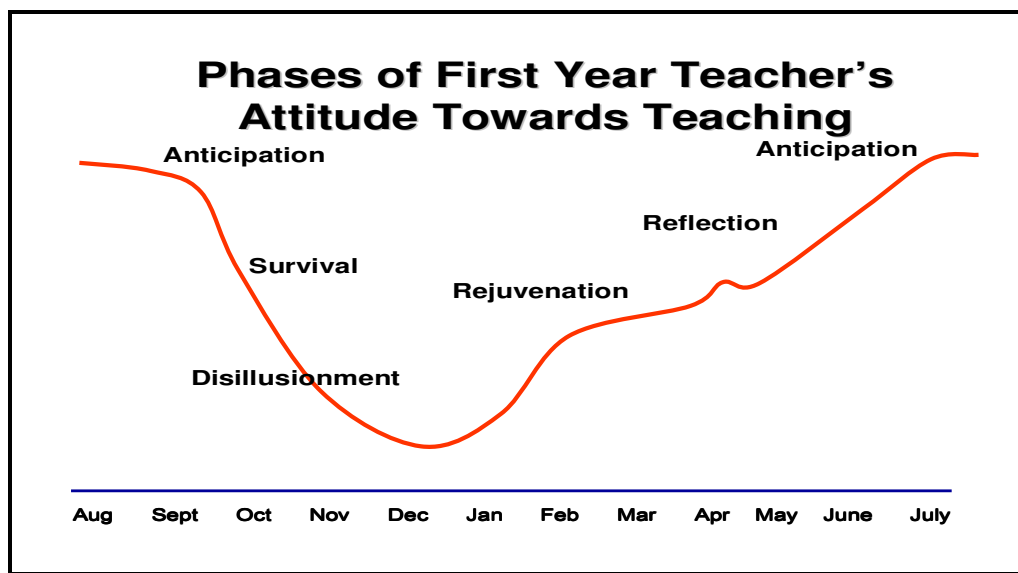


## Promising Support and Assistance Activities for Use When Working With Entry-Level Teachers: Case Findings for State Supervisors



National FFA Teacher Induction and Mentoring Project  
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## Introduction

Project personnel desired to know what different stakeholders involved in the life of the entry-level agricultural education teacher should do to assist the entry-level teacher as they proceed their initial year of teaching. An on-line instrument was selected as the mechanism to collect data.

The forms of assistance listed in the instrument for each phase of the attitudinal development were derived from interviews with 5 state supervisors from across the United States. Thirty-three state supervisors of agricultural education completed an on-line or hardcopy of an instrument that sought how strongly they recommend use of selected forms of support and assistance.

What follows is an initially listing of the forms of support and assistance activities that 33 state supervisors *strongly or very strongly recommended* they and peers use at different phases during the attitudinal development of entry-level agricultural education teachers. The phases for which forms of assistance were developed in the instrument were anticipation, survival, disillusionment, rejuvenation, reflection, and anticipation.

Table 1

*Strength of the Recommendation for State Supervisors Use of Selected Forms of Assistance and Support During the Anticipation Phase (N=33)*

Support and Assistance Activities	M	SD
Encourage ELTs to seek guidance, advise, support, and assistance from veteran agricultural education teachers.	5.8	0.4
Provide ELTs with the LPS and other CD-ROMS available from respective states and the National FFA.	5.6	0.5
Provide opportunities for ELTs to network with other teachers, state staff, resource people, university faculty, and policy-makers.	5.5	0.6
Assist the ELT in identifying and selecting a suitable area agricultural teacher mentor.	5.5	0.6
Review the professional teaching, SAE/WBL supervising, and FFA advising responsibilities of the ELT (curriculum, forms, teaching activities, and professional activities).	5.5	0.7
Visit the ELT at their school within the first month or two in the classroom.	5.4	0.9
Create a workshop for beginning teachers at the summer conference.	5.4	0.8
Assist the ELT prioritizing activities for successfully completing their job.	5.2	0.8
Provide ELTs with a number of occasions to inform state supervisors and what resources they need in order to be effective and successful teachers.	5.2	0.8
Enroll ELTs on the state and national list serve for all agricultural education teachers.	5.2	1.0

*Note:* Scale: Strength of Recommendation 6 = Very Strong, 5=Strong, 4 =Somewhat Strong, 3=Somewhat Weak, 2=Weak, 1=Very Weak.

Table 2

*Strength of the Recommendation for State Supervisors Use of Selected Forms of Assistance and Support During the Survival Phase (N=33)*

Support and Assistance Activities	M	SD
Provide encouragement and advocacy for the ELTs whenever appropriate.	5.7	0.5
Refer ELTs to individuals who can assist them with their concerns and needs.	5.5	0.7
Establish environments at various gatherings for new teachers to build relationships with other ELTs who are having similar professional experiences.	5.5	0.6
Establish special workshops for the ELTs to address challenges, gain information, and celebrate progress.	5.4	0.9
Convey the importance of balancing one's professional and personal life.	5.3	0.7
Visit the ELT in their school.	5.3	0.9
Use a variety of strategies to convince the ELTs the importance of meeting and interacting with the parents of students.	5.2	1.3
Provide access to resources by providing lists of quality vendors & web sites.	5.1	1.0
Promote the value of the knowledge about teaching developed through experience and derived from theory and research.	5.0	0.8
Supply information about models of teacher development and changes in attitudes during the first year of teaching to principals, ELTs, peers, in-school mentors, professional association members, and family members of ELTs.	4.7	0.9
In collaboration with NAAE-affiliate members, assure that the ELT rides with their mentor or another agricultural education teacher to professional and professional development meetings.	4.6	0.8
Assist ELTs, schools, and colleagues in addressing issues due to differences in the sex of the teachers (e.g., pregnancy and maternity leaves).	4.6	1.2

*Note:* Scale: Strength of Recommendation 6 = Very Strong, 5=Strong, 4 =Somewhat Strong, 3=Somewhat Weak, 2=Weak, 1=V. Weak.

Table 3

*Strength of the Recommendation for State Supervisors Use of Selected Forms of Assistance and Support During the Disillusionment Phase (N=33)*

Support and Assistance Activities	M	SD
Encourage first year teachers to contact their network for support and assistance.	5.6	0.7
Assist ELTs in developing realistic teaching goals and expectations for their first year of teaching.	5.4	0.8
Encourage ELTs to interact with other ELTs with a similar program.	5.4	0.7
Encourage ELTs who have extremely high FFA expectations for students in schools without past FFA traditions to have patience.	5.3	0.7
Visit the ELT, if severe problems exist, remedy the challenge(s) immediately.	5.2	1.3
Ask designated mentors, or guides, to provide support and assistance to ELTs.	5.2	0.9
Provide ELTs with instruction regarding how to effectively manage their time.	5.1	0.9
Provide instruction regarding how to secure funding for equipment and technology.	4.7	1.2
Provide counselors and principals with ideas of how to provide appropriate support and assistance to ELTs as they proceed through Moir's phases.	4.6	1.2

*Note:* Scale: Strength of Recommendation 6 = Very Strong, 5=Strong, 4 =Somewhat Strong, 3=Somewhat Weak, 2=Weak, 1=Very Weak.

Table 4

*Strength of the Recommendation for State Supervisors Use of Selected Forms of Assistance and Support During the Rejuvenation Phase (N=33)*

Offer encouragement to the ELTs.	5.7	0.5
Use a list serv to provide materials, information, teaching tips, and encouragement	5.5	0.8
Ask mentors to provide support and assistance to ELTs.	5.5	0.6
In order to improve their teaching, suggest that ELTs observe the teaching of highly- regarded master teachers.	5.3	0.9
Encourage teachers to visit classrooms and programs outside their own program	5.2	0.9
Encourage teachers to review their curriculum to identify ways to more effectively meet student needs.	5.2	0.7
Reflect on the successes, non-successes and events of the first semester.	5.2	0.8
Discuss how to justify and secure extended contracts.	5.1	0.9
Provide a workshop that focuses on their needs surrounding events, CDEs, and applications of the FFA.	5.1	0.9

*Note:* Scale: Strength of Recommendation 6 = Very Strong, 5=Strong, 4 =Somewhat Strong, 3=Somewhat Weak, 2=Weak, 1=Very Weak.

Table 5

*Strength of the Recommendation for State Supervisors Use of Selected Forms of Assistance and Support During the Reflection Phase (N=43)*

Support and Assistance Activities	M	SD
Encourage new teachers to attend a state wide meeting to get to know their colleagues.	5.8	0.4
Encourage ELTs to attend the state FFA convention.	5.8	0.5
Encourage new teachers to meet with their advisory committees.	5.5	0.8
Determine the in-service needs of the ELTs.	5.5	0.7
Provide encouragement and compliment them on their successes to date.	5.5	0.6
Assist ELTs in creating a plan for summer activities.	5.4	0.8
Encourage ELTs to schedule time for self, family, &/or other individuals.	5.4	0.8
Continue to provide for the professional development needs of ELTs that were determined throughout the academic year.	5.3	0.7
Encourage ELTs to identify curricula ideas that can strengthen their future program	5.3	0.8
Instruct ELTs how to set goals and plan for the future direction of the program.	5.2	0.8
Provide ELTs with ideas to plan SAE visits during the summer months.	5.2	0.9
Provide the setting for ELTs to meet as a group to identify and reflect upon successes and non-successes of their first year of teaching.	5.1	0.9
Guide discussions about the merits of continuing their teaching careers in teaching.	4.9	0.9
Visit each ELT in their school.	4.8	1.3
Discuss the implications of changing school districts; remind ELTs that moving will result in two first year experiences.	4.6	1.2

*Note:* Scale: Strength of Recommendation 6 = Very Strong, 5=Strong, 4 =Somewhat Strong, 3=Somewhat Weak, 2=Weak, 1=Very Weak.

Table 6

*Strength of the Recommendation for State Supervisors Use of Selected Forms of Assistance and Support During the Anticipation Phase (N=33)*

Support and Assistance Activities	M	SD
Encourage ELTs to attend state department of education and NAAE-affiliate sponsored summer conferences, as well as other professional development activities.	5.8	0.4
Encourage ELTs to schedule time for self, family, and/or other significant individuals.	5.6	0.7
Encourage ELTs to be involved in all aspects of summer conference activities including recreational activities, meetings, and social activities.	5.5	1.1
Encourage ELTs to collaborate with other teachers in their school.	5.4	0.8
Encourage ELTs to set long term program and personal professional goals with advice from mentors in neighboring programs.	5.4	0.7
Assist ELTs in creating end-of-year evaluations and progress reports that reflect progress that is attributable to the teacher.	5.3	1.1
Teach ELTs about the accountability needs of the state department of education. Assist ELTs in completing reports.	5.2	1.0

*Note:* Scale: Strength of Recommendation 6 = Very Strong, 5=Strong, 4 =Somewhat Strong, 3=Somewhat Weak, 2=Weak, 1=Very Weak.

**State Supervisors Views of the Qualities of Effective Mentors  
For Agricultural Education Teachers  
Winter 2006**

<b>Most Important Qualities of a Mentor</b>	<b>Second Most Important Qualities of A Mentor</b>	<b>Third Most Important Qualities of a Mentors</b>
Effective Listener (8) Availability (2) Desire To Be A Mentor (2) Knowledgeable (2) Respected (2) Supportive (2) A Leader A Role Model Demonstrates Patience Effective Communicator Empathy For ELT's Situation Exhibits Professionalism Exhibits Understanding Experienced Great Pedagogy Coach Has Integrity Honest Positive Role Model Successful Teacher	Competent (2) Trustworthy (2) Experienced Teacher (2) Knowledgeable (2) Listener (2) Capable Caring Communication Skills Concerned Dependable Effective Educator Acts as a Guide Was a Reputable Teacher and Had a Quality Ag Ed Program An Impact Teacher A Model Teacher Offers Constructive Ideas Shows Openness Exhibits Patience Positive Role Model Provides Access To Resources Shares Options Rather Than Answers Supportive Team Player Willingness To Work as a Mentor	Caring (3) Encouraging (2) Experienced (2) Friendly (2) A Share-All Attitude Accessible BALANCES AGED MODEL Compassionate Competence Confidential/Professional Encourages Professional Development Walks The Talk Follows Through Knowledgeable Loves People Model Teacher Shows Passion Positive Disposition Non-Judgmental Attitude Professional A Program Leader Successful Supportive Understanding Willingness To Assist Demonstrates Wisdom

**State Supervisors Views of the Primary Challenges Facing  
Entry-Level Agricultural Education Teachers  
Winter 2006**

<b>Greatest Challenge Faced by Entry-Level Teachers</b>	<b>Second Greatest Challenge</b>	<b>Third Greatest Challenge</b>
Classroom Management (7) Time Management (7) Student Discipline (3) Program funding (3) Prioritizing time (2) Setting priorities (2) Limited subject matter knowledge Lack understanding of job responsibilities Feeling of isolation Lack of organization skills Challenge of overcoming negative program Overwhelming nature of job Limited planning skills Fail to ask for assistance	Time Management (5) Needs to Establish Realistic Goals (2) Organization Skills are Limited (2) Limited or Lacking Educational Resources (2) Additional Responsibilities Beyond Teaching (2) Classroom Management (3 ) Administration Support Deciding What To Teach High Stakes Testing/Accountability Lack Of Preparation In Content Area Lesson Plan Development Maturity Not Interacting With Advisory Board & Community Outside Classroom (Paper Work) Overwhelmed By Duties / Expectations Preparation And Planning Satisfying Administrator On State Tests Setting Priorities Skill and Time to Complete Reports And Applications State, District And School Regulations Student Management	Time Management (4) Discipline Management (2) Budgeting Issues Classroom Management Curriculum Development District And State Leaders Doesn't Listen To Advice FFA Knowledge Is Limited FFA And SAE Program Management Complete Lessons – Too Short Inexperienced Instructional Skills are Lacking Lack Of School Resources Local School District Policies And Responsibilities Managing FFA Activities Planning SAE/FFA Taking Time To Review And Analyze What Happened. Technical Competence Unable To Focus On What They Should Be Doing Unprepared Unrealistic Expectations Regarding to the Teaching Work Load



Table 7

*Phases During Which It Is Highly Important That State Supervisors Conduct Selected Support & Assistance Activities (N=33)*

Support and Assistance Activities	Recommended Phases to Conduct Support and Assistance Activities with ELTs						
	Anticipation	Survival	Disillusionment	Rejuvenation	Reflection	Anticipation	N/A
Show that you think highly of the ELT	27 <sup>1</sup>	25	26	23	22	22	0
	81.8 <sup>2</sup>	75.8	78.8	69.7	66.7	66.7	0
Serve as a role model for the ELT	25	23	22	22	19	18	0
	75.8	69.7	66.7	66.7	57.6	54.5	0
Interact socially outside of the school setting of the ELT	16	14	13	15	9	12	7
	48.5	42.4	39.4	45.5	27.3	36.4	21.2
Provide support and encouragement	27	26	24	23	22	20	0
	81.8	78.8	72.7	69.7	66.7	60.6	0
Show willingness to discuss the questions & concerns of the ELT	23	25	26	24	21	18	0
	69.7	75.8	78.8	72.7	63.5	54.5	0
Serve as a sounding board for the ELT	18	23	26	19	20	13	0
	54.5	69.7	78.8	57.6	60.6	39.4	0
Convey feelings of respect	22	22	24	23	23	17	0
	66.7	66.7	72.7	69.7	69.7	51.5	0
Serve as a confidant	17.	23	25	17	17	15	1
	51.5	69.7	75.8	51.5	51.5	45.5	3.0
Be an individual the ELT may desire to emulate	19	18	17	21	20	22	0
	57.6	54.5	51.5	63.6	60.6	66.7	0
Show acceptance of the ELT as being a competent teacher & colleague	8	21	21	22	22	18	0
	24.2	63.6	63.6	66.7	66.7	54.5	0
Be someone the ELT can identify with	19	17	19	17	19	16	2
	57.6	51.5	57.6	51.5	57.6	48.5	6.1
Socialize with the ELT on a one-to-one basis outside of work	8	6	7	6	7	7	15
	24.2	18.2	21.2	18.2	21.2	21.2	45.5
Get together informally after work	10	9	11	7	9	5	12
	30.3	27.3	33.3	21.2	27.3	15.2	36.4
Share personal experiences as another perspective for informing the problems of the ELT	16	22	20	21	15	13	2
	48.5	66.7	60.6	63.6	45.5	39.4	6.1
Be a trustworthy professional acquaintance	28	26	27	27	26	24	0
	84.8	77.8	81.8	81.8	78.8	72.7	0

Note: <sup>1</sup> Frequency <sup>2</sup> Percentage of State Supervisors.

