

Any individual can take control and begin practices that build confidence, self-efficacy, a willingness to support others, and the ability to assume leadership roles.

Practical Solutions and Results

A year-long self-mentoring pilot study including a small group of volunteers from Duplin County in North Carolina yielded results that suggested participants gained confidence and increased self-efficacy as teacher leaders in and out of the classroom. For teachers that participated in self-mentoring, the focus was to become a stronger teacher leader in the school environment, and the strategies chosen during the school year proved to provide a 'leader' voice. Some teachers video-taped their classroom performance and sought feedback from other teachers as well as self-reflected to assess what worked and what could be altered for a more effective delivery to students. Other teachers chose to gather quantitative data. For example, one teacher counted the number of questions from students after giving directions to determine the need for more diverse methods of explaining assignments.

Teachers reported that they gained confidence through the control they maintained over meeting their expectation and through their choice of strategies. They became empowered to make decisions about their own teaching and leadership ability.

Duplin County Schools is now implementing self-mentoring as professional development in school planning. Teachers who went through the training encouraged others to participate. New teachers are encouraged to become self-mentors to learn more about the culture of their environment. Union High School in Sampson County, NC, began a study in the fall of 2013, but has already determined without final results that self-mentoring will become a school-wide program in 2014. Charlotte-Mecklenburg

Schools, NC has begun implementation of self-mentoring and the University of North Carolina, Wilmington is providing self-mentoring training for new faculty. Self-mentoring has grown to include university faculty, middle and high school students, professions exclusive of education, and even the business arena. England will be the first country to introduce self-mentoring through business school programs later this year.

Building Teacher Leaders

Leadership is a framework for school improvement and a tenant of self-mentoring. Through self-mentoring learners view themselves as a potential leaders. Self-mentoring promotes leaders in any setting. Self-mentoring is the act of accepting responsibility for your own growth and success – you are the best leader in your own life.

After all it is ‘*Your life – You lead!*’

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