

Mentoring New Teachers, Promoting the Profession

Recruitment of and support for new teachers is crucial for Latin education at all levels. Nationally, new teachers at the K-12 level leave their classrooms within five or ten years—far earlier than they reach their peak effectiveness. One powerful way to support these teachers and to keep them teaching is to provide appropriate mentoring. Research tells us that the most effective mentoring programs are school-centered and ongoing; in the best, schools provide release time for experienced teachers to meet with new teachers on a regular basis. Classical organizations cannot provide that kind of experience as both funding and staffing are limited. We can, nonetheless, help facilitate less formal mentoring relationships, especially ones that take advantage of the internet and face-to-face meetings at CAMWS and other conferences.

In this workshop teachers will reflect on their own experiences as having and being mentors. Such experiences include the long-distance mentoring of ACTFL and working through local or state networks. Our goal is that participants will see the value of various kinds of support for one another and brainstorm a variety of ways to create opportunities for supportive activities in their own spheres. An experienced, supported teacher will, after all, be a more effective ambassador for the profession as a whole.

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