

# Induction and Mentoring for Beginning Special Education Teachers:

## From Research to Practice

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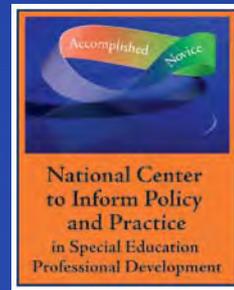
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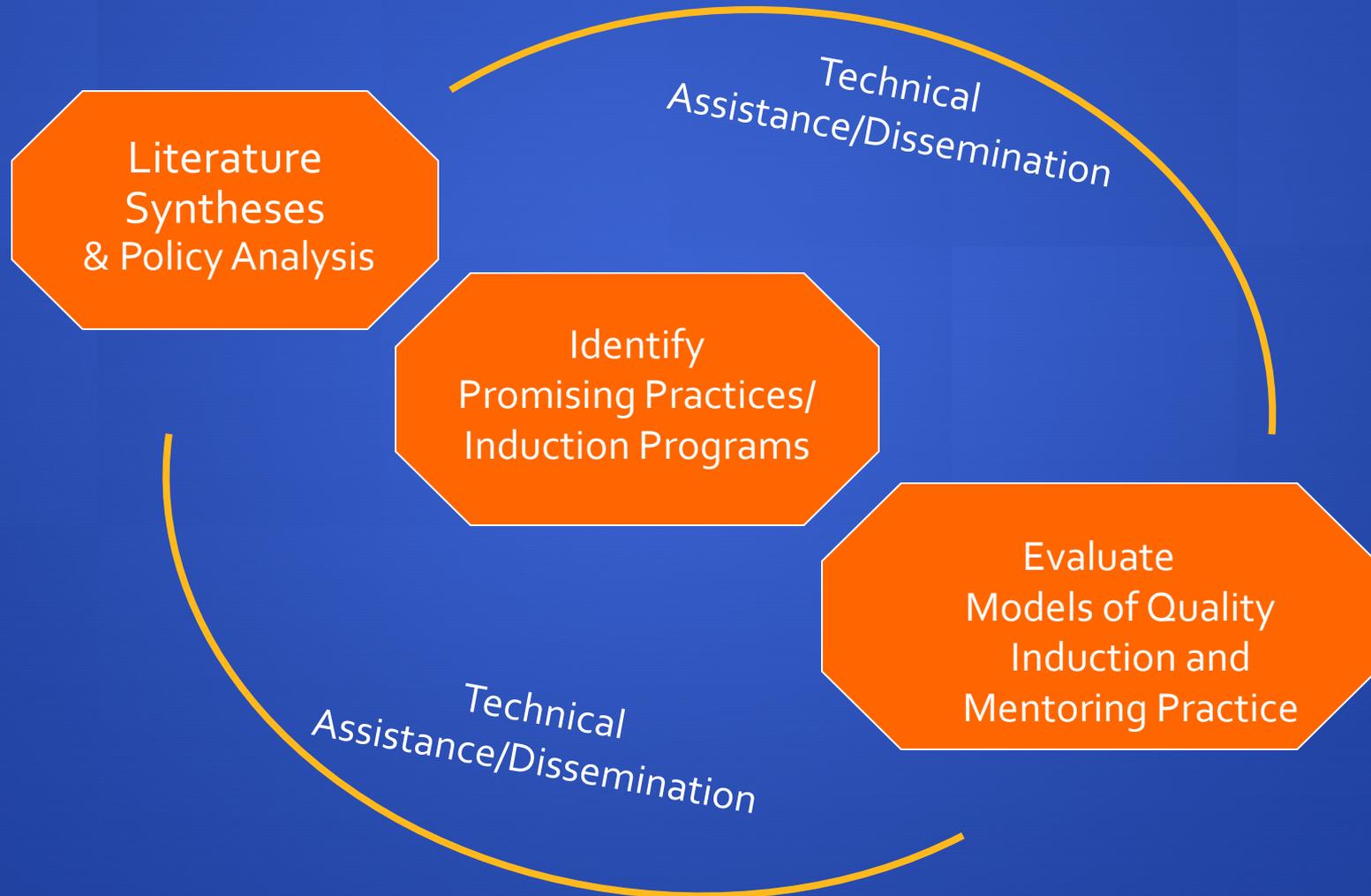
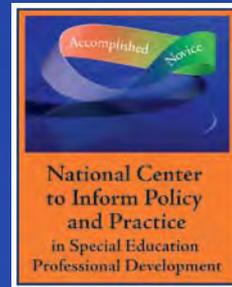
# NCIPP

National Center to Inform Policy and Practice in  
Special Education Professional Development

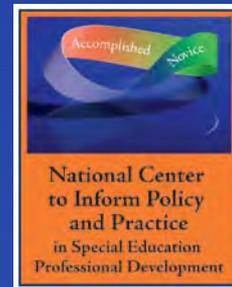


- **To improve teacher quality and increase commitment to teaching students with disabilities by**
  - informing special education policy and practice on induction and mentoring
  - identifying and recommending induction and mentoring implementation strategies

# NCIPP National Center to Inform Policy and Practice in Special Education Professional Development



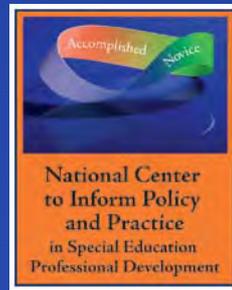
# Research: Mentor Matching



- Novice special education teachers (SETs) prefer mentors who:
  - Teach students with similar disabilities
  - Teach in the same grade level
- When this occurs, novice SETs tend to:
  - Request assistance often
  - Rate assistance favorably
- Ideal matches may be hard to achieve



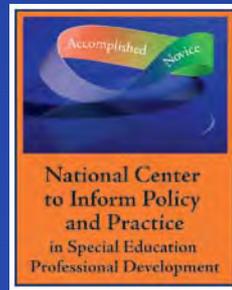
# Research: Formal and Informal Support



- Formally scheduled meetings with mentors are key
  - Appeal to novice SETs
  - Help to facilitate collaboration and communication between mentors and mentees
- Novices find informal supports are also beneficial
  - Impromptu meetings with mentors and colleagues

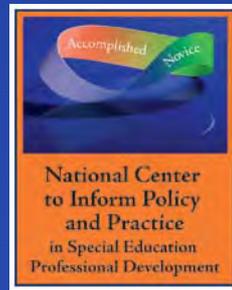


# Research: Mentor Contact



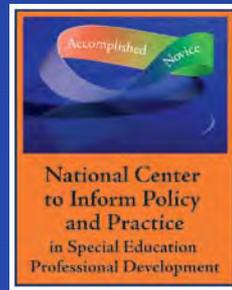
- Novices need accessible mentors, preferring mentors in close proximity
- And they need to meet at least weekly for the first year
  - Inadequate to address all of their professional and emotional needs
- Few state policies specify frequency of contact

# Research: Relevant Content

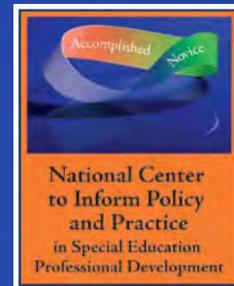


- Content of mentoring sessions should address special education issues
  - Strategies to teach and motivate challenging students
  - Adapting functional materials for instruction
  - Special education paperwork and procedures
- Beginners also have important secondary needs
  - Emotional support
  - Materials and resources
  - System information pertaining to the district
  - Procedural knowledge about how the school operates

# Research: Principal Support



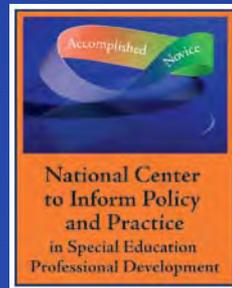
- Principal support strongly influences new teachers' job satisfaction and their decision to remain in teaching
- Principals can help beginners by
  - Assigning an appropriate mentor
  - Providing induction support tailored to beginning SETs' needs
  - Assisting beginners in managing multiple roles
  - Establishing a positive school culture
  - Facilitating their socialization and relationship development



# Research: Professional School Culture

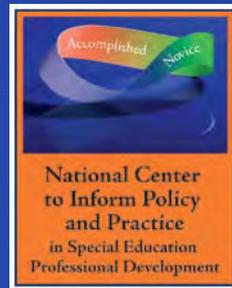
- A positive school culture is associated with beginning teachers' job satisfaction and their intention to remain in teaching
  - Professional Learning Communities can help novice special education teachers acclimate to their role and environment
    - PLCs provide school-based supports and facilitate the socialization of SETs
    - PLCs provide a safe environment for debating issues and solving problems
    - However, we do not know how PLCs have integrated novice SETs successfully

# Research: Collaboration



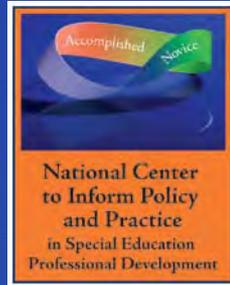
- Novice special education teachers need to develop positive relationships with their professional colleagues
  - Special education teachers
  - General education teachers
  - Related service providers
  - Paraprofessionals
- They report high satisfaction when they collaborate with veteran teachers

# Site Study Questions



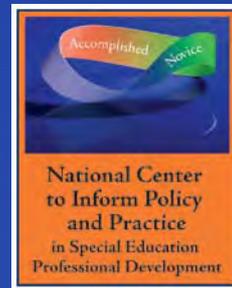
- **How are quality Induction & Mentoring programs structured?**
  - Mentor selection process
  - Mentoring training and ongoing support
  - Procedures/protocols for mentoring
  - Program evaluation procedures
  - Cost of implementation
- **What are the practices of quality mentors?**
  - Content
  - Processes
  - Parameters/Roles

# Sources of Evidence



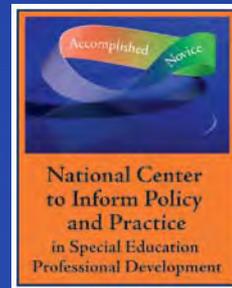
- Interviews
  - Induction program directors
  - Trainers
  - Mentors
  - Select beginners
- Artifacts
  - Mentor logs
  - Training manuals
  - Protocols for providing feedback /lesson planning
- Observations
  - Mentoring Sessions

# Special School District Preliminary Findings



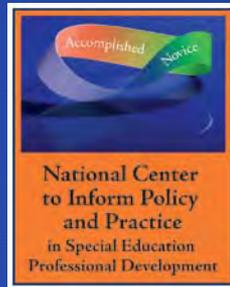
- Alignment with research
  - Purposeful supports provided
  - Multiple years of structured support and PD
  
- Additional mentoring practices and support from case studies
  - Multiple layers of support
  - Data-driven instruction

# Program Rationale & Goals



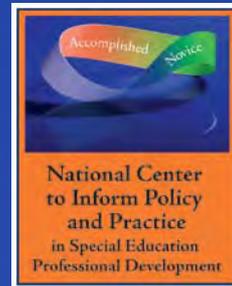
- **Rationale:**
  - Missouri State requirement for mentoring (2 years)
  - Potential to address district challenges (retention, teacher quality)
- **Goal:**
  - Aimed at building instructional quality, increasing student achievement, and retaining efficacious teachers.

# Overview



- **2 Academies**
  - **Academy 1**
    - 3 years
    - Two levels of mentors, school-based and instructional facilitator
    - Professional development coursework
  - **Academy 2**
    - 2 years
    - Work collaboratively with colleagues
    - Analyze student data and implement research strategies

# Mentoring Contact and Match



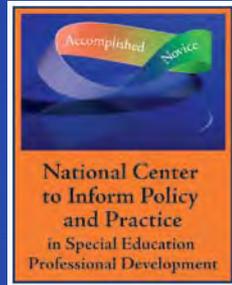
## Contact

Research	SSD Practice
At least once a week	Instructional facilitator – minimum 25 hours a year
Close proximity	School-based mentor- minimum 7 hours 1 <sup>st</sup> semester, 3.5 second semester

## Match

Research	SSD Practice
Teach students with same disability	Match IF by area, professional development given by IF with disability knowledge
Teach students at same grade level	Match SBM at grade level and disability if possible

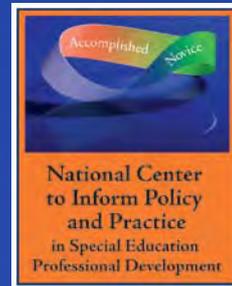
# School-Based Mentor



Research	SSD practice
Formal and Informal Support	Formal support required Informal support utilized
Content- Special education procedures/paperwork Emotional support Materials/resources System information pertaining to district Procedural knowledge about how the school operates	Content- immediate classroom concerns Special education procedures/paperwork Emotional support Materials/resources System information pertaining to district

“I usually just check in with them once a day. “Hey, how’s it going?” Kerry and I are sharing a math class, so I’ll see her at the end of everyday. And then Nancy, I’ll catch her, just kinda say hi, stop in at the end of the day or during my planning period just to kind of go and see how things are going. Marleen, we have classrooms next door to each other, so her needing the higher level support and understanding, ya know, she’ll just knock on the door real quick or send a student over, just ask questions, or just need to process a situation that happened in class.” –*School-Based Mentor*

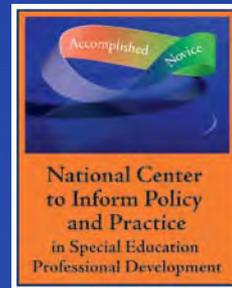
# Instructional Facilitator



Research	SSD Practice
Content of mentoring- focus on strategies for students with disabilities	Quality Instruction Skill Sets

Quality Instruction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Assesses student learning, uses assessment results to plan, selects learning experiences, delivers instruction and reflects on evidence of student learning.</li><li>2. Provides direct instruction in skills and strategies to ensure that students have access to and benefit from the general education curriculum using the components of lesson design in the advance organizer, body and post organizer.</li><li>3. Demonstrates techniques to promote maximum student involvement/learning.</li><li>4. Integrates basic technology in the learning environment.</li><li>5. Identifies cultural and diversity factors that contribute to student learning .</li></ol>
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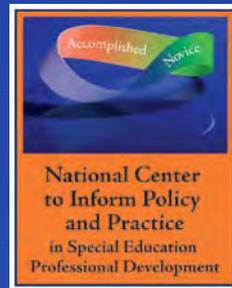
# Professional Development Focus



Research	SSD practice
Content of mentoring- focus on strategies for students with disabilities	Teachers participate in a series of courses aimed at gaining knowledge in a variety of instructional strategies specifically designed for students with disabilities

- Examples of coursework:
  - Collaborative Teaching
  - Fundamentals/Proficiency in Sentence Writing
  - Instructional Strategies for Secondary Mathematics
  - Literacy Strategies for Primary Students (K-2)
  - Supports for Students with Social/Emotional Concerns
  - Self Advocacy Strategy

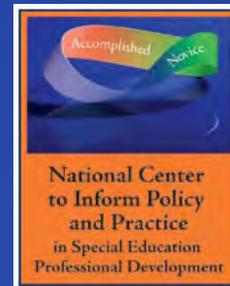
# School and District Culture



Research	SSD Practice
Positive school culture	District focus on data, reflection, and change for improvement
Opportunities to collaborate with colleagues	Data teams

“We’ve got a long history of great people here. We come across teachers who have left us and gone to work in other places, and they come back and say ‘I never realized the amount of resources and support that there is with SSD.’ We (SSD) believe it’s your responsibility to be able to meet the needs of any child in the county, no matter what the incidence rate is and we have the resources to support this goal or somebody knows somebody that can help. I mean, there’s just too many professionals in our group to not be able to figure this out.” --SSD Program Director

# Principal Support

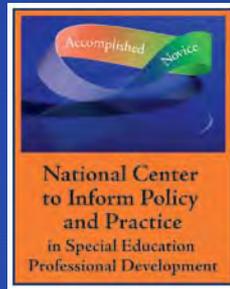


Research	SSD Practice
<p>Support including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Providing induction support tailored to beginning SETs' needs</li><li>•Assisting beginners in managing multiple roles</li><li>•Establishing a positive school culture</li><li>•Facilitating socialization and relationship development</li></ul>	<p>Varies by site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Establishing a positive school culture</li><li>•Facilitating socialization and relationship development</li></ul>

“The principal is really, really good, he was early childhood special ed. before, so he really tries to instill that the students are students, not that they’re special ed. kids separate from the school... He comes in the room. He’ll do observations of my teaching and give me feedback on how it’s going. He’ll just come in to visit with the kids from time to time, so he’s real visible in there, as well as everywhere else.”

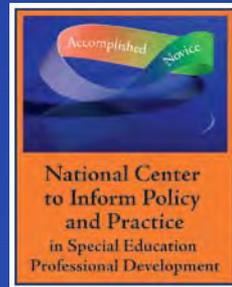
-- *Beginning Teacher*

# Other Noteworthy Practices: Going Beyond the Research



- Well developed materials to guide mentoring process
- Mentor training
- Ongoing Evaluation
- Critical Reflection
- Sustained Funding

# Questions We Are Still Pursuing



- What is the content of mentoring conversations?
- How do mentoring conversations influence practices teachers use in their classroom?
- How are mentoring programs organized in districts with one and two year programs?
- Questions?