

In June 2011, INTC conducted a cross-district survey of new teachers who had just completed their first year teaching. The research included 77 participants, all attendees of the 2011 Beginning Teacher Conference.

Weekly mentor/beginning teacher interactions are extremely valuable.

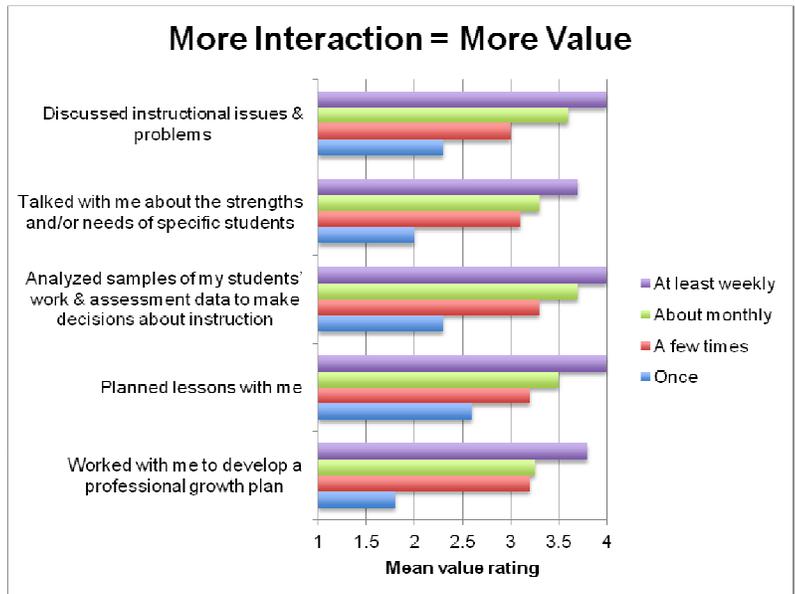
Participants were asked how often they interacted with their mentors during their first year and to rate the value of each of those supports. New teachers found weekly interactions with their mentors to be extremely valuable, while those that took place only once were generally viewed as only minimally or moderately valuable.

Positive Elements of Year One.

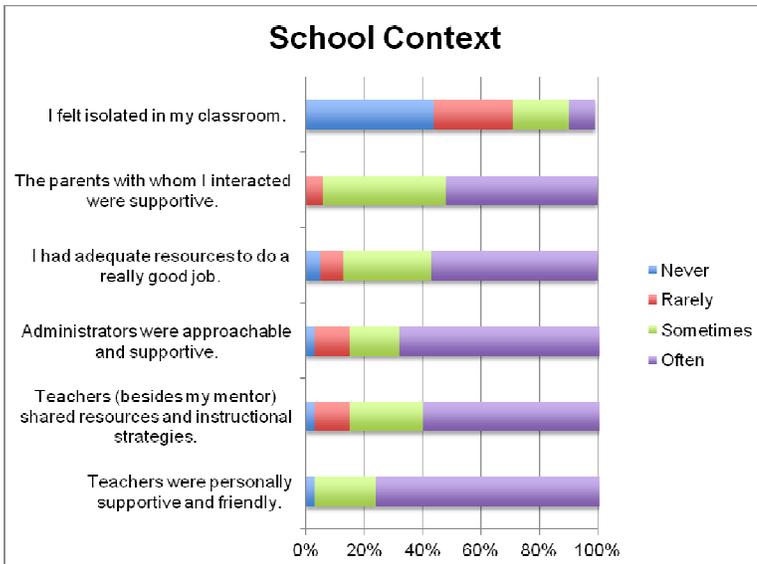
Beginning teachers were asked to describe the positive elements from their first year experiences. The response themes most related to:

- Feeling support from staff and/or parents
- Seeing student progress
- Relationships built with students and other staff members
- Professional learning and growth
- General comments related to students, and
- The teachers' mentoring program.

The element most positively cited by respondents (71%) was support received from colleagues, including mentors, administrators, and other teachers.



"The staff really helped me adjust to the building quickly, which allowed me to focus on my students"



School context is important to beginning teachers' feelings of isolation.

Many beginning teachers described their school context during their first year as supportive and friendly, yet they still reported feeling isolated in their classrooms. This may suggest that deeper staff interactions are needed beyond the initial exchange of materials, and that beginning teachers may want mentor involvement inside their classrooms. Such activities may lessen beginning teachers' feelings of isolation and provide a collaborative atmosphere between new teachers and their mentors. This can be particularly helpful at the start of the school year when many beginning teachers reported feeling the most pressure and stress.



The Illinois New Teacher Collaborative (INTC) is at the forefront of providing statewide leadership for promoting new teacher induction and mentoring programs and supplying resources for those who support new teachers. INTC Online offers resources for preservice teachers, new teaching professionals, teacher mentors, K-12 school administrators, service providers, and higher education professionals.