

# Preface

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There are books and resource materials for mentoring in the business section of bookstores, but few exist that specifically describe for elementary and middle-level principals what mentoring is, how it's done, or what outcomes are possible. By writing this book, we hope to contribute authentic information that in a variety of ways might fulfill that need. The literature for the business world is designed to help people become better leaders and advance in their careers. This book is designed to help elementary and middle-level principals gain insights that will enable them to do the same.

We envision this book being of primary value—but not limited to—the following audiences:

- Students and faculty engaged in college or university administrative training programs
- Aspiring principals
- Practicing principals
- Assistant principals
- Retired principals
- Association leaders
- Boards of education
- Superintendents, assistant superintendents
- Directors, supervisors, educational support personnel
- Service industry personnel
- Teachers
- Interested constituencies

As the legions of baby boomer principals retire, trained, effective mentors are critically needed to help “pass the torch” of leadership in our nation’s schools. Mentors know how to impart lessons in the “art” of being a principal. They share the “ins and outs” of the job that are unlikely to be learned from any other professional. They see their protégés and mentees in ways they have never considered themselves before, helping them develop into leaders in a world of change.

**x • Mentoring Principals**

This book contains an overview of the key components and phases of principal mentoring and adult learning. It provides the architecture for formal mentoring. For aspiring mentors and mentees, a set of meeting agendas linked to NAESP standards for principals are included. It also features authentic stories, reflections, and lessons learned from a mentor and his protégés. Additionally, the book draws on the mentoring experiences and wisdom of expert mentors around the country. It is intended to support the need for a trained cadre of certified mentors, provide direction in the “art” and “how to” of mentoring, and to share learning and practice with others.

Effective principal mentoring must be grounded in learning. We have attempted to share what we’ve learned as well as how we did it. Writing about our experiences has required hours of reflection. It was very beneficial. Together, we’ve learned much about ourselves and grown. As a result, we are better prepared to meet daily challenges, share our joys and sorrows with others, and model the art of being an effective principal.

*Principals must teach their ‘craft’ and support the ‘superstars’ who will make outstanding principals.*

*Every effective, practicing principal should identify, encourage, and nurture at least five aspiring principals before he or she retires or leaves the principalship.*

*Everything in an effective mentoring program for principals must be focused on ensuring learning for both the mentee and the mentor and ultimately the students.*

—Paul G. Young, 2003