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Wisdom of the elders: mentors' perspectives on mentoring learning environments for beginning science and mathematics teachers.

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Summary: In this study, we engage in an evaluation of a mentoring program for beginning teachers in secondary science and mathematics. As part of the study, mentors were asked about their motivations for participating in the program, and how they had benefited in terms of their professional learning. In this paper we examine and interpret mentors' experiences in this created learning environment with the aim of better understanding, from the mentors' perspective, factors important for the success of mentoring early career teachers in science and maths, and the establishment of an ongoing supportive learning environment through mentoring for both mentors and mentees. Throughout, we rely heavily on the mentors' voices to describe their motivations for participating, characteristics they saw as important for successful mentoring, benefits they accrued as a result of the experience, and factors that facilitated effective mentoring relationships. These findings are discussed with a view to providing guidance for the developers of mentoring learning environments.

Classification: D49 D39 B50

Keywords: beginning teachers; mentoring learning environment; mentors' perspectives; program evaluation; professional development

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