be one-sided or a burden to the mentor. In other words, the protege should do his or her part to facilitate the relationship. The protege should initiate some contact and provide ideas and information to the mentor. One mentor commented that she needed feedback from the protege in terms of whether or not the relationship was helpful.

Advocates of assigned mentoring programs have recommended that mentors and proteges begin their relationships with an understanding of one another's roles and responsibilities. They should reach an agreement on the
manner in which their relationship will be conducted including their individual responsibilities (Henry et al., 1994; Murray & Owen, 1991: Phillips-Jones, 1983; Wilson & Elman, 1990).

Conclusions

Based upon data analysis, research questions were addressed and emerging themes identified. Relationships between the cases in this study and those reported in the literature were explored. The conclusions regarding these six descriptive case studies are summarized in two parts. The first set of conclusions addresses mentoring relationships specific to special education administrators. The second set of conclusions refers to mentoring relationships in general.

Mentoring Relationships of Special Education Administrators

The mentoring relationships of special education administrators in this study were either assigned or unassigned. The assigned relationships either developed or did not develop. Among the six case studies, the following conclusions were reached:

1. Assigned mentors provided specific information, general survival skills, and overall support.

2. Assigned relationships were facilitated by mutual attendance at regional meetings.

3. Assigned relationships were facilitated when pairs were matched.
based on geographic proximity, membership in the same regional directors' group, and employment in school systems of similar size.

4. Assigned relationships were facilitated when mentors initiated contact and were perceived as approachable.

5. Protégés had different needs and expectations depending upon their skill level, their access to in-house resources, their previous experience, and the types of issues which confronted them in their new position.

6. Unassigned relationships usually occurred between individuals who were employed in the same school system.

7. In a school system with more than one staff in special education administration, mentoring of staff could be a component of the primary special education administrator’s role.

8. Unassigned mentors and protégés who were employed in the same school system observed one another performing job duties which enabled the mentor to function as a role model.

9. Unassigned pairs who were employed in the same school system had more frequent contact than assigned pairs.

10. Unassigned mentors employed in the same school system as their protegés functioned as career enhancers, providing their protégés with challenging opportunities and exposure.

11. Special education administrators tended to seek assistance from, and
share resources with one another.

**Mentoring Relationships**

The relationships in the six cases studied appear to represent assigned and unassigned relationships as reported in the literature. The literature reviewed was not limited to special education administration or to educational administration, therefore, the following generalizations may apply to any mentoring relationship.

1. Assigned mentoring relationships are facilitated by a mechanism for regular contact.

2. Assigned mentors and proteges may feel ambivalent prior to beginning a relationship, especially if the assignment is not voluntary.

3. Assigned mentors require knowledge and interpersonal skills in order to provide specific information and overall support.

4. Assigned relationships are facilitated when pairs are matched to facilitate access and to insure a similarity of experiences.

5. Assigned relationships are facilitated when mentors initiate contact and are perceived as approachable.

6. Proteges who are assigned a mentor may not access that mentor if they have resources available to meet their needs.

7. Unassigned relationships develop between individuals who know one another or have access to one another.
8. Mentoring may be part of the supervisory role.

9. Observation of the mentor by the protege may be necessary for the mentor to fulfill the role model function.

Recommendations

Recommendations are provided according to two areas of emphasis: assigned or formal mentoring programs and future research. The recommendations for assigned mentoring programs are based on the six case studies and previous research. Recommendations for future research are based on the information provided from this study together with events which took place during the course of the study. Both forms of recommendations may be generalized to either mentoring of special education administrators or mentoring in general.

Assigned Mentoring Programs

The individual program participants studied and the case study findings revealed several specific suggestions for Project SEAM. There are other recommendations that may generalize to any formal program.

Project SEAM. Project SEAM continues to exist. The program appears to be interrelated with and facilitated by the regional directors' meetings. The meetings should be recognized as one mechanism for facilitating the assigned mentoring relationships. However, as noted on page one, the regional meetings, training sessions, and technical assistance alone are not sufficient to
meet the needs of special education administrators. Program monitors should recognize that individuals who do not perceive the need for a mentor due to resources in-house, their own skill level, or lack of serious problems may utilize their assigned relationship less than those individuals who do perceive the need for a mentor. The protege's needs and expectations should be assessed and considered prior to offering an assigned relationship or matching with a specific mentor.

At least one protege has suggested that proteges need an orientation or training session similar to that offered mentors, in order to better understand the protege role. One mentor suggested that the mentor training include a segment on strategies for facilitating relationships. Other recommendations include: a joint meeting of mentors and proteges to initiate the assignments each year and use of former mentors and proteges to conduct the mentor and/or protege training. It has been suggested in the literature that retired administrators have the knowledge and the time available to serve as mentors. Each of these options is worth further exploration.

**Formal programs.** In terms of formal programs, this study reinforces certain basis principles found in the literature. These include:

1. Voluntary participation of mentors and proteges.
2. Choice in selection of mentoring partner.
3. Mentoring as part of an overall career development program.
4. Orientation or training for mentors and proteges.

5. Facilitation of assigned relationships through a program which features: (a) mechanisms for contact, (b) access to mentoring partner, (c) matching for similar experiences, (d) agreement of responsibilities by partners, and (e) monitoring for re-assignment as needed.

6. Reaching a certain level of respect and trust between mentor and protege prior to beginning mentoring.

7. Identification of need for mentoring and goals of the program prior to program implementation.

8. On-going evaluation of program and sharing results with participants.

Future Studies

This study has served as an exploratory and descriptive analysis of mentoring for special education administrators and as a descriptive study of assigned and unassigned mentoring relationships. Future studies may take either of two directions: special education administration or mentoring.

To pursue further study of special education administration, the researcher might choose to:

1. Compare regional groups of special education administrators to the social network advocated by Keele et al. (1987).

2. Explore the role of the superintendent with special education administrators; i.e., superintendent as mentor or superintendent as support.
3. Explore the changing role of special education administrators as the unification of special and general education occurs in the field.

4. Identify early career concerns and career stages of special education administrators (see Roberts, 1993 for a discussion of career stages of principals).

   In terms of mentoring relationships, the researcher may choose to:

   1. Compare assigned mentoring relationships to peer relationships as identified by Kram and Isabella (1985).

   2. Explore programs which are labelled peer coaching or peer collaboration and compare them to assigned mentoring.

   3. Explore mentoring functions within supervisory relationships.

**Summary**

First year special education administrators in Virginia school systems are assigned experienced special education administrators as mentors. In most instances the mentors and proteges are not employed by the same school division, but are in the same regional directors' group. Case studies of six mentors revealed that each was involved in more than one mentoring relationship. Four mentors had successful assigned relationships. Two mentors had assigned relationships which did not develop. Four of the six mentors were also involved in successful unassigned relationships. Findings indicated that, with appropriate selection of mentors, matching of pairs for similar experiences,
and a mechanism for regular contact, assigned relationships can provide benefits to both mentors and proteges.

Unassigned mentoring relationships among these six cases typically occurred between individuals who were employed by the same school division. The mentor was often the protege's direct supervisor. Pairs in unassigned relationships observed one another performing job duties which enabled the mentor to function as a role model. Unassigned mentors functioned as career enhancers, providing their proteges with challenging opportunities and exposure. Assigned and unassigned relationships provided specific information, general survival skills, and overall support to the proteges.

The case studies of the six mentors suggest that the Virginia Department of Education should continue Project SEAM, following the recommendations mentioned earlier, because both mentors and proteges benefit from the networking and pooling of resources between their school systems. Proteges in the assigned relationships were provided with accurate information and general support. However, the process could be improved by offering training to proteges along with mentors and insuring a commonality of experience in the matching of pairs. As planned, but not always conducted due to funding difficulties, a joint meeting of the assigned pairs in the Spring of each academic year should be held. At this meeting, the pairs could share their successes, failures, and ideas for facilitating relationships.
LITERATURE CITED


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Blacksburg, VA.


Holmes (Eds.), *Mentoring: Developing successful new teachers* (pp. 39-50). Reston, VA: Association of Teacher Educators.


Keller, F. W. (1994). *The personal and contextual variables affecting the relationships between mentors and proteges in a regional program for the*
preparation of principals. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA.


Moving up the career ladder: An interview with the president of CEC. (1994, October). *CEC Today, 1*, 2.


E.P. Dutton.


Appendix A

Sample Interview Guide
Interview guide for central person in assigned relationship  Code______

(1) Tell me about when you first learned about the mentoring program and its possibilities for you. How did you hear of it?

What were your initial thoughts?

Positive/negative:

Degree of choice/voluntary:

Decision to participate:

Expected benefits:

Expected commitment:

(2) Describe your first meeting with the assigned mentor. How did it occur? What happened?

Initiation of contact:

Type of contact:

Future plans:

(3) Describe the first time you needed assistance. What did you do? How did it turn out?

Background:

Initiation of contact:

Type of contact:

Technical aspects:

Emotional aspects:

Discussion/advice/activity:
(4) Tell me about the best (i.e., most helpful) mentoring event or activity that took place. What led up to it? What did you do? What did your mentor do? How did it turn out?

**Background:**

**Initiation of contact:**

**Type of contact:**

**Technical aspects:**

**Emotional aspects:**

**Discussion/advice/activity:**

**Benefits:**

(5) Describe the worst (least satisfactory) mentoring event or activity that took place. What led up to it? What did you do? What did the mentor do? How did it turn out?

**Background:**

**Initiation of contact:**

**Type of contact:**

**Technical:**

**Emotional:**

**Discussion/advice/activity:**

**Problems/concerns:**

(6) Tell me about a typical mentoring experience. What happened?

**Background:**

**Initiation of contact:**

**Type of contact:**

**Technical:**
Emotional:

Discussion/advice/activity:

Benefits/concerns:

(7) What proportion of your experiences overall were like the "best" example you gave?

The "worst"?

"Typical"?

What were the benefits (to you) in this relationship?

What were the drawbacks?

(Tell me about geographic proximity (miles or travel time) in terms of the relationship.)

(Probe time factors.)

(8) Tell me about a time when the relationship seemed to be changing (or had changed). What happened?

Type of contact:

Content:

Change in roles:

Positive/negative:
(9) Were there any other times when you felt the relationship was changing? Tell me about them.

(10) Describe what the relationship is like now.

Continued/why:

Terminated/why:

Length of relationship:

Let's talk for awhile about the assigned relationship in which you were the mentor.

(11) Tell me about your decision to participate in the mentoring program as a mentor. What were your initial thoughts?

Positive/negative:

Degree of choice/voluntary:

Decision to participate:

Expected benefits:

Expected commitment:

(12) Describe your first meeting with the assigned protege. How did it occur? What happened?

Initiation of contact:

Type of contact:

Future plans:

(13) Describe the first time you offered assistance. What did you do? How did it turn out?

Background:

Initiation of contact:

Type of contact:

Technical aspects:
Emotional aspects:

Discussion/advice/activity:

(14) Tell me about the best (i.e., most helpful) mentoring event or activity that took place. What led up to it? What did you do? How did it turn out?

Background:

Initiation of contact:

Type of contact:

Technical aspects:

Emotional aspects:

Discussion/advice/activity:

Benefits:

(15) Describe the worst (least satisfactory) mentoring event or activity that took place. What led up to it? What did you do? How did it turn out?

Background:

Initiation of contact:

Type of contact:

Technical:

Emotional:

Discussion/advice/activity:

Problems/concerns:

(16) Tell me about a typical mentoring experience. What happened?

Background:

Initiation of contact:

Type of contact:

Technical:
Emotional:

Discussion/advice/activity:

Benefits/concerns:

(17) What proportion of your experiences overall were like the "best" example you gave?

The "worst"?

"Typical"?

What are the benefits of this relationship?

What are the drawbacks?

(Tell me about geographic proximity (distance or time) in terms of the relationship.)

(Probe time factors.)

(18) Tell me about a time when the relationship seemed to be changing (or had changed). What happened?

Type of contact:

Content:

Change in roles:

Positive/negative:

(19) Were there any other times when you felt the relationship was changing? Tell me about them.

(20) Describe what the relationship is like now.

Continued/why:

Terminated/why:
Length of relationship:

(21) Have you been involved in other mentoring relationships?

Partner was assigned/not assigned:

Mentor/protege:

How did it come about?

Tell me about the best aspect of that relationship.

Tell me about the worst aspect of that relationship.

(22) Describe for me a special education administrator who would have the greatest need for a mentor.

Personal characteristics:

Experience:

Training:

(23) Describe for me a special education administrator who would have the least need for a mentor.

Personal characteristics:

Experience:

Training:

(24) Imagine that I am starting a job next week as a special education administrator—what advice about seeking a mentor would you give me?

Selecting mentor:

Responsibilities of protege:

Characteristics of mentor:
Activities:

(25) If one of your peers intends to mentor a beginning director, what advice would you give him or her?

Personal characteristics:

Activities:

Involvement of others:

(26) What would you like to share about these relationships that we have not talked about?

With assigned mentor:

With assigned protege:

Unassigned:
Appendix B

Informed Consent Form
Title of Project: A Descriptive Study of Mentoring Relationships of Beginning Special Education Administrators in Virginia
Principal Investigator: Laura Goad

PURPOSE OF THIS RESEARCH
You are invited to participate in a study about mentoring among special education administrators. This study involves the analysis of interview responses to describe and compare mentoring relationships when mentors are assigned and when they occur naturally.

PROCEDURES
Face-to-face interviews lasting approximately one hour are used for this study. The information requested in the interview is not sensitive, and should not cause you any discomfort. For information regarding confidentiality, see the section titled EXTENT OF ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY.

BENEFITS OF THIS PROJECT
Your participation in this project will provide information regarding mentoring of special education administrators from the viewpoint of a participant. No guarantee of benefits has been made to encourage you to participate. You may receive a synopsis or summary of this research when completed by making a request on this form.

EXTENT OF ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY
The results of this study will be kept strictly confidential. At no time will the researchers release information which identifies individuals with their responses. The information you provide will have your name removed and only a subject code or pseudonym will identify you during analyses and any written reports of the research. The interview will be taped (audio only). These tapes will be transcribed by a professional typist and erased after five years.

FREEDOM TO WITHDRAW
You are free to withdraw from this interview at any time without penalty. You may refuse to answer any question during the course of the interview.

APPROVAL OF RESEARCH
This research project has been approved, as required, by the Institutional Review Board for projects involving human subjects at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and by the Division of Administrative and Educational Services in the College of Education.

SUBJECT'S RESPONSIBILITIES
I know of no reason I cannot participate in this study.

SUBJECT'S PERMISSION
I have read and understand the informed consent and conditions of this project. I have had all my questions answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent for participation in this project. If I participate, I may withdraw at any time without penalty. I agree to abide by the rules of this project. Should I have any questions about this research or its conduct, I will contact:

Principal Investigator (703) 231-5925 Virginia Tech
Laura Goad (703) 231-9715
Faculty Advisor/Committee Chair (703) 728-3250 home
Harol J. McGrady, Ph.D. (703) 231-8077
Chair, IRB, Research Division

______________________________ Name signed ________________ Date

153
Appendix C

Personal Information Form
Current position or title:

Number of students in school division: □□□□□□

Number of students with IEPs (eligible for services under IDEA): □□□□□□

Number of special education personnel-teachers: □□□□

related services: □□□□ supervisory: □□□□

Time in position: □ years □ months

Time in school division: □□ years □ months

Previous positions in same system (starting with most recent):

Previous positions in special education:

Total number of years: □□□□

Previous positions in administration:

Total number of years: □□□□

Degree/Type Major area of study Date

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Other training related to special education or administration:

Endorsements/certifications:

How would you describe yourself in terms of personality?

What are your strengths as a director?

What are your limitations as a director?

Gender: male or female

Age: □□

Approximate age of your mentor:

Approximate age of your protege:
Appendix D

Sample Letter of Appreciation
April 21, 1995

Mr. Fred Smith
Supervisor of Special Education
Adams City Public Schools
100 N. Main Street
Mapletown, VA 00000

Dear Mr. Smith,

Thank you so much for taking the time to talk with me about mentoring of special education administrators. It was very helpful to gain insights from an individual making the change from supervision to administration. The information you provided is not only very important for my dissertation, but will help me personally as I begin a career in supervision or administration of special education. Thanks again!

Sincerely,

Laura Goad
Doctoral Candidate
Appendix E

Contact Summary Form
CONTACT SUMMARY FORM

Contact type: ___ visit ___ phone Site: _______________________

Date: ___________ Today’s date: ___________ Written by: ___________

1. What were the main issues or themes that struck you in this contact?

2. Summarize the information you got (or failed to get) on each of the target questions you had for this contact.

   Question: ______________________ Information: ______________________

3. Anything else that struck you as salient, interesting, illuminating or important in this contact?

4. What new (or remaining) target questions do you have in considering future contacts?

   This site: ______________________

   Other sites: ______________________

STOP
Appendix F

Page One of Interview Write-up
INTERVIEW WRITE-UP

DATE OF VISIT: TYPE OF VISIT:

DATE OF WRITE-UP: WRITTEN BY:

SUBJECT CODE:

DESCRIPTION OF INDIVIDUAL:

DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOL DIVISION:

EXTENT OF PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAM:

OBSERVATIONS/SURROUNDINGS:

INTERVIEW CONTENT:
Appendix G

Coding Lists
Initial Coding Outline

Relationship Type

Assigned

- Developed
  - Within school division
    - Mentor is supervisor
    - Mentor is not supervisor
  - Outside school division

- Did not develop

Unassigned

- Within school division
- Outside school division

Codes/concepts discovered in open coding

Knowledge
- of program
- of assignment

Expectations
- of self
  - Positive
  - Costs
- of protege
  - Positive
  - Costs

Initiation
- Mentor experience/competence
- Protege experience/competence
- Commitment/investment
- Prior contact/relationship

Status
- Volunteered
- Requested
- Declined
Connection
Contact
  initiator
  activity/type: observation, conversation
  frequency
  scheduled/not scheduled

Content/functions
  technical information
  organizational information
  working staff

Resources
  within system
  regional group
  DOE staff
  each other

Change/evolution

Benefits
  of process
  of person

Drawbacks
  of process
  of person

Future
  Continue
  Terminate

Other concepts, not sure where they fit:
  mentor training
  supervision
  awareness of protege's area of difficulty
  feedback for mentor as well as protege
  goals for mentor/protege
Final Coding List

M=mentor role                  P=protege role

**RELATIONSHIP TYPE**

**Assigned**
- Within same school division (AS)
- In a different school division (AD)
- Assigned relationship
  - mentor volunteered (MV)
  - mentor agreed when asked (MA)
  - mentor declined (MD)

**Unassigned**
- Within same school division (US)
- In a different school division (UD)
- Unassigned relationship
  - mentor initiated (MI)
  - protege initiated (PI)
  - mutually initiated (MU)

Relationship did not develop - draw a slash (/) through the code from above.

**Prior relationship (PR)**
- none (prn)
- colleagues (prc)
- trust/respect established (prt)

**Initial feelings about potential relationship**
- positive (F+)
- negative (F-)
- mixture/ambivalent (F~)

**CONTACT**

**Initiation**
- mentor initiated the contact (CI)
- mentor responded to the contact (CR)
- contact mutually initiated (CM)
- contact was not initiated (CN)

**Contact type**
- face to face (CTF)
- by phone (CTP)
- part of a joint activity (CTA)
  - contact scheduled by pair (CS)
  - activity scheduled by third party (CU)
- frequency of contact --- mark or highlight actual number(s)
CONTENT/FUNCTION

Content is specific to special education (FSPED)
Content is related to administration/management (FADMN)
Assistance with specific information (SI)
General or overall support/assistance (GS)
Protege is given advice/answers (AV)
Protege observes mentor behavior (OB)
Protege and mentor interact (IN)

Type of interaction
- brainstorming (bs)
- facilitating reflection (fr)
- bouncing ideas off/sounding board (bi)
- encouraging/reinforcing (en)
- reassuring that are not alone (na)
- seeing the big picture (perspective) (sbp)
- facilitating professional growth (fpg)

RESULTS/BENEFITS

Benefit to mentor only (BM)
Benefit to protege only (BP)
Benefit is mutual (BB)

- pooled resources (pr)
- network created (nc)
- brainstormed solutions (bs)
- increased knowledge (ik)
- increased confidence (ic)
- protege takes responsibility (pt)
- safeguard (sg)
- exposure/fresh perspective (fp)
- deals with isolation (dis)
- provides balance/coping (bc)
- career advancement (ca)
- developing vision (dv)

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Mentor Characteristics (MC)
- Experienced in position (ex)
- Knowledgeable (kn)
- Willing to mentor (wm)
- Flexible/tolerant (ft)
- Establishes rapport/trust (ert)
- Listener (ls)
- Facilitates the relationship (frt)
- Available/accessable/approachable (aa)
Protege Characteristics/Responsibilities (PC)
- Seeks assistance from others (sa)
- Follows through on recommendations (ftr)
- Self-starter (ss)
- Identifies priorities/concerns (ip)
- Communicates needs and growth to mentor (cn)
- Shares with/offers assistance to mentor (sm)
- Has confidence in mentor (cim)
- Lacks experience (le)
- Self-evaluative (se)

DRAWBACKS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Drawback</th>
<th>(NOD)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drawback for mentor</td>
<td>(DM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawback for protege</td>
<td>(DP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawback for both Process</td>
<td>(DB)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Process
- Time involved (ti)
- Additional responsibility involved (ar)
- Distance between divisions (di)
- Dissimilar school divisions (ds)
- Logistics of getting together (lg)
- Nature of the job (noj)
- In different school divisions (dsd)
- Within same school divisions (sd)

People
- Feeling that didn't do enough (dd)
- Other party not approachable (na)
- Did not meet expectations (de)

RESOURCES
- Uses resources within own school division (RSS)
  - Individual (ind)
  - Group (group)
  - Staff development program (sdprg)
Uses resources outside of school division (ROS)
  Peers in same region (psr)
  Peers in larger school division (isd)
  Peers within the state (pws)
  Regional group meeting (rgm)
  State Department of Education staff (sdoe)
  Former bosses/trainers (fbt)

CHANGE/EVOLUTION
No change in relationship (NOC)
No change in relationship, change in topics (NOCT)
Positive change in relationship (PCR)
Negative change in relationship (NCR)

FUTURE
Continue as is (CAI)
Continue with changes (CWC)
Terminate (TER)

STATE PROGRAM
management academy (MA)
mentor training (MT)
regional meetings (RM)
  attended and helpful (atth)
  attended and not helpful (attnh)
  did not attend (dna)

Project SEAM recommendations
  Keep the same (pjss)
  Add something (pjsa)
  Take out something (pjest)
Appendix H

Research Question Matrix
Research question 1: What is the nature of the mentoring relationship between a first year special education administrator and an assigned mentor in Project SEAM?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case number/ mentor name</th>
<th>Mentor comments</th>
<th>Protege name/ comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Margaret</td>
<td></td>
<td>David</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Sarah</td>
<td></td>
<td>Amanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) James</td>
<td></td>
<td>George</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Bob</td>
<td></td>
<td>George</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Research question 2: What is the nature of the mentoring relationship between a first year special education administrator and an unassigned mentor?

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Protege name/ comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Margaret</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Sarah</td>
<td></td>
<td>Numerous individuals in a nearby system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Amanda</td>
<td></td>
<td>Individuals in her own system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) James</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bob</td>
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</table>
Research question 3: What is the nature of a relationship that is assigned in Project SEAM but does not develop?

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<th>Protege 2 name/comments</th>
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<tr>
<td>(2) Jean</td>
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<td>Margaret</td>
<td>Rhonda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Mark</td>
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Research question 4: What are the similarities and differences between assigned and unassigned mentoring relationships? S=similarities D=differences

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<th>Assigned relationship protege comments</th>
<th>Unassigned relationship mentor comments</th>
<th>Unassigned relationship protege comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) James</td>
<td>George</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bob</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Bob</td>
<td>George</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Research question 5: What are the similarities and differences between assigned relationships which develop and those that do not develop?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case number/mentor name</th>
<th>Mentor comments when developed</th>
<th>Protege comments when developed</th>
<th>Mentor comments when did not develop</th>
<th>Protege comments when did not develop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Margaret</td>
<td></td>
<td>David</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>(2) Jean</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Margaret:</td>
<td>Rhonda:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Sarah</td>
<td></td>
<td>Amanda</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Amanda</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) James</td>
<td></td>
<td>George</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Bob</td>
<td></td>
<td>George</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I

Individual Interviews
INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Interview with Margaret

April 18, 1995

Margaret described herself as a "leader" and "good listener" who was "never too serious". She was in her second year as a director of special education in a large urban/suburban school division. She served as an assigned protege and an assigned mentor in Project SEAM. She served as an unassigned mentor to her assistant. Her office was located in a contemporary building. A vase of fresh flowers decorated her office where we sat at a small table.

Margaret shared that her assigned relationship with a mentor never developed. Margaret developed relationships with two proteges: one assigned and one unassigned. She felt strongly that mentoring was an aspect of her style of supervision. She emphasized the unassigned protege's development as part of her team. With her assigned protege, she lacked feedback and a sense of learning from him. She facilitated both of the relationships. (12)

Interview with David

April 19, 1995

David had been a director of special education in another state for approximately 20 years. This was his first year as a director in Virginia. David described his strengths as "experience/knowledge of the field" and his ability to
"work well with parents." He saw "organizational skills for long range planning" as his area of limitation. David had a staff of nine teacher specialists. His school division had a total student population of 10,000. The division occupied several floors of a high rise office building. The interview was conducted in his office while he sat behind his desk.

Margaret was assigned to mentor David. They met regularly for lunch. They brought their staffs together to share information and for staff development purposes. Margaret assisted David with Virginia regulations and shared her long range plan for her division with him. David reported being a mentor himself in assigned and unassigned relationships. (5)

Interview with Fred

April 19, 1995

Fred worked as an assistant to Margaret. He described himself as "open, accepting, [and] conciliatory." His strengths as an administrator were his "problem solving" ability and that he knew the "system well." His limitations were his "newness" and lack of "management experience." The interview was conducted in Fred's office which was adjacent to Margaret's larger office. I sat in a chair beside Fred's desk during the interview.

Fred shared that Margaret and her boss served as mentors. All three had worked together for an extended period of time. The mentors were providing assistance and support to Fred as he learned the ropes both in special
education administration and administration in general. Fred asserted that mentoring relationships are significant relationships which must be facilitated and nurtured. (8)

Interview with Jean

April 18, 1995

Jean was in her fifth year as a director of special education. Her school division was mostly rural but served as a commuter county for a major metropolitan area. Her offices were located in a former school building which housed pupil personnel services. It was located several miles from the main school board office. Jean described herself as "friendly, outgoing, and energetic." Her strength as a director was that she was "organized" while her limitation was not "having enough time/resources." Jean took me to a small meeting room for the interview. It was uncomfortably warm. I did not see her office.

Jean talked at length about her role as a special education administrator. She provided general, commonly accepted comments about mentoring. Specific comments about her mentoring relationships with Margaret and Rhonda were limited. A third party listened to the interview audio-tape and observed that Jean provided "canned" answers and that she was "eager/nervous/quick to answer." (12)
Interview with Rhonda

April 26, 1995

After numerous phone calls and a visit to Rhonda's school division, I was able to reach her by phone. She was in her first year as a special education director. Her only administrative experience was as an assistant principal. Rhonda had a staff of two coordinators. Her office was located in a former school building.

Rhonda described Jean as a "positive resource." She described a relationship in which Jean provided information but not interaction. Jean did not initiate any contact with Rhonda, but talked with her at two regional meetings. Rhonda relied on peers with "specific expertise" to survive the first year. (3)

Interview with Sarah

April 24, 1995

Sarah was in her sixteenth year as a director of special education. She described herself as a "self starter, persistent, [and] level-headed." Her strengths as a director were that she was "organized" and "people oriented." Her limitation was that "burn out" was "approaching." Sarah's school division was a city division which appeared to be in a largely rural area. The school board office shared its parking lot with the city jail. I interviewed Sarah in her office. The nail polish was missing on most of Sarah's fingernails.

Sarah had served as an assigned mentor for Amanda. She had a history
of informally mentoring individuals in nearby school divisions. She and Amanda shared resources. Sarah came to rely on Amanda in addition to mentoring her. Being in a larger school system, Amanda had in-house resources to share with her mentor. Sarah felt that mentoring relationships can not be formalized completely. (9)

Interview with Amanda

April 25, 1995

Amanda was in her second year as a special education director. She had previous experience as an elementary principal, secondary principal, and in public relations for the school system. She was mentored by Sarah. She had been a protege and a mentor in unassigned relationships. She preferred a "shared decision making style of leadership." Her other strengths were: "complete things on time with accuracy, enable others to grow, and clearly define goals and planning princip[les]." She found it difficult to keep up with the frequent changes "in the legal interpretation of IDEA." Her office was located in a former school building surrounded by a 10' high chain length fence. We sat in two chairs opposite her desk during the interview.

Amanda described her hesitancy prior to the assigned relationship. Her experiences were with unassigned relationships. She emphasized the need for the mentor to be respected and trusted by the protege in order for a relationship to develop. She and Sarah developed a relationship. Amanda used
Sarah's assistance and advice more as they knew one another better and became closer. Amanda did not feel that she developed a relationship with her assigned protege. (18)

Interview with Mark
April 25, 1995

The interview with Mark took place over the phone. Mark was an administrator with responsibility for special education and four other areas of pupil personnel. He had a staff of eleven area specialists. The relationship between Mark and Amanda did not develop for a number of reasons: (a) the distance between their divisions, (b) the resources available to Mark within his own school system, and (c) Mark's lack of significant problems for that academic year. Mark's unassigned mentor was his superintendent. (2)

Group Interview with James, Bob, and George
April 28, 1995

This interview was conducted following a regional directors' meeting. The interview took place in a meeting room at a large public facility not associated with either school system. The mentors were employed by the same school system. Bob served as an assistant to James. George's school system was very similar in size and location to that of his mentors. The three men had known each other by phone prior to the mentoring assignment.

The three men agreed that administrators in their first year of a position,
even those with experience, need the assistance of a mentor. During the
course of the year, the mentors and protege came to share information and
resources with one another. The mentors reported learning from the protege.
They felt that their association functioned as a safeguard, protecting both
parties from unwise decisions and actions. (14)

A complete description of each interview is available as collected and
developed by the researcher. The total number of pages (single-spaced) for
each interview is located in the parentheses following each summary. The total
number of pages is 83. To receive a copy of any or all interviews, please send:
(a) 3.5" disk and (b) self-addressed stamped envelope (SASE) to:

Laura Goad
Route 3 Box 189
Hillsville, VA 24343
(540) 728-3250
Appendix J

Mentor Characteristics
### Table J1

**Mentor Characteristics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>MARGARET</th>
<th>JEAN</th>
<th>SARAH</th>
<th>AMANDA</th>
<th>JAMES</th>
<th>BOB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40-45</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years as a special education administrator</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years as an administrator</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total students in division</td>
<td>17,000</td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>34,200</td>
<td>6,300</td>
<td>6,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unassigned protege(s)</td>
<td>Fred</td>
<td>Many in a nearby division</td>
<td>Several in her own division</td>
<td>Bob</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship types</td>
<td>Assigned &amp; Unassigned</td>
<td>Did not develop</td>
<td>Assigned &amp; Unassigned</td>
<td>Did not develop &amp; Unassigned</td>
<td>Assigned</td>
<td>Assigned &amp; Unassigned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Appendix K

Graphic Representation of Cases
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1993-94</th>
<th>1994-95</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JEAN</td>
<td>JEAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↓</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret</td>
<td>Rhonda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MARGARET → Fred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>David</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SARAH</td>
<td>AMANDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↓</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda</td>
<td>Mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JAMES (⇒) BOB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>George</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure K1.** Graphic representation of cases. The MENTOR is represented with all capital letters. An assigned relationship is represented by ↓. An unassigned relationship is represented by ⇒.
Appendix L

Mentor Training Agenda
AGENDA

8:30 A.M.  REGISTRATION

9:00 A.M.  INTRODUCTIONS AND OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM

9:30 A.M.  ROLE OF MENTOR

10:00 A.M. THINKING, FEELING, AND ACTING

10:30 A.M. BREAK

10:40 A.M. GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK

11:00 A.M. STICKY SITUATIONS -- ROLE PLAY AND FEEDBACK

11:30 A.M. DOE - PROJECT SEAM ISSUES

12 NOON  LUNCH
Appendix M

Project SEAM Activities

1994-95
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR MENTOR PROGRAM
Project SEAM

Activities for 1994-95

1. New Special Education Administrators are brought in during the new Special Education Directors’ Academy and given information regarding their roles and responsibilities as a new administrator.

As part of the presentation by the Department of Education (DOE), new administrators are informed of the support system that is available. One part of the support system is the Office of Special Education Services staff. They are assigned to regions across the state and provide assistance to school divisions on any issues related to special education. The Virginia Council of Administrators of Special Education (VCASE) also supports the mentor program with DOE staff. Your assistance as a mentor is important in giving the new administrator field based information that is practical and goes beyond regulations.

2. Mentor training will take place during the new Special Education Directors’ Academy although assignments are made earlier.

The mentor program is designed to provide support without taking too much time out of the busy work day. If mentoring becomes a burden, then contact should be made with Canice Razlaiff at (804) 788-8036.

3. Mentors should contact their mentees regularly, at least once each month, to touch base. Travel expenses to work with mentees will be reimbursed (see travel reimbursement forms in packet). Most mentoring can take place over the phone or by fax or mail. If questions arise that you cannot answer, please refer the mentee to the Office of Special Education Services.

4. A follow-up of the mentoring process will take place after the first of the year. Please feel free to call anytime if you have questions regarding the mentoring process.

5. A seminar will take place in the spring with mentors and mentees coming together to share experiences and evaluate the mentorship program. Dates and location will be announced at a future date.

6. A notebook is available for you to take that is the same as the one given out at the New Special Education Directors’ Academy. Use it as a reference in responding to questions.

7. If you require any materials or information from DOE in order to answer requests for assistance, please call and we will get it to you as soon as possible, providing it is available for dissemination.

HAVE A GREAT YEAR AND THANK YOU FOR AGREEING TO BE A PROJECT SEAM MENTOR!!!!!
VITA

Laura Lee Chisom Goad

DATE OF BIRTH: May 10, 1956

EDUCATION:

B.S. James Madison University, 1978
    Summa Cum Laude
    Mental Retardation

M.S. Radford University, 1984
    Emotional Disturbance

Ed.D. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State
      University, May, 1996.
      Administration and Supervision of Special
      Education

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Senior Graduate Research Assistant, VPI & SU, August 16,

Lead Educator, part-time, Wythe House ICF/MR, Mt.
Rogers Community Services Board, Wytheville, VA,

Teacher, students identified as emotionally disturbed,
Wythe County Public Schools, 1983-86 (Fort Chiswell High

Teacher, Southwestern Virginia Training Center, Hillsville,
VA, 1978-83.

Camp Counselor (1977 and 1976) and Volunteer (1975),
Camp Virginia Jaycee, Blue Ridge, VA.