Mentoring Conversation Protocol

Assess the Beginning Teacher’s Needs by:
- Making connections and building trust
- Identifying successes and challenges

Establish a Focus for Work by:
- Paraphrasing
  Restating in your own words or summarizing.
  Stems include:
  So,...In other words,...What I’m hearing then,...What I hear you saying,...
  From what I hear you say,...I’m hearing many things,...As I listen to you
  I’m hearing,...
- Clarifying
  Asking a question to
  1. Gather more information
  2. Discover the meaning of the language used
  3. Get clarity about the speaker’s reasoning
  4. Seek connections between ideas
  5. Develop or maintain a focus
  Stems include
  Would you tell me a little more about...?Let me see if I understand...
  I’d be interested in hearing more about...It’d help me understand if you’d
give me an example of...So, are you saying/suggesting...?Tell me what
you mean when you...Tell me how that idea is like (different from)...
To what extent...?I’m curious to know more about...I’m intrigued by.../
I’m interested in.../I wonder...NOTE: “Why” tends to elicit a defensive
response.

Support the Teacher’s Movement Forward by:
- Direct teaching
  - Teachable moments are spontaneous opportunities that offer the
    mentor a chance to: help the new teacher make good choices and to
take “the next step”
    – share in the spirit of support
    – be brief—focus on the essential
    – be strategic
    – avoid using jargon
  Stems include One thing to keep in mind is... If you’re interested in
___, it’s important to... What I know about ___ is...
It’s sometimes/usually helpful to ___ when...
- Suggestions are expressed with invitational, positive language and
  voice tone; offer choices to encourage ownership; are often expressed
  as a question; invite further thinking; are achievable—enough to
encourage, but not to overwhelm may provide information about the mentor’s thinking and decision-making

- Stems include One thing I’ve learned/noticed is… A couple of things to keep in mind… From our experience, one thing we’ve noticed… Several/some teachers I know have tried a couple of different things in this sort of situation and maybe one might work for you… What I know about ___ is… Something/some things to keep in mind when dealing with… Something you might consider trying is… There are a number of approaches… Sometimes it’s helpful if…

- Try following a suggestion with a question that invites the teacher to imagine/hypothesize how the idea might work in his/her context. Use these questions.
  How might that look in your classroom?
To what extent might that work in your situation/with your students?
What do you imagine might happen if you were to try something like that with your class?
Which of these ideas might work best in your classroom (with your students)?

- Collaborative problem-solving/work
  Mediational questions help the colleague hypothesize what might happen, analyze what worked or didn’t, imagine possibilities, compare & contrast what was planned with what ensued.
  Stems include…
  What’s another way you might…? What would it look like if…? What do you think would happen if…? How was…different from (like)…? What’s another way you might…? What sort of an impact do you think…? What criteria do you use to…? When have you done something like…before?
  What do you think…? How did you decide…(come to that conclusion?)
  What might you see happening in your classroom if…?

- Reflective questioning

Promote Accountability by:
- Identifying specific next steps
- Agreeing to follow-up