#### **DEDICATION**

I dedicate my dissertation work to my family and many friends. A special feeling of gratitude to my loving parents, William and Louise Johnson whose words of encouragement and push for tenacity ring in my ears. My sisters Katie, Linda and Rhonda have never left my side and are very special.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	V
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	X
CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM	
Historical Perspective	1
Purpose	5
Theoretical Framework	5
Figure 1	6
Context for Mentoring	7
The Needs of Beginning Teacher	7
The Needs of the Mentor Teacher	12
The Needs of the School Division	20
The Mentoring Program	27
Role of the Mentor	31
Personal Support	32
Confidence	34
Collegiality	35
Professional Community	37
Descriptive Research Questions	39
Definitions of Terms	41
Chapter Summary	47
Overview	49
CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY	
Introduction	51
Setting of the Study	51
Population(s)	52
Description of the Mentoring Program	53
Data Collection	60
Instrumentation	60
Content Validation	61
Analyzing the Data	62

	Page
CHAPTER THREE: RESULTS	
Introduction	64
Survey Responses	64
Descriptive Data: Demographic variables	65
Findings	73
Mentor Program Effectiveness by Population and Item	90
Summary	107
CHAPTER FOUR:	
Summary	111
Conclusion	113
Discussion	116
Implications for Change in the Program	120
Recommendations	122
References	125
Appendices	134
Vita	180

## LIST OF TABLES

	P	age
Table 1	Literature on Beginning Teacher Needs	13
Table 2	Literature on Mentor Teacher Needs	21
Table 3	Operational Terms and Survey Items Associated With those Items	44
Table 4	Distribution of Surveys Returned by Population	65
Table 5	Demographic Characteristics of Respondents – Administrators	66
Table 6	Demographic Characteristics of Respondents – Mentor Teachers	68
Table 7	Demographic Characteristics of Respondents – Beginning Teachers	70
Table 8	The Beginning Teacher's Perception of the Effectiveness of the Mentor-Teacher Program by Level of Education of the Beginning Teacher	75
Table 9	The Beginning Teacher's Perception of the Effectiveness of the Mentor-Teacher Program by Age of the Beginning Teacher	76
Table 10	The Beginning Teacher's Perception of the Effectiveness of the Mentor-Teacher Program by Age of the Mentor Teacher	77

		Page
Table 11	The Beginning Teacher's Perception of the Effectiveness of the Mentor-Teacher Program by Age of the Administrator	78
Table 12	The Beginning Teacher's Perception of the Effectiveness of the Mentor-Teacher Program by Ethnicity of the Beginning Teacher	79
Table 13	The Beginning Teacher's Perception of the Effectiveness of the Mentor-Teacher Program by Ethnicity of the Mentor Teacher	80
Table 14	The Beginning Teacher's Perception of the Effectiveness of the Mentor-Teacher Program by Ethnicity of the Administrator	81
Table 15	The Beginning Teacher's Perception of the Effectiveness of the Mentor-Teacher Program by Gender of the Beginning Teacher	81
Table 16	The Beginning Teacher's Perception of the Effectiveness of the Mentor-Teacher Program by Gender of the Mentor Teacher	82
Table 17	The Beginning Teacher's Perception of the Effectiveness of the Mentor-Teacher Program by Gender of the Administrator	83
Table 18	The Beginning Teacher's Perception of the Effectiveness of the Mentor-Teacher Program by Years of Experience of the Beginning Teacher	84
Table 19	The Beginning Teacher's Perception of the Effectiveness of the Mentor-Teacher Program by Years of Experience of the Mentor Teacher	85

		Page
Table 20	The Beginning Teacher's Perception of the Effectiveness of the Mentor-Teacher Program by First Career of the Beginning Teacher	86
Table 21	The Beginning Teacher's Perception of the Effectiveness of the Mentor-Teacher Program by Years of Experience of the Administrator	87
Table 22	The Beginning Teacher's Perception of the Effectiveness of the Mentor-Teacher Program by Position of the Administrator	88
Table 23	The Mentor Teacher's Perception of the Effectiveness of the Mentor-Teacher Program by Position of the Mentor teacher	89
Table 24	The Beginning Teacher's Perception of the Effectiveness of the Mentor-Teacher Program by Position of the Beginning Teacher	90
Table 25	Follow-up Analysis by Item Beginning Teacher Survey	92
Table 26	Follow-up Analysis by Item Mentor Teacher Survey	96
Table 27	Follow-up Analysis by Item Administrator Survey	103

### LIST OF FIGURES

		Page
Figure 1	Model of outcomes of a teacher mentoring program	6