



## Supporting New Teachers

Elko County School District (ECSD) has long recognized that a “sink or swim” attitude toward teachers new to the profession and/or new to the district is not ideal for teacher retention and fulfillment. The RISE (Retain, Induct, Support, Encourage) program for new teachers, provided through a partnership between ECSD and Northeastern Nevada Regional Professional Development Program (NNRPDP), has been in effect for at least a dozen years with revisions to fine-tune the program along the way.

This focus of supporting new teachers aligns with one of three state-level priorities identified during Nevada’s 2015 legislative session (SB474), that of recruiting and retaining effective teachers. Research supports the idea that providing induction and mentoring for new teachers increases retention (Ingersoll, 2012, Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). High-quality induction programs not only increase retention, but they are also linked with increased teacher effectiveness and student achievement (Strong, 2006).

The umbrella goal of RISE is effectively communicated through the acronym - it is to **retain** newly-hired teachers through an **induction** program that provides **support** and **encouragement**. With that goal in mind, NNRPDP coordinators provided a week-long RISE Induction for new teachers prior to the start of school and facilitated a mentor component providing support to mentors who then provided support to new teachers at their school sites. These two components helped teachers navigate the essential workings of the district and their schools, understand and implement high leverage pedagogical standards, and receive ongoing, job-embedded support throughout the school year.

## Instructional Context

Elko County School District employs over six hundred teachers, hiring an average of 54 teachers each year over the past decade. Fifty-three new teachers were hired for the 2018-2019 school year. These new hires teach in fifteen rural and semi-rural schools filling an array of positions in grades K-12 including regular education teachers in all disciplines, special education, music, PE, and library. They teach the district’s student population including those with identified learning disabilities (nearly 13% with IEPs), those who speak English as a second

language (10%), and those facing the challenge of poverty (nearly 40% free and reduced priced lunch eligible).

With nearly 10% of the teaching force being new to the district each year, a strong start and robust support is essential.

### **Initial Data and Planning**

In partnership with ECSD, NNRPDP continued the RISE program in 2018-19 with teachers newly hired by the district. This effort coincides with a statewide focus on recruiting and retaining effective teachers. Both the week-long RISE Induction prior to the start of school and the ongoing site-based mentoring support have received overwhelmingly positive reviews from past participants. Data collected in 2016-17 indicates RISE was a valuable experience for both newly hired teachers and their mentors. In a 2016-17 survey, 100% of participants rated the experience of the 5-day institute prior to the start of the new school year as positive.

*This has been some of the best PD I have had. Very relevant and useful. No time was wasted and we felt very welcome. I like how everything being used, including the format, can be used in my classroom. I appreciate time spent sharing ideas with other teachers.*

*This...work has been extremely useful in numerous ways, first off, it's great to get to know other teachers in Elko County and begin networking.*

Regarding the impact of site-based mentor support, participants had only positive reviews:

*I was extremely lucky to have a mentor that was not only checking on my teaching skills, but cared about how I was doing personally as well.*

*RISE has been a positive experience. It is comforting to know that I could always count on my mentor for advice or just having someone to bounce ideas off of.*

Additionally, 100% of mentors reported that mentoring newly hired teachers had a positive impact on them professionally and that they found value in their role, growing as colleagues and professionals.

*I appreciated this experience, and I was grateful for the opportunity to be a school mentor. It is humbling, but also wonderful professional development for me. I believe in a shared leadership model; and, once again, RISE (NNRPDP) delivered a quality program.*

*This opportunity has been wonderful for both myself and my mentees. They have grown more comfortable throughout the year coming to me with questions and in many cases, we are seeking the answers together. It has really helped to create a better sense of community within our school.*

At the end of the 2017-18 school year, NNRPDP coordinators brought mentors together to brainstorm possible ways to make RISE more effective for teachers. Many questions were posed, and ideas were discussed, and at the end of the session, one mentor summed up the feelings of the group, “Why do you want to change RISE...it’s working!” With that in mind, NNRPDP facilitators planned 2018-19 RISE with the same structure as in the prior two years with only a few small updates.

### **Learning Design**

Keeping in mind the overarching goal of RISE, to support and encourage new teachers, and knowing that effective support and encouragement includes a variety of structures at multiple levels, NNRPDP facilitators planned to support new teachers through the implementation of two major components: 1) the week-long RISE program prior to the start of school, and 2) providing support to site-based mentors by establishing a mentor community and facilitating sessions at regular intervals throughout the school year.

#### **Part I: RISE Induction**

Prior to the start of school, newly-hired teachers gathered at the Elko High Tech Center for a week-long induction. With the exception of one full day mid-week at the school site, each day followed a predictable schedule designed to provide engaging pedagogical content, coordinated opportunities for connections and networking on multiple levels, and pertinent information regarding the practical details of working in the state of Nevada, specifically Elko County School District.

**Content.** Since Nevada Academic Content Standards vary for each educator depending on the content and grade level they teach, participants were given focused time to locate and delve into the content standards applicable to them. This content was presented as the “what” to teach. Pedagogical content regarding “how” to teach included a dive into each of the five high-leverage instructional standards and indicators comprising the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF) which Nevada educators are expected to implement and by which they are evaluated. As a practical companion providing ways to implement the NEPF instructional standards, facilitators engaged participants in Ron Ritchart’s work with Project Zero at Harvard’s Graduate School of Education outlined in the book, *Creating Cultures of Thinking*. The morning content continued with what NNRPDP facilitators call “ready to roll” -- a practical piece where teachers think through and plan for necessary routines and procedures and anticipate the whirlwind of the first weeks of school.

**Connections.** Fostering connections between new teachers and assigned mentors has become an integral part of the RISE program. This began on the afternoon of day two when each site-based mentor met with the teachers new to that school, facilitating a short productive meeting. The following day new teachers spent the day with their assigned mentors at their school sites becoming familiar with the school, setting up their classrooms, and meeting others at the school with whom they will spend the year working closely. NNRPDP provided mentors a comprehensive checklist to ensure that each new teacher received pertinent information concerning the complex details and systems particular to their school.

NNRPDP facilitators orchestrated networking sessions for new teachers to get to know other newly-hired teachers, those in their same grade level, at their school sites, and throughout the district, as well as mentors, administrators, and district office personnel. These networking sessions occurred in “walking meetings” where participants usually left the building to get some sun while discussing a provocative question such as “What is one of the most important words in education today, and why do you think so?”

To create a bridge between district office personnel and new teachers, each day began with a welcome from administration starting with the superintendent, assistant superintendent, and directors of curriculum and special services so teachers begin to recognize names and faces and know that those individuals are approachable and accessible. Assigned school site mentors, school administrators, school board members, and district office staff were invited to attend RISE and, despite busy schedules, often sat in for a session or two.

One session new teachers participated in, “hot topics”, is a segment which both new teachers and NNRPDP facilitators have come to anticipate. During this session, new teachers rotated through short roundtable discussions facilitated by principals and mentors from throughout the district. Each roundtable discussion focused on timely topics including collaborating with colleagues, priorities for the first six weeks of school, and building relationships with families and the community.

On the final day of the RISE program, newly-hired teachers were treated to a luncheon, hosted at a local venue, where they were joined by their school site administrators, mentors, and school board members. Participants were given certificates recognizing their attendance and participation as well a monetary stipend from the district recognizing the time devoted to RISE providing support for what could be a long stretch of time between regular paychecks. Additionally, to help new teachers with the licensure renewal process, the district obtained continuing education credits for new teachers who participated in all five days of RISE.

**District Details.** Each afternoon, participants completed required “district details” including training in harassment and boundary policies and Olweus (anti-bullying) training, as well as becoming familiar with district Special Education policies and procedures, employee portal housing information and records, state retirement program, district health insurance, online grading system, and teachers’ association (which they were invited to join).

## **Part II: Supporting Site-Based Mentors**

Mentors for each school were chosen by the administrator at that school. The mentors received support from NNRPDP coordinators and they, in turn, supported newly-hired teachers at their schools. Mentors, who were paid a stipend by the district as a token of appreciation for the often-extensive amount of extra work required in their role, came together for an initial face-to-face orientation provided by NNRPDP coordinators during the week of RISE.

**Critical Friends Groups.** Critical Friends Groups (CFG) are a protocol-driven form of Professional Learning Community (PLC). Based on past success, NNRPDP coordinators chose to implement Mentor CFGs as the vehicle for regular professional mentorship and collaborative support for mentors who, in turn, facilitated RISE CFGs for new teachers at their school sites. The effectiveness of CFGs is dependent upon participants’ voluntary attendance; therefore, new teachers were not required to attend; rather, mentor teachers developed relationships with new teachers inviting and encouraging them to attend.

**Cycles of Support via Zoom.** The community of mentors participated in cycles of support spaced over the course of the year. In previous years, mentors met face to face for CFG meetings, but this year, following the initial face-to-face orientation meeting to begin establishing a professional mentor community, they met via the online synchronized Zoom meeting platform. In Mentor CFGs, NNRPDP coordinators supported mentors in their role with new teachers while modeling effective facilitation of protocols which mentors then used to facilitate new teacher CFGs at their school site. Each cycle consisted of:

- attending an online synchronous mentor CFG facilitated by NNRPDP;
- facilitating a face-to-face new teacher CFG modeled after the one they experienced with NNRPDP coordinators at their school site; and
- reflecting on the CFG experience.

**Protocols.** In order to provide relevant support and consistency, the coordinators chose to include two components in every CFG which mentors then replicated in the CFG they facilitated at their school. Since all teachers benefit from reading and discussing worthy professional literature, and all teachers face dilemmas and benefit from collaborative support to resolve, each two-hour CFG agenda included two main parts:

1. Processing a relevant professional text using a CFG protocol such as The Three Levels of Text Protocol (adapted from National School Reform Faculty), the purpose

- of which is to deepen understanding of a text and explore implications for participants' work, or processing a text using "thinking routines" described in the text, *Creating Cultures of Thinking*.
2. Processing a mentoring dilemma using The Consultancy Dilemma Protocol (adapted from National School Reform Faculty) which provides a structured process to help a participant see new possibilities for a dilemma they face.

After engaging in the Mentor CFG facilitated by NNRPDP coordinators, mentors scheduled and facilitated a RISE CFG with new teachers at their school. Like the mentor CFG, this on-site CFG included the following components:

1. Processing a relevant professional text (chosen by the mentor) using a protocol or thinking routine modeled in the mentor CFG.
2. Processing a teaching dilemma encountered by a new teacher using The Consultancy Dilemma Protocol.

**Responsibilities.** Principals, mentors, and NNRPDP coordinators shared responsibility for the job-embedded year-long support provided at each site. Detailing, sharing, and effectively communicating responsibilities for the mentoring support for new teachers is essential for success.

#### Principals

- Assign one or more mentors at their school site depending on the number of new teachers

#### Mentors

- Attend a face-to-face orientation and planning meeting prior to the start of school
- Provide an orientation and support new teachers at the school site prior to the start of school
- Co-facilitate "Hot Topics" discussion during the week of RISE
- Participate in online synchronous Mentor CFGs (Critical Friends Group) four times over the course of the year with other mentors to collaborate, plan, and experience protocols to use to assist new teachers
- Schedule, plan, and facilitate five face-to-face New Teacher CFGs over the course of the school year with new teachers at their school site(s)
- Share a written reflection on Google Docs for each of the five CFGs facilitated
- Provide ongoing support to new teachers as needed

#### NNRPDP Coordinators

- Facilitate an orientation session for mentor teachers prior to the start of school
- Facilitate four Mentor CFGs over the course of the school year which serve as a model for mentors to replicate at their school site
- Review and respond to reflections on CFGs and provide ongoing support for mentor teachers

## Measurement

Several measurements were used to determine the effectiveness of the 2018-19 RISE program. Data were collected from RISE participants and from RISE mentors in the form of surveys, questionnaires, and reflections.

### RISE Participants

**Surveys.** RISE participants completed a 4-question survey at the end of the five days prior to school starting. This survey involved using a five-point Likert scale to rate the effectiveness of that component of the induction process in the following ways: 1) The training will improve my teaching skills, 2) I will use the knowledge and skills from this training in my classroom or professional duties, 3) My learning today has prompted me to change my practice, and 4) My learning today will affect students' learning.

**Reflections.** Participants' reflections from both the five-day session prior to school starting and from the ongoing site-based support they received from their mentor gave the coordinators additional awareness of the effect of these two components of the RISE program.

### RISE Mentors

**Questionnaires.** RISE mentors completed an end-of-year questionnaire including open-ended questions to determine how their role as mentors was fulfilling and challenging and to determine the effectiveness of support provided by NNRPDP.

**Reflections.** RISE mentor reflections from each CFG they facilitated at their school provided rich anecdotal evidence of the success of this component.

## Results and Discussion

### RISE Participants - Impact of RISE Induction

RISE participants completed a survey at the end of the five days prior to school starting. This core component of the RISE program, while changing somewhat from year to year in substance, has remained much the same in structure. An analysis of responses to four survey questions and from open-ended reflections indicate that this component of RISE continues to have a meaningful, positive impact.

*I really enjoyed this process. Getting to know the people in the district and other new teachers. Also having this week and bringing much of the information I've learned in college all together to apply to the specific population here in Elko County has been beneficial for me, especially as a brand-new teacher.*

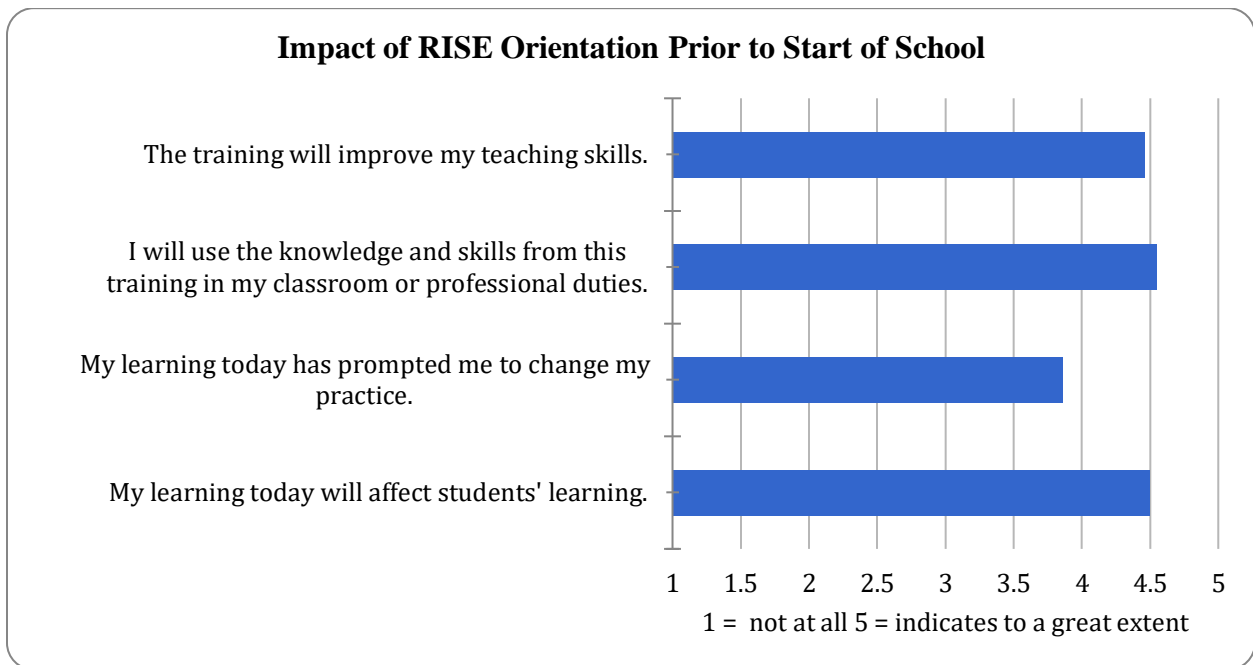
*RISE is beneficial to help in understanding the best practices for teaching.*

*Best thing I have seen in the State of Nevada.*

*Such a helpful training! Feel so much more prepared for the year!*

*I really enjoyed the interactions and discussion.*

*I'm exhausted, but super excited! I appreciate all the effort and time that went into planning and delivering RISE.*



**Figure 1:** Impact of RISE Orientation Prior to Start of School

On three of the four survey questions, 100% of RISE participants rated the impact in the 4 to 5 range on a Likert scale of 1–5, where a rating of 1 indicates not at all and a rating of 5 indicates to a great extent. The question receiving a score in the three range was “My learning today has prompted me to change my practice.” Since school had not yet started, and teachers were not actively teaching, this rating is understandable as shown in Figure 1.

On the same survey, participants were given the opportunity to respond to three open-ended questions. Question one asked, “From today’s session, what will you transfer to practice?” Forty-eight of the fifty-four participants responded, and four themes emerged reflecting the major components of RISE as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Themes Reflected in RISE Participant Responses



<b>Theme</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Classroom Environment	<i>Building a culture of learning</i>  <i>Planning the last 5 minutes of class for group reflection</i>  <i>I will be more aware of the culture I am creating in my classroom</i>  <i>I will establish routines for my classroom</i>  <i>Not only focusing on classroom management, but more on student learning.</i>
Learning strategies and methods modeled throughout the week	<i>I loved all the methods modeled for learning...the walking meeting, the large post-it notes, the conga line, the give one, get one...</i>
NEPF	<i>Conscious application of NEPF</i>  <i>I need to really pay close attention to the NEPF standards and focus on those in my classroom.</i>
NVACS	<i>Becoming more familiar with NVACS and understanding them.</i>

### **RISE Participants - Impact of Ongoing Site-Based Support**

RISE participants completed reflections at the end of each CFG meeting. These reflections were mined for correlation with NEPF standards, support and encouragement provided through CFG, comments directly related to mentorship, and lastly the emerging theme “teaching is hard”. It is important to note that there were no negative statements related to mentorship nor CFG meetings.

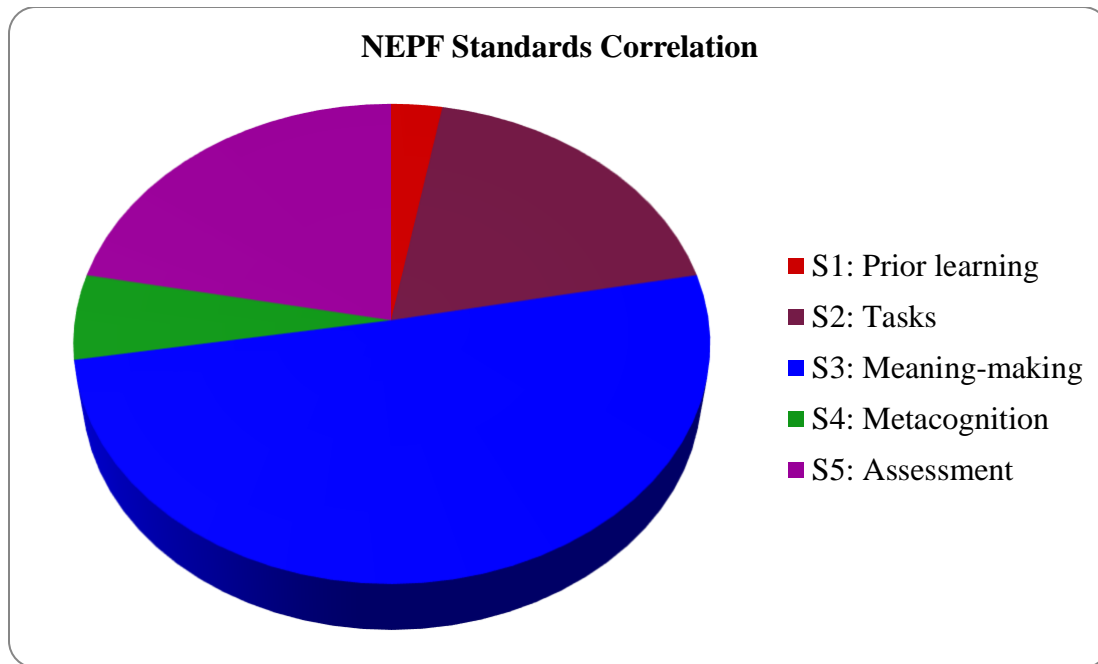


Figure 2: NEPF Standards Correlation

Teachers who participated in RISE CFG reflected on the experience following each meeting. Since a significant portion of the RISE program week focused on exploring and understanding the NEPF standards, the coordinator mined reflections for statements correlated to NEPF standards finding that many statements did indeed relate. Of the 105 total statements correlated to NEPF standards, half corresponded with standard three. Since this standard is about students making meaning through multiple representations, the coordinator included all references to strategies. Additionally, the fourth indicator for this standard references classroom environment and affective experience for students, so all statements related to establishing a positive classroom culture were included with this standard. The standard with the fewest corresponding statements was standard one dealing with activating and connecting new learning with prior learning and experience followed by standard four which focuses on metacognition. This data could indicate a need for greater focus on these two important aspects of teaching in the future (See Figure 2).

Aside from statements correlated to NEPF standards, two major themes emerged from RISE participants' reflections: 1) teaching is hard, and 2) mentors and regular CFG meetings provided necessary support and encouragement.

**Teaching is Hard.** *Being a teacher is hard, especially being a first-year teacher. Questions constantly run through my mind such as, "Did I choose the right profession?" "Am I doing good enough?" "Why do people keep asking me if I want to stay a teacher?" Being successful starts with yourself but also requires a lot of outside help from the principal, other teachers, and the community.*

*As a first-year teacher, I had so many things running in my head all at once. As soon as I got one thing done, something else came up. For a while, it felt like it was never-ending. I was at school from early morning until late at night trying to plan and make sure everything is ready for my students the next day...*

*It can be hard to step away from the daily stressors and put them into perspective, but it is key to making it through the harder parts of teaching. Networking and finding support is so important.*

*I need to be more aware of my verbal and nonverbal language. Sometimes it is hard to stay positive at the end of a long day.*

*My dilemma: how do you tell the difference between a struggling student versus an unmotivated kid?*

One participant spewed a laundry list of problems:

- *Not enough time to plan for 7 classes*
- *Canvas is clunky, slow, could use a search bar*
- *Still waiting on licensing*
- *[School Club] takes up too much time on activities that have little to no correlation to [my content].*
- *First year teachers apparently cannot be evaluated on student-driven data, even though we need to use it anyway.*
- *The computers are not able to run the software needed to develop the games.*
- *Students destroy the chairs*

...and ended his reflection with a single word goal: *survive*.

*First year teaching is overwhelming and requiring, suggesting, or even asking 1st year teachers to participate, help or act as an advisor for another club ... is too much. Duties get delegated down to the 1st year teacher, with little appreciation to what their course load looks like. This ongoing desire to use new teacher to fill holes in the organizations takes away from the teachers' ability to effectively teach. Goal: to limit - as much as possible - any additional involvement in clubs and organizations; it is not worth the pay, nor the sacrifice to the teacher's primary job which should be to focus on becoming an effective teacher.*

*My first-year teaching has been a rollercoaster ride. I have had highs and lows! I have had two big challenges. The first challenge was trying to find different ways to motivate all of my students. I definitely began the year naively, under the assumption that all*

*students wanted to be at school and do their best. My second challenge was trying to find a balance between teaching and family.*

*After my first formal observation, I was devastated. However, I learned from others, observed others, listened, took what was given to me and I changed. Got better. Each day I implemented something new, stuck to routines that worked, ditched what didn't. [Second] formal observation, I felt more successful. Got glowing feedback. Continued to learn and get better. 3rd observation felt ok, but it turned out great! I am STILL learning every day, keep what is working, change what doesn't.*

**Mentors and CFG Meetings Provided Support and Encouragement.** *[My mentor] has been patient, sharing and a fantastic listener. Many times, I figure a solution out while explaining the problem. In truth, she has been a fantastic mentor.*

*One of my ah-ha moments was taught to me by my mentor teacher. I want all of my students to think that they are my favorite. This has challenged me to learn how to put on a poker face when there are annoying behaviors and really look into what makes each child special and unique.*

*[My mentor] has been a great mentor - helping me navigate the ins and outs of teaching the first year. There was a lot of times I popped into her classroom unannounced and she always was open to discuss/address any questions or issues I have had.*

*I love coming to these meetings...I do not always feel like I have people to collaborate with because I am running around all day. I do not get a lot of interaction with other teachers.*

*It was helpful to get clarification on specific issues. I liked getting to work together to dissect and understand the reading.*

*I enjoyed the monthly meetings knowing that I would be getting great advice and have a scheduled time to reflect on the previous month because sometimes I would get really busy and forget to reflect on my own learning during the month until the meeting came around. It was also very helpful to hear other first year teachers' woes and know, even if I couldn't fix them, we were not alone in the daily struggles of teaching. This planned and guided reflection is something that I will continue on my own in the years to come and continue to develop my methods.*

*Looking back at the previous year and the RISE program, I am excited about my career choice. Of course, I don't feel like I have this all figured out. There are structural*

*problems, behavioral problems, and finding the zone of proximal development for each student while modeling a culture of learning is difficult....the main thing RISE taught me is I'm not alone in this. I have the support of my coworkers who are all struggling to perfect the imperfectable. I may not have it this year or next year, but we all struggle together toward a goal greater than ourselves.*

*RISE was very useful to me and I enjoyed listening to the struggles, victories, and experiences of the other new teachers. I gained useful information and new understanding on topics like classroom management, personal care, problem-solving, and student discipline. I felt supported and encouraged throughout the year, and I am glad that I had RISE to help me through the year.*

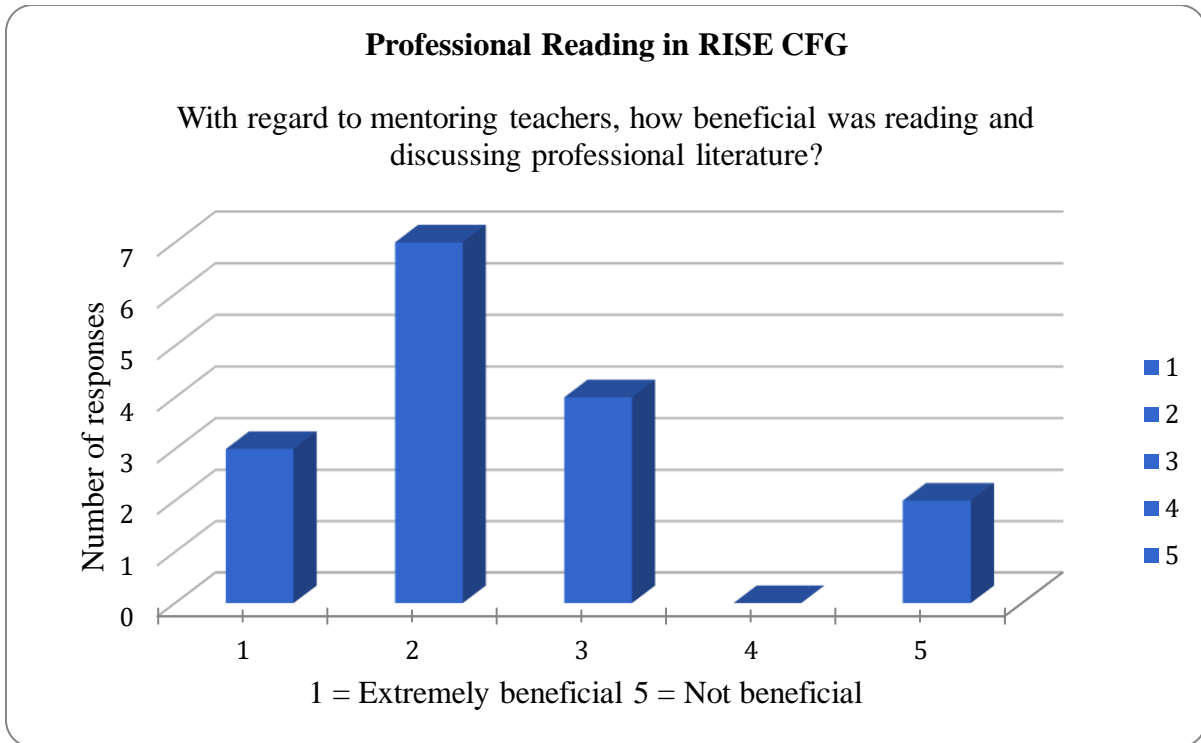
*RISE has been a good support during my first year of teaching. I found the reflection and discussions to be most valuable...The comradery that was developed during meetings will likely blossom into lasting relationships....*

*It is nice to have a team of teachers to learn from. If there is a struggle that we are dealing with, the mentor provides valuable feedback and support.*

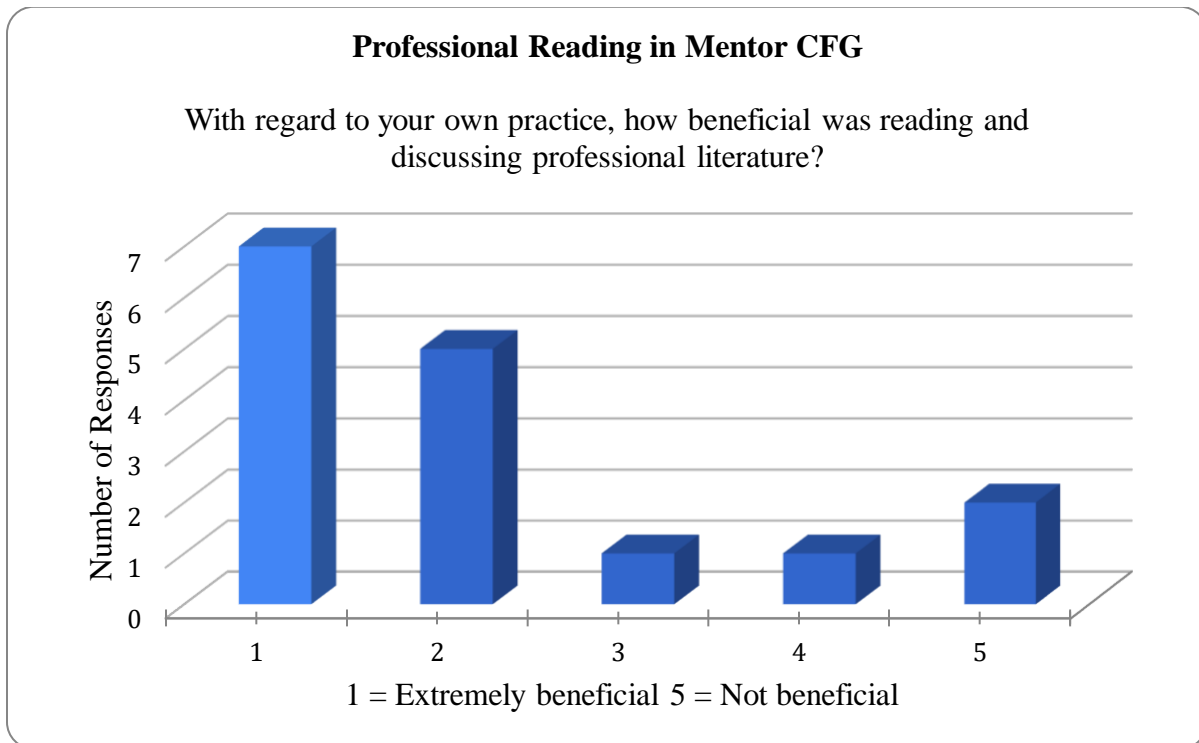
### **RISE Mentor Survey**

Mentors were asked about the most fulfilling aspect of mentoring and the most challenging aspect of mentoring. All 16 mentors indicated that mentoring was fulfilling because they were able to help new teachers navigate the struggles of first year teaching and share the successes and growth new teachers experienced. By far the biggest challenge mentors faced, and one which could have been anticipated, was finding a time to meet that fit the schedules of everyone involved.

Mentors were asked to evaluate the benefits of the two consistent components of both the Mentor CFG meetings in which they participated and the RISE CFG meetings which they facilitated. Those two components were reading and discussing professional literature and tapping the power of the collaborative group in addressing dilemmas of practice (See Figures 3-4).



*Figure 3: Professional Reading in RISE CFG*



*Figure 1: Professional Reading in Mentor CFG*

Mentors indicated that they thought processing professional literature was more beneficial to their own practice than to their mentoring.

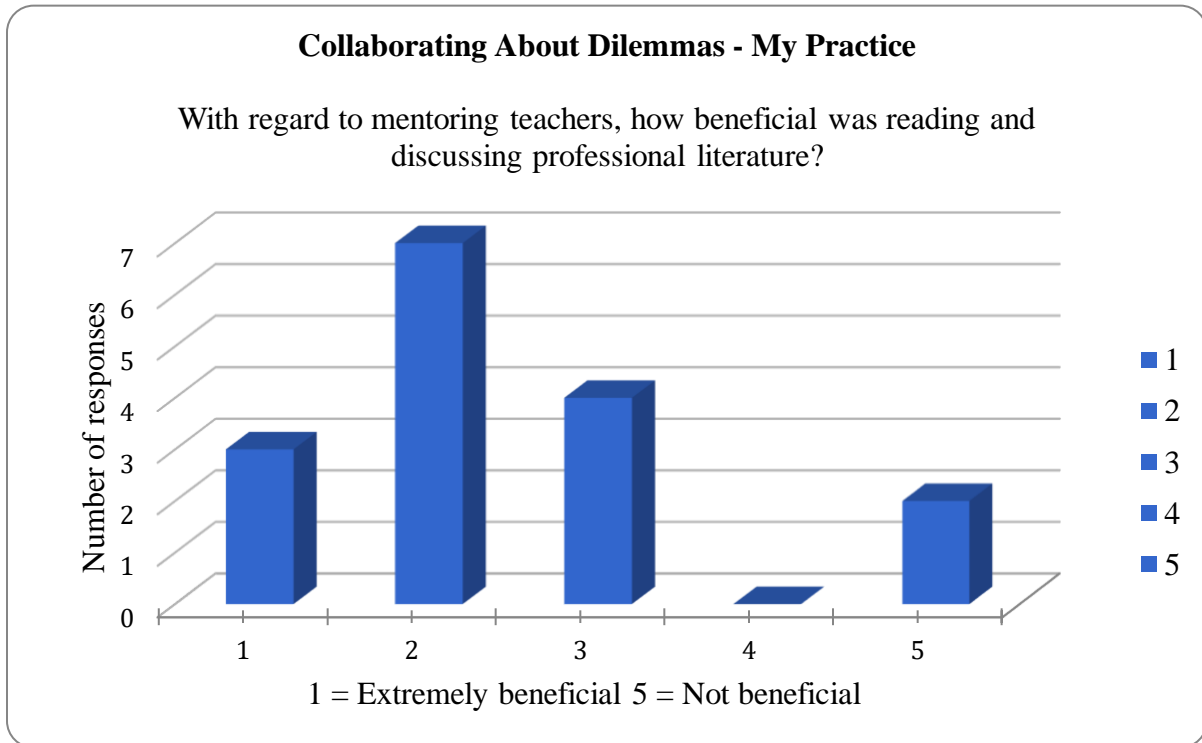


Figure 5: Collaborating About Dilemmas-My Practice

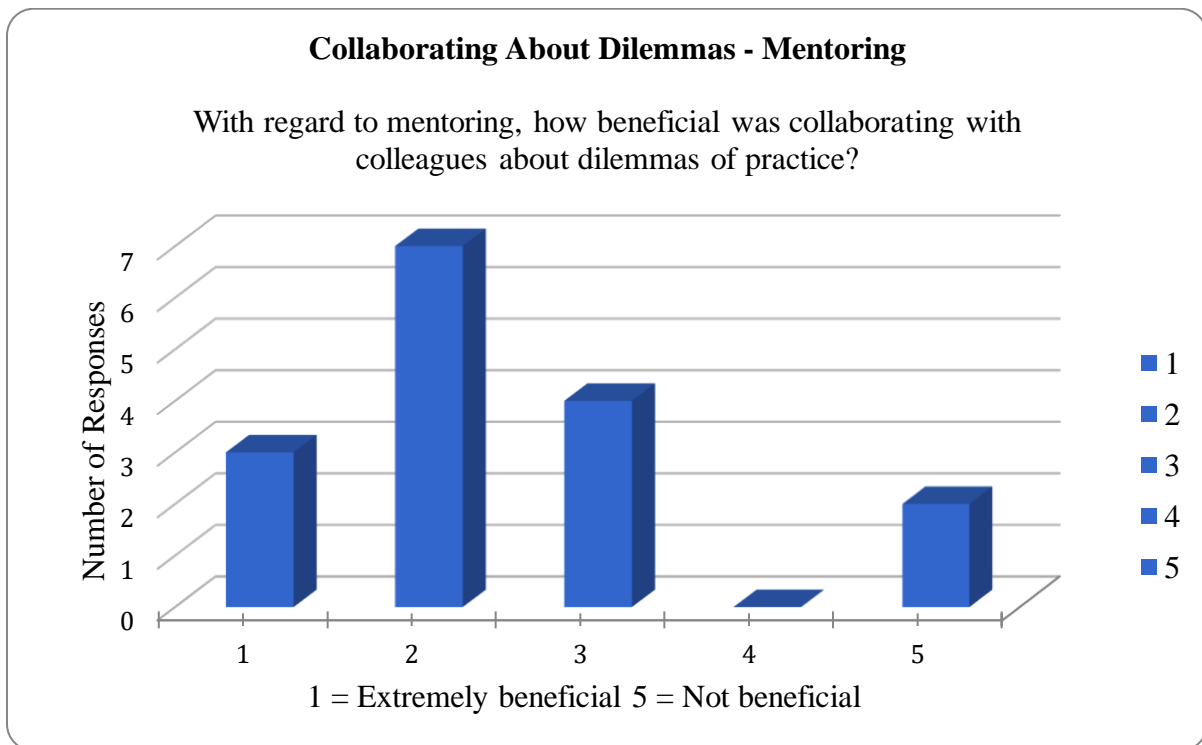
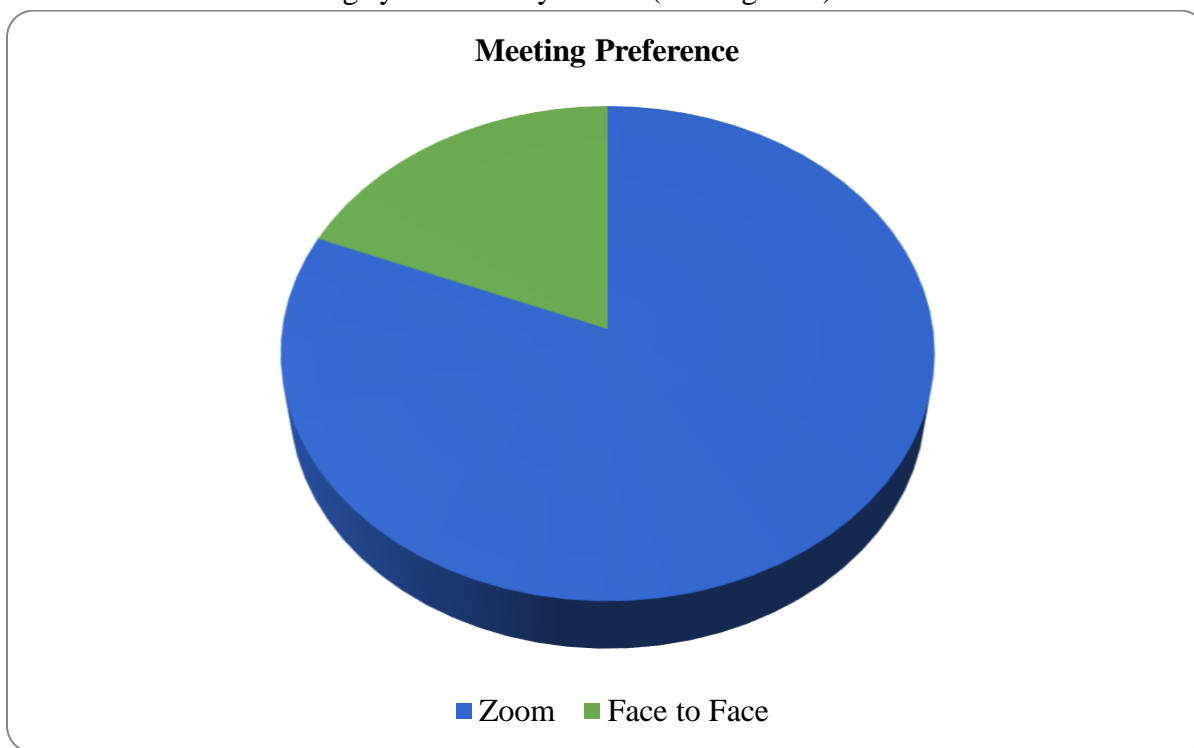


Figure 6: Collaborating About Dilemmas-Mentoring

Results indicate that mentors believe collaborating with colleagues about dilemmas of practice was beneficial for both their own practice and that of their mentees. (See Figures 5-6)

This year, NNRPDP coordinators chose to try a different format for the Mentor CFGs. After the initial face-to-face session during the week of RISE, all meetings were held via Zoom, an online meeting platform. Coordinators surveyed mentors in order to determine the effectiveness of the new meeting form and results show that more than 80% of mentors prefer the convenience of meeting synchronously online (See Figure 7).



*Figure 2: Meeting Preference*

When asked how NNRPDP coordinators could better support mentors, half of the responses expressed gratitude for the support currently provided with no suggestions for improvement. The other half offered suggestions that are worthy of consideration for next steps. Suggestions included:

- Time embedded in the mentoring program to observe new teachers in their classrooms to provide feedback and target challenges.
- NNRPDP coordinators could attend one RISE CFG meeting at each site and provide coaching to the mentor.

### **RISE Mentor Reflections**

Each Mentor CFG meeting began with a five-minute reflection period where mentors reflected on their work in a shared Google Doc. These reflections shown in Table 2 reveal teachers deeply committed to the profession, their schools, and the new teachers they have been



charged with mentoring. Many, if not most, went above and beyond the requirements of the contract.

*Table 2: Themes Reflected in RISE Mentor Responses*

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Example</b>
<p>Mentoring and CFG meetings were a positive experience</p>	<p><i>Our meeting was very productive.</i></p> <p><i>Our meeting was great!</i></p> <p><i>We have had a good year and have drawn close together. I just had one of my teachers drop by this afternoon to ask some advice for a student. It is nice to see the comfort they have in coming to seek information, advice, or suggestions for their teaching. I have seen great growth in both of them and we recently talked about the upcoming P/T conferences and if they we feeling good about them, and they both said they were much more comfortable this go around than in the fall.</i></p> <p><i>I really enjoy my mentee teachers. They are doing really well and trying new things.</i></p>
<p>Mentors went far above and beyond the requirements outlined in the contract</p> <p>(Nearly all mentors spent extra time, some extensive amounts of time supporting mentees. Some did observations with feedback, some spent time planning with mentees. Some mentors provided food for the meetings. One mentor invited students to a meeting where adults and high school students were able to share their different perspectives.)</p>	<p><i>I cannot say that there has been just one meeting. My mentee teacher is my trailer mate and we meet daily. We have gone in depth about procedures as this has been the greatest struggle she has faced so far. I was able to give her ideas and suggestions of things that have worked well for me in my classroom. I have helped her with the school climate and how things are generally run here at this school. I am continually clarifying questions on the curriculum and rigor that should be expected at this grade level. She is full of questions and very willing to ask for any needed help. We have sat and planned our weeks out together just so she could get a sense of what others schedules look like as far as pacing of the day.</i></p> <p><i>After school that day, another new teacher (history) came by my class to hash out some problems she'd had. Her "thinking" assignment for that day had fallen pretty flat, and she was struggling to get the kind of engagement we had talked about that morning. So, she and I brainstormed for about 90 minutes to redesign an upcoming lesson she had planned to make it more about deep thinking, engagement, and ownership.</i></p>
<p>Mentors reflected on the experience and what went well and what did not</p>	<p><i>I felt like I "hogged" the conversation and need to do less talking next time.</i></p> <p><i>I removed myself from the conversations and let the two groups do the talking and answer one another's questions. This was super helpful I felt more like I was</i></p>

Theme	Example
	<p><i>facilitating/hosting rather than “running a class”. They were in charge of the learning and not me.</i></p> <p><i>I think had we established some agreements first, there would not have been as much reluctance to try and participate in the protocol as it is set up.</i></p>
<p>Mentors targeted support to the specific needs of RISE teachers</p>	<p><i>I have three out of the six that have never done standard-based grading and were struggling with how to do it. They said they felt much better about it after our meeting so I’m glad I choose that topic.</i></p> <p><i>We also were able to discuss current goals and struggles with attaining those goals, due to either lack of resources, clarity regarding policy, or challenging students.</i></p> <p><i>Our last meeting was on Classroom management as the two kinder teachers that are mentees have been struggling.</i></p> <p><i>Our dilemma time was productive in the sense that we were able to help alleviate some stress from one colleague by offering support in his situation and providing collaborative ideas that hopefully will be useful in the next couple months. It was nice that everyone offered such great feedback and mutual concern for a teacher that really is struggling, burnt out, and overwhelmed.</i></p>
<p>Mentors targeted support based on what they believe is important</p>	<p><i>History of the school is important and so is knowing your audience, especially in a small community. We clarified questions on curriculum and other topics, as the new teachers are receiving a lot of different answers when asking questions.</i></p> <p><i>Our second topic was Discipline with Love and Logic. This ended up going longer than we expected as the discussion was rich with new understandings that could be related to their classrooms.</i></p> <p><i>We spent our meeting with the topic of reflection. It is the time of year when we can still make some changes. I had them reflect on three topics...students, classroom, and parents.</i></p>
<p>Mentors face many challenges</p>	<p><i>It was challenging to meet the needs of 1st year teachers versus 1st year in Elko.</i></p> <p><i>Trying to schedule 7 high school teachers all at the same time is rough!</i></p>

Theme	Example
	<i>One of my mentees is struggling with just about everything in her classroom and continually misses our meetings.</i>
Mentors find great satisfaction in helping new teachers	<p><i>The two brand new teachers are finding challenges and successes, but truly enjoying the year! This was great to hear!</i></p> <p><i>One teacher brought a dilemma and everyone who participated really enjoyed the protocol, especially the teacher who had the dilemma. I hope we were able to help her.</i></p> <p><i>I feel very lucky to have a teacher who shares a lot of similar beliefs that I have. She is willing to work hard and try new things. I feel more like we are teaching partners than I her mentor.</i></p>

**Conclusion**

Through the partnership between Elko County School District and NNRPDP, RISE offered new teachers needed support and encouragement. The two components of RISE, induction and mentoring, gave teachers necessary information and inspiration prior to the start of the school year and ongoing support through the school year provided at the school site. The evidence strongly indicates that both components are necessary and effectively work in tandem to accomplish this goal. The evidence also suggests that effectively supporting new teachers during their first year requires a great deal of time and commitment on the part of mentors and that the small stipend and credits they receive is not compensation, but merely a token of appreciation. With such intense effort, mentors themselves risk burnout suggesting that revision to the program could include more support for mentors. Small measures could be taken to provide that support including NNRPDP coordinators attending at least one CFG meeting at each school site each year to provide support and coaching to mentors. More robust revision could include mentorship for all teachers in their first two years in the profession.

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