

STEM Teachers as New Teacher Mentors

A look at one Alternative Certification Model

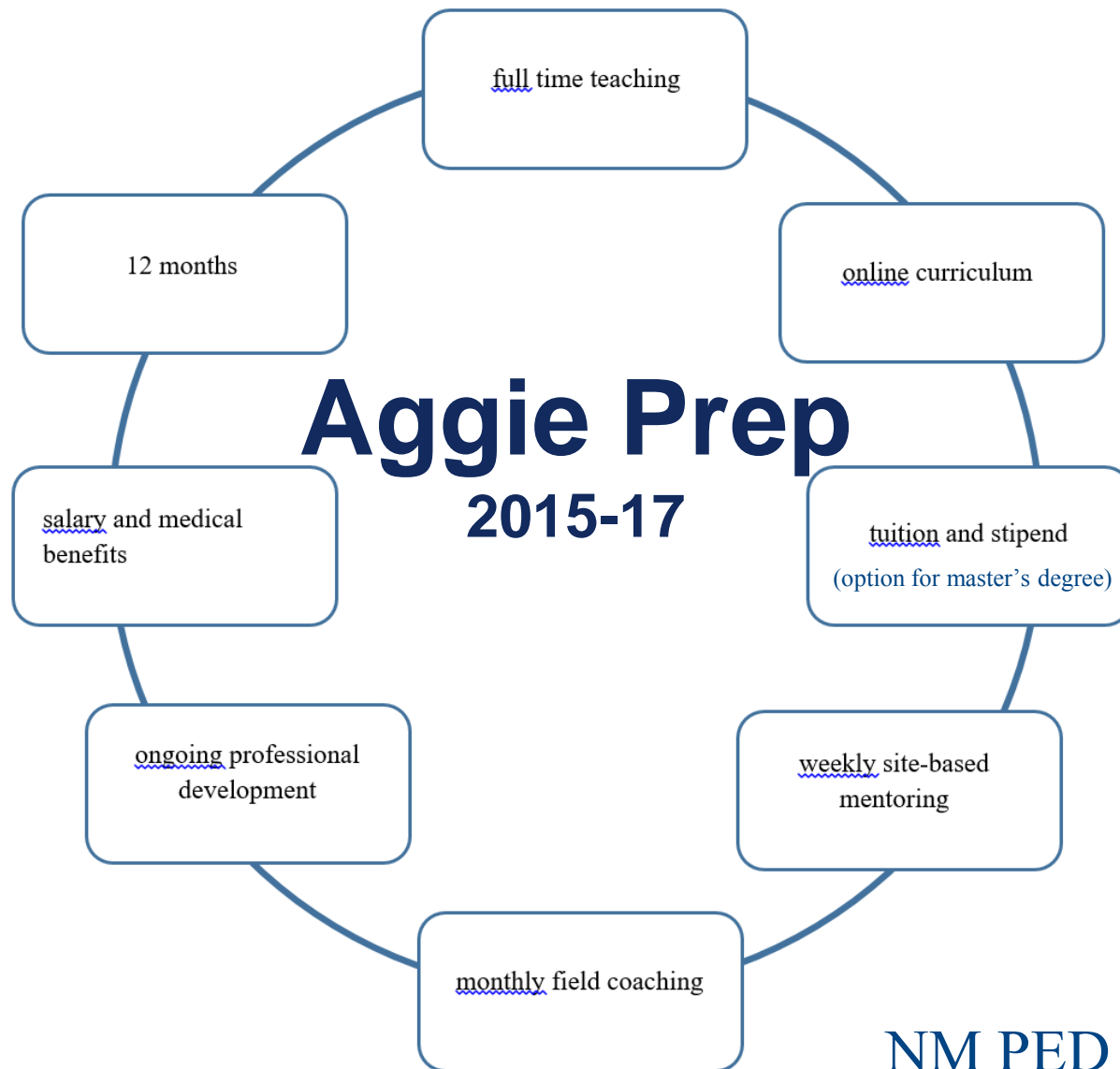
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Qualities of Effective Alternative Certification Programs

- Recruit widely, select carefully
- Design should be flexible and coherent
- Provide extensive support
- Engage in continuous improvement and reflection

(US Dept. of Education, 2014)



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Why STEM Professionals Decide to Teach through ALC

- Model influences (ie. teacher in the family)
- Programmatic influences that reduce barriers for entry into the profession
- Experiential influences
- Vocational reasons (i.e. a passion or calling for a more fulfilling career or affinity for content knowledge)

(Morettini, 2014)

The logo for New Mexico State University, featuring the letters "NM" stacked above "STATE" in a white serif font, set against a dark red square background with a white outline.

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Retention in the Profession

- NM has the second highest teacher turnover rate in the nation. We rank 50th for collegiality within the school environment. (ABQ Journal, 2017)

When do beginning teachers decide to stay?

- Vocational and programmatic influences (ie. mentors, colleagues, supportive teaching context, support through courses and professors, success on required licensure exams)
- ***Intensive and sustained*** support increases retention!

Aggie Prep Intensive & Sustained Support to Build a Network

- Field Coaching (once monthly for 2 years)
- Daily site-based mentoring
- Face-to-face sessions (Orientation & Transition)
- Synchronous class sessions via Adobe Connect
- Conference Calls

Goal for Partnership with Mentors

- Focus on development of curriculum that is practice-based, culturally and linguistically responsive, and connected to daily classroom work as a teacher.



Responsibilities of Mentors

- Mentors were asked to record their interactions and the topics they discussed in the monthly log that were submitted to NMSU at the start/end of each month.
- This information helped us to further conceptualize how the program curriculum and roles were structured to meet the needs of Aggie Prep candidates.

Responsibilities of Mentors

- Mentors conduct 2 formal observations during the each semester.
 - Participants were asked to attach a copy of the lesson plan to the feedback form.
- Mentors then sent the formal observations to the Clinical Educator or the faculty observer.

Conference Call Example

- **Mentor:** The ALC did well for a first year teacher in terms of planning and delivering instruction. Excellent rapport with students. He is very involved in our community. He is volunteering with student council and coaches track. The ALC is advocating for himself with needs for lessons and resources. He is very open to suggestions. He is receptive to feedback. The ALC arrived after the first week of school. He was in a rush to do concepts right away. He initially ignored the introduction of procedures. He needed to work on structure in the classroom. At the start of this semester, he asked the kids about appropriate behavior and co-constructed consequences. He is improving and that practice worked for him. He is working on doing a routine in his daily activities.
- **Faculty:** Is the ALC more teacher-centered or student-centered?
Mentor: He is lecture based at start and activity-based in the extension or when need to re-teach presents itself.

Conference Call Example

- **Mentor:** The ALC is in put out the current fire mode. It is whatever is happening that day. She is very much addressing what she needs at that moment. She needs some guidance on SPED law. She has too many kids failing her class. She needs to meet kids in the middle a little more. The ALC has excellent classroom management. I do not have any immediate concerns. I think her grading needs to go as she moves along instead of at the very end. Needs to learn how to do quick checks.
- **Faculty:** Will work with the ALC to conceptualize an assessment system that matches her desire to do activity-based lessons.
- **Clinical Educator:** Participant attitudes are good so far. Willing to support mentors and participants in any way needed.

Outcomes of Conference Calls

- Mentors invited to present at face-to-face PD on topics they identified.
- Course instructors adapt curriculum in real-time.
- Course instructors and clinical educators model relevant lessons and strategies in the classroom to help support the candidate (ie. demonstrate how to do a lab)



creating measurable objectives

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Next Steps for Aggie Prep

- Cost-effective supervision using technology tools like iPads and/or Swivl
- Continue to provide a state approved online alternative licensure program.