International Telementor Program
Full Program Evaluation
April 2002 – June 2005

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Chance W. Lewis, Ph.D.
Research Associate

Research and Development Center for the Advancement of Student Learning

Co-Directors: Michael DeMiranda, Ph.D. and Ellyn Dickmann, Ph.D.

222 West Laurel
Fort Collins, Colorado
970-491-3179; 970-491-3180 (FAX)
www.cahs.colostate.edu/r-dcenter/home.asp

Colorado State University / Poudre School District Collaborative

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International Telementor Program
Program Evaluation Results from Teacher, Mentor, and Student Surveys
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Program Overview

The International Telementor Program (ITP) creates matches between industry professionals from ITP sponsor companies and students while targeting specific communities around the world. ITP creates project-based online mentoring support for students and teachers in classroom and home school environments with a focus on serving a diverse student population. Since 1995, over 28,000 students have been served throughout nine countries.

Parameters of this Program Evaluation Research

This independently conducted program evaluation covers three program years (2002-2003, 2003-2004, and 2004-2005). Specifically, this program evaluation research includes teacher, mentor, and student survey results from the aforementioned years. This program evaluation report is divided into four specific areas: (a) survey results from the teacher surveys; (b) survey results from the mentor surveys; (c) survey results from the student surveys; and (d) recommendations from the researcher on improving the ITP program.

Based on the area of impact table below, teachers reported that students made significant improvements in the below-mentioned categories. The vast majority of teachers witnessed significant improvement in writing skills, self-directed learning and critical thinking skills. Further, a primary ITP program goal is to help students adopt a proactive learning position and begin creating their own independent learning plans. The findings report that 66% of the teachers witnessed improvement in this area. This clearly shows that students can now take more responsibility in their learning as a result of being in the ITP program.

Areas of Impact	Teacher response (average)
Improved writing skills	88%
Increase in self-directed learning	79%
Improved critical thinking skills	76%
Increase teamwork	68%
Increased desire to become a proactive learner	66%
Increase in knowledge of the workplace/career awareness	59%
Increase in integration of knowledge across subject areas and interest	50%
Increase in the desire to go to college	43%
Improved subject grades	42%
Other areas	29%
Improved science comprehension	18%
Increase in standardized test scores	13%
Improved math comprehension	11%

Additionally, teachers were asked to describe any additional areas that may have been impacted by this program. Due to the large size of the data sets and the different nature of analyses of qualitative data, responses to qualitative questions were analyzed using HyperResearch software. The major themes are listed below.

- "I believed the program reinforced the students desire to pursue some type of business career—whether it was accounting, starting their own business, combining a major with another area of business."

- "Students stated that this made the class more interesting and that they looked forward to coming to class on telementoring days."

- "I believe as a direct result of the personal contact and attention of professionals as mentors, my students became more aware and made some long-range goals."

In viewing the other side of the spectrum, the ITP program was not as effective in improving the following areas: (a) science comprehension; (b) standardized test scores and (c) math comprehension. As the ITP program seeks to plan future programmatic efforts, these are critical subjects that should be addressed by the ITP program in collaboration with the teachers that they work with. As a recommendation, the ITP program can work with teachers to create projects that develop solid skills in the areas of math and science. By doing so, the ITP can be instrumental in assisting students to raise academic achievement levels in critical areas such as science and math.

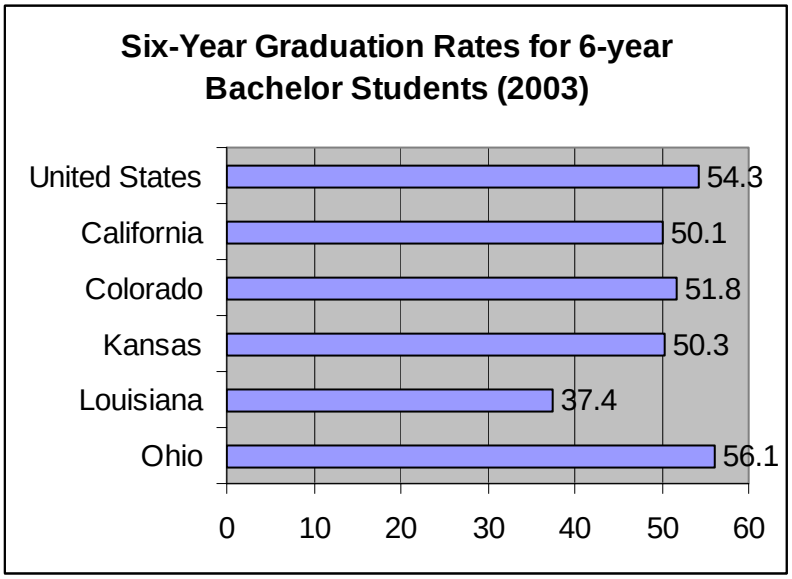
To further explore the challenges of the ITP program, teachers were asked to describe significant changes that they would like to see in the program or school environment that would improve the effectiveness of the program for you and your students. Here are a few highlights of teacher responses:

- "More computers in our classrooms would improve the effectiveness, which could be provided by a variety of sources. Mentors with expertise in the area of the project would help tremendously. In addition, mentor training in working with young students. More time at the beginning of the project with support for setting up the project expectations and specific outcomes for the project (a combination of telementor staff and teachers, with input from students).

- "It would be helpful to have a clearer idea of what is expected of the coordinating teacher; perhaps to assign a new teacher a mentor (a previous teacher) who could answer questions FROM THE TEACHER PERSPECTIVE about how to manage different aspects of the program."

ITP Communities and Graduation Rates

The ITP program has chosen to work in communities across the United States to increase the graduation rates of students. Listed below are national averages and the graduation rates for college freshmen pursuing college degrees in the individual states that the ITP program is currently conducting its programmatic efforts. In examining these numbers, it is fertile ground for the ITP program to have an impact on college student graduation rates across the country.



Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (2002)

As a result of the above table, the national and individual state data shows that plenty of work needs to be done with students with approximately 50% of college freshmen graduating from college within six-years. The ITP program is providing an innovative approach to help students be prepared to be successful in college.

Summary

In summary, after evaluating the teacher, mentor, and student surveys from 2002-2005, it appears that the International Telementor Program has been very successful in assisting students to become more "proactive learners." With so many teachers, mentors and students involved this program, as one student noted; this program should be in schools across the nation.

After an in-depth examination of the findings, this program is doing quite well. Mentors noted that they have really enjoyed working students. Teachers have noted that have seen quite a change in their students after being involved in this program. Finally, students have noted that they have enjoyed participating in this program.

To paint a picture of the complexity of the program, the reader must know the amount of mentor/student matches that were made as a result of this program. From April 2002-June 2005 4,021 matches were made between mentors and teachers. This provides context into how many students have been impact as a result of this program.

About the Researcher

Chance W. Lewis, Ph.D. is an education research consultant with the Research and Development Center for the Advancement of Student Learning and an Assistant Professor in the School of Education at Colorado State University. If there are any questions related to the research results, Dr. Lewis can be contacted at (970) 491-1807 or by e-mail at chance.lewis@cahs.colostatate.edu.

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Chance W. Lewis, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
School of Education
Research and Development Center
For the Advancement of Student Learning
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523

Program Overview

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This evaluation report presents the results of analyses of both the quantitative and qualitative data from teachers during the aforementioned time period. Table 1 outlines the questions that were asked of teachers in question 1.

Data Type	Data Source	Question	Response Format
Quantitative	Teacher	Select those areas where you witnessed significant improvement for your participating students. • Improved math comprehension and ability • Increased registration for advanced math courses • Improved science comprehension and ability • Increased registration for advance science courses • Communication skills (Written or Oral) • Subject grade improvement • Standardized test improvement • Improved critical thinking skills • Improved teamwork • Critical thinking skills • Increase in self-directed learning • Increase integration of knowledge across subject areas and interest areas • Increase in knowledge of the workplace • Increased desire to go to college • Other areas	Any checked items were coded a "1"; all items that were not checked were coded a "0"
Qualitative		Describe additional areas that may have been impacted by this program	Open-ended

Quantitative analyses are presented in Tables 2 and 3 below. As noted in Table 1 above, teachers were asked the following quantitative question: **"Select those areas where you witnessed significant improvement for your participating students."** Each impact area that was selected was assigned a "yes" rating, all those non-selected were assigned a "no" rating. A total of 95 teachers responded to this question.

Table 2

Impact Area	Yes	No	Rank
Improved Math Comprehension and ability	10	85	14
Increased registration for advanced math courses	7	88	15
Improved science comprehension and ability	17	78	12
Increased registration for advanced science courses	4	91	16
Communication skills (written or oral)	84	15	1
Subject grade improvement	40	55	9
Standardized test improvement	12	83	13
Improved critical thinking skills	72	23	3
Improved teamwork	65	30	4
Critical thinking skills	32	63	10
Increase in self-directed learning	75	20	2
Increase integration of knowledge across subject areas and interest	47	48	7
Increase in knowledge of the workplace	56	39	6
Increased desire to become a proactive learner	63	32	5
Increased desire to go to college	41	54	8
Other areas	28	67	11

In examining Table 2, teachers reported that the areas of greatest impact for students were centered on the "softer" skills (i.e., communication skills, self-directed learning, and critical thinking skills). As reported in the Rank column, the top 5 areas support the notion that students made the most significant improvements in areas that are not easily quantifiable.

Table 3

Areas of Impact	Teacher response (average)
Improved writing skills	88%
Increase in self-directed learning	79%
Improved critical thinking skills	76%
Increase teamwork	68%
Increased desire to become a proactive learner	66%
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Other areas	29%
Improved science comprehension	18%
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Improved math comprehension	11%

Based on Table 3, teachers reported that students made significant improvements in the above-mentioned categories. Most notable, was the large percentage of students that improved their writing skills and increased their desire to become proactive learners as a result of this program. This clearly shows that students can now write much better and take on more responsibility in their own education as a result of being in the ITP program.

Additionally, teachers were asked to describe any additional areas that may have been impacted by this program. Due to the large size of the data sets and the different nature of analyses of qualitative data, responses to qualitative questions were analyzed using HyperResearch software. The major themes are listed below.

- "I believed the program reinforced the students desire to pursue some type of business career—whether it was accounting, starting their own business, combining a major with another area of business."

- "Students stated that this made the class more interesting and that they looked forward to coming to class on telementoring days."

- "I believe as a direct result of the personal contact and attention of professionals as mentors, my students became more aware and made some long-range goals."

Students Becoming Proactive Learners

In question 2a, teachers were asked to "Please indicate the percentage of their students who were actively moving in the direction of becoming proactive learners." In an examination of the three years of this full evaluation report (n=95) 68.4% of teachers reported that their students were actively moving in the direction of becoming proactive learners.

This clearly demonstrates that teachers do feel that students are benefiting from the International Telementoring Program. With more than 65% of teachers indicating that students are becoming more active learners, the educational impact of the ITP program has been very positive.

In question 2b, teachers were asked, **"How they used the program to help their students become proactive learners."** Here is a sample of teacher responses:

- "The program encouraged students to take interest in their futures and to help them realize the importance of education in achieving their goals."

- "I feel that the students became better at being a proactive learner because they had to use resources other than just themselves to fill out their education plans."

In addition to the above-stated quotes, teachers clearly see a positive link between the ITP program and project-based learning. With this link, students and their mentors used these projects to help students become more productive and proactive in achieving greater success on assignments where students were required to use higher order thinking skills.

Student Supervision

Question 3a asked teachers, **"How many students did they want to supervise in the program next year?"**

Overall Mean Score: 15.73

According to this finding, the data shows that teachers only want to supervise a small number of students in this program. It appears that teachers over all three years of the program evaluation want to supervise an average of 15.73 students participating in the program.

In question 3b, teachers were asked, **"How could (ITP) partner with them to expand the program in your area."** A summary of teacher-responses are found below:

- "The biggest problem with this program is time, it is very time consuming, especially reading and communicating with the mentors and the students."

- "Meet with the team early in the year to propose possible ways to include Telementoring in the team's interdisciplinary units."

Quality of Matches between Mentors and Students

Question 4 asked teachers, **"Please rate the quality of the matches between students and mentors."** Teachers were provided with a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from "1=poor through 5=excellent."

Overall Mean Score: 4.12

With a mean score of 4.12, teachers reported overall that the matches between students and mentors were of high quality. Teachers were very pleased with the types of mentoring their students were receiving through the ITP program.

Additionally in question 4b, teachers were asked to "Please describe any changes they wanted to see which would further improve the quality of the matches." A summary of teachers are found below:

- "I have been very pleased and have loved my association with many of our mentors."
- "We feel the mentors did an EXCELLENT JOB.
- "One major problem was when mentors would be out of town for long periods of time and students were somewhat frustrated if they were waiting for a response from them."

Student and Mentor Accomplishments

In question 5, teachers were asked to "Please describe a few things that students and mentors were able to accomplish through this program that would have been difficult or impossible any other way. Teacher responses are listed below:

- "Without the mentors' involvement, students would not have had the opportunity to talk directly with someone who has worked in a specific field or has the knowledge of his or her topic."
- "The mentors were able to direct use to resources that we might not otherwise would have found."

Teacher Ratings of Quality of Help Received from ITP Staff

In Question 6, teachers were asked to rate the quality of help they received from the ITP staff throughout the duration of the project. Teachers were given 5 choices ranging from 1=poor through 5=excellent. The mean score is listed in Table 5 below:

Overall Mean Score: 4.47

According to this finding, teachers were very pleased with the quality of help they received from the ITP staff. Given the mean score of 4.47, teachers' perceptions were very close to the "Excellent" category.

Frequency of communication with the mentor group

In question 7, teachers were asked, **"How often they were able to communicate with the entire mentor group?"** The survey choices ranged from the following choices: 1=daily, 2=every other day; 3= weekly; 4=biweekly; and 5=less than biweekly. Results are found below:

Overall Mean Score: 3.47

According to this finding, teachers reported a mean score of 3.47. This score illustrates that they were able to communicate with the entire mentor group about once a week. Given the demands on a teacher's time, this communication is efficient to discuss any problems that may arise with matches between students and mentors.

Students Communication with Mentors

Question 8 asked teachers to report **how often students were able to communicate with their mentors**. Teachers were given 5 choices: 1=Daily; 2=Every other day; 3=Weekly; 4=Bi-weekly; and 5=less than biweekly. Results are found below:

Overall Mean Score: 3.42

According to the mean score of 3.42, teachers reported that students often communicated with their mentors roughly about once a week. However, this may not be the *actual number* because of the capability of some students to e-mail from their homes. Also, the ITP message system allows students the flexibility to communicate more often. This messaging system helps the students to communicate 2-3 times per week, which is the requirement of the ITP program.

Changes in ITP program

In question 9 of the survey, teachers were asked to **"Describe any significant changes that they would like to see in the program and who would be responsible for making these changes."** The summary of the responses are found below:

- "More computers in the classroom so I would be able to get students on throughout the week."
- "We [teachers] need to communicate with mentors more frequently."
- "Students had a great amount of difficulty reading messages because the text was not wrapped. Scrolling does not make for good comprehension. It got to the point that I would wrap the text of messages that I received and then print them for my students. This was tedious and a wasteful use of paper. We also wasted a lot of time waiting for the telementoring program; it was not uncommon for students to wait 5 to 10 minutes just to log on."

Assistance with Technology

Question 10 asked teachers, **"How has this program assisted in using technology more effectively**. The summary of responses is found below:

- "It has taught me how to maneuver around the Internet."
- "Being in the computer lab on a weekly basis has made me aware of the vast possibilities of computer technology can have in the classroom."
- "I've become more comfortable using wireless technology and various computer equipment, which makes my classroom run calmly and smoothly."

In examining the above-stated quotes, it is clear that teachers are getting valuable technology training for their classrooms. Many teachers are learning the value of technology in their classrooms.

Impact of Meeting National and State Standards

In question 11a, teachers were asked, "**How this program impacted students in meeting the various national and state standards."** Teachers were given 5 choices ranging from 1=Not at all significant to 5=Significant. The mean score is provided below:

Overall Mean Score: 3.45

According to teachers in this survey, the (ITP) program is significant in helping students to meet the various national and state standards. This explains what many teachers have said many times during this survey, that this program should be highly publicized so it can have a positive impact on many more students in schools.

In question 11b, teachers were asked to **"Please describe the impact of the (ITP) program in helping to meet national and state standards in their own words**. A summary of teacher thoughts are listed below:

- "Students learned to put their thoughts into writing more effectively."
- "This program met a significant number of state and national standards."

Supervising "At-Risk Students"

Question 12 asked teachers to **"Indicate the percentage of students that were under their supervision that can be identified as "at-risk" students."** Teachers had 5 possible choices which consisted of the following: 1=10% or less; 2=25%, 3=50%, 4=75%, and 5=90% or more.

Overall Mean Score = 2.54

According to this mean score of 2.28, teachers reported that approximately 25% of their students were actually labeled as "at-risk" students. This indicates that the majority of the students that teachers were working with in the ITP program were more "traditional students."

Meeting of ITP Program Requirements

In question 13 of the survey, teachers that were selected in the (ITP) program were asked to meet the following requirements:

1. All student/mentor communication is project-based
2. Participating students receive a subject grade and turn in work at least biweekly
3. Teachers should communicate biweekly with the mentors
4. Students should be self-selected for participation
5. Teachers should expect a high degree of accountability from their students
6. Teachers should respond to specific program problems within 48 hours

With these requirements, teachers were asked, "How many of the requirements were they able to meet during they year. Teachers were given 5 choices ranging from 1-5.

Overall Mean Score: 3.90

This mean score clearly shows that most teachers were able to meet approximately 4 of the 6 above stated requirements during the three academic years under investigation. This shows a positive picture for the ITP program because teachers meet the majority of the goals and requirements in a given academic year.

In question 14, teachers were asked a follow-up question to #13. "Teachers were asked to indicate which requirements helped them be successful in the program." A summary of teachers responses are found below:

- "By having the students to be self-selected and communicate biweekly helped the students become more successful in reaching a successful completion to the project."

- "I believe the necessity to respond to specific program problems within 48 hours helped me to make certain I addressed and responded to each mentor as quickly as possible. That sense of urgency drove me to keep abreast of things."

Question 15 asked teachers to "Please describe which requirements were difficult to meet." A summary of the teacher responses are found below:

- "Biweekly communication was difficult due to very high lab usage during the same class hour that we met."

- "Because of computer problems and the fact that we were just learning the program, we were not able to utilize the mentors as quickly as I would have liked."

Question 16 asked teachers the following question: "If you were helping a new teacher start this program, what advice would you offer that would aid this new teacher and his or her students to be successful participants?" Teacher responses are found below:

- "I would do this program only with the whole class and I would try to apply the choice of topics of material that you are required to cover by the district."

- "Plan your projects so they are beneficial and interesting/fun for the students and within reason for the mentor to be able to help the student."

Question 17 asked teachers the following question, "Do you plan to participate in the program next year?" The teacher responses are reported below:

Overall Totals: Yes=78; No=17

These numbers clearly show that teachers found this program very productive and plan to participate in the upcoming school year. With such a great number of teachers (82%) reporting that they plan to participate again lends support to the need to promote this program on a larger-scale basis.

Support of "Proactive Learning"

Question 18 asked teachers the following question: "Are you supportive of the 'proactive learning' concept where each student measure academic success by the ability to execute his or her own learning plan successfully?" The responses are reported below:

Overall Totals: Yes=91; No=4

These totals show that teachers are "very" supportive of the concept of "proactive learning" where students measure academic success by the ability to execute his or her own learning plan successfully. By this response, teachers would like students to become more "accountable" for their own learning.

Numbers of Students Served

Question 19 asked teachers to "Please estimate the amount of students in your school district or city that could take advantage of this program next year. The finding to this question is found below:

Overall Mean Score: 149

According to this finding, teachers reported that many students could take advantage of the International Telementoring Program. By teacher estimates, an additional 100+ students could be

recruited into this program. This shows that teachers believe that more students need to be involved in order to ensure their success in the academic environment.

Additional Training

In question 20, teachers were asked, **"What additional training is needed for next year?"** A summary of teacher responses are found below:

- "Have new teachers work with a teacher that has already done this for one full semester before they introduce students to this process."
- "Training on the Telementor website and all its components and how they are used during the project timeframe."
- "New teachers need a tutorial in how to use the project tracer, the ins and outs of the message board."

Summary of Teacher Survey

In summary, the 95 teachers that participated in this survey overwhelmingly believe that the International Telementor Program (ITP) is valuable for their students. Teachers reported that students that participated in this program have increasingly become proactive learners. Also, teachers reported that they have gained greater knowledge in the area of "technology usage" by being a part of this program.

2003-2004 Mentor Survey

Introduction

The next section of this report will focus on findings from the 2003-2004 Mentor survey. The ITP recruits mentors from all across the world to work with students who want to become "proactive learners." In this section, only 2003-2004 will be reported because the mentor survey was changed in 2005. The 2005 mentor results will be reported in a later section of this full evaluation report. In 2003-2004, 793 mentors worked with the International Telementor Program. The results of the mentor survey will be reported below in their relation to the survey questions.

Question 1a-p asked mentors to "Please select those areas where your student benefited from your mentoring and this program." The results are found below in Table 4:

Table 4

Area	N/A	No	Yes
Improved Math Comprehension	78	39	676
Increased registration for advanced math courses	72	58	663
Improved science comprehension and ability	82	80	631
Increased registration for advanced science courses	74	83	636
Improved communication skills (written or oral)	65	543	185
Improved ability to use resources beyond school	41	573	179
Standardized test improvement	78	16	699
Improved critical thinking skills	72	384	337
Improved teamwork	75	301	417
Increased responsibility for learning and academic success	62	507	224
Increase in self-directed learning	68	363	362
Increase in integration of knowledge across subject areas and interest areas	53	403	337
Increase in knowledge of the workplace	49	85	659

n=793

Based on the results in Table 4, mentors reported that students benefited from mentoring and the ITP program in many of the areas listed above. This shows the effectiveness of the ITP program in helping students in critical areas that are important in their quest to become proactive learners.

Question 1q was a follow-up question that asked, "Please describe additional areas that were impacted by this program?" Responses from the mentors are provided below:

- "Student got to think outside the box and combine all the areas that go into deciding what you want to do for a career, finding the job, and attaining specific goals."
- "Increased general awareness of the dedication, work and effort it takes to achieve career goals."
- "Program helped the student to begin critical thinking about future careers, and how choices made now can have influence over where they will be in 5-10 years."

Quality of Relationship

Question 2 asked mentors, "Please indicate the quality of the relationship that developed between you and your student." Mentors were given Likert-scale choices such as: 1=surface relationship to 5=Genuine Relationship. The mean score is found below.

Overall Mean Score: 3.38

Based on this mean score, mentors and students built some quality relationships in this program. By bringing students and mentors together, the ITP program expanded the educational opportunities for many students in this program.

Impact on School Attendance

Question 3 asked mentors, "please indicate the level of impact, if any, this program had on improving school attendance." Mentors were given Likert-scale choices ranging from: 1=very little impact to 5=Significant impact. The mean score findings are below:

Overall Mean Score: 2.83

The mean score findings from this question illustrate that this program had "some impact" on school attendance. This may be due to the fact that students were more willing to attend school to make contact with their mentor. This is another by-product of the effectiveness of the International Telementor Program.

Messages Sent By Mentors to Students

Question 4 asked mentors, "Please indicate the average number of messages you sent to your student each week." Mentors were given Likert-scale choices ranging from: 0=Less than once per week to 6=Greater than 5 per week. The mean score findings are below:

Overall Mean Score: 1.79

This finding shows that mentors actually sent students approximately two messages per week through the ITP system. This is due to the fact that these are working professionals with full-time jobs who are taking time to work with students. Therefore, this mean score is about what one could expect.

Messages Received from Students

Question 5 asked mentors, "Please indicate the average number of messages you received from your student each week." Mentors were given Likert-scale choices ranging from: 0=Less than once per week to 6=Greater than 5 per week. The mean score findings are below:

Overall Mean Score: 1.55

This finding illustrates that students sent approximately 1.5 messages per week to their mentors. This may be due to the fact that some students do not have Internet access readily available to them at all times at their schools. Also, in most situations, teachers have to schedule lab time for students to get Internet access.

Comfort in asking students questions about Projects

Question 6 asked mentors, "How comfortable were you asking your students questions about the project and responding to messages sent from your student?" Mentors were given Likert-scale questions ranging from: 1=uncomfortable to 5=very comfortable. The mean score findings are below:

Overall Mean Score: 4.42

This high mean score illustrates that mentors were very comfortable in asking students questions about the projects and responding to messages sent from their students. This shows that the ITP program is working when mentors can communicate efficiently with their students.

Assistance from the Teacher

Question 7 asked mentors, "Please rate the level and quality of assistance you received from the teacher throughout the project and mentoring experience." Mentors were given Likert-scale choices ranging from: 1=Low quality, infrequent to 5=High quality, frequent. The mean score findings are found below:

Overall Mean Score: 3.67

This mean score shows that mentors believed that teachers provided average assistance throughout the mentoring experience. Even though this mean score is slightly above average, this may be an area of improvement. Teachers are also very critical to the success of this program.

Overall Experience with the ITP program

Question 8 asked mentors, "Please rate your overall experience in the ITP program." Mentors were given Likert-scale choices ranging from: 1=negative and 5=very positive. The mean score findings are below:

Overall Mean Score: 3.94

This finding shows that mentors really liked being involved in the ITP program. With a high mean score of 3.94, mentors feel that the time they are taking to volunteer and help a student is very well worth it.

Topics of Discussion

Question 9 asked mentors, **"Which topics did you most enjoy discussing with your student?"** The responses from the mentors are found below:

- "The topics I most enjoyed discussing with my students were those that were most important to my students personally, like the things that they do in their free time or what they would like to do with their futures."

- "Topics that will have the most positive impact to the students educational opportunities; important college courses to take, realistic career planning, and meaningful research."

Based on the sample of these comments from mentors, discussion primarily focused around creating educational opportunities for students based on real-world experiences mentors currently have and also the discussion really helped students to really think critically about what they wanted to do with their futures. These types of activities are one of the primary purposes of the ITP program.

Valuable Aspects of Participation

Question 10 asked mentors, **"What was the most valuable aspect of participating in this program?"** Samples of mentor responses are found below:

- "When a mentee accepts your feedback and truly takes the time to improve their project, I feel we have made impact. This is very important."

- "Doing something concrete to - hopefully - make a difference in a young person's life, hopefully opening new paths of thought, broader perspectives."

- "Being able to mentor a hard-working student and help her realize that her dreams of becoming a lawyer can come true."

Participation in the Program

Question 11a asked mentors, **"Do you want to participate in the program next year?"** Mentors were given choices of "yes" or "no". The mentor responses are found below:

Overall Totals: Yes=750; No=43

Given the overwhelming responses of mentors, many will continue their participation in the program. This is a testament to the effectiveness of the ITP program. Given that many mentors want to stay involved in this program will be a positive for students that are participating given that they will be working with experienced mentors.

Difficulties of Participating

Question 12 asked mentors, "What was the most difficult aspect, if any, of participating?" Responses from the mentors are found below:

- "Getting the student to be more proactive."
- "Trying to give advice to someone I've never met and only have limited information about."

Given these responses, mentors did experience difficulties working in the ITP program. Mentors expressed frustrations getting students to become more proactive and giving advice before a real relationship is established. This may speak to the fact that students and mentors should know more information about each other before a relationship is established.

Participation in a Formal Mentoring Program

Question 13 asked mentors, "Was this the first time you've been part of a formal mentoring program?" Findings from this question are found below:

Overall Totals: Yes = 213; No= 580

The findings from this question shows that many of the mentors that participated in this program were already experienced in mentoring students. This is positive given that most mentors have worked with students before and this makes the wealth of experience much more positive for students participating in this program.

2005 Mentor Survey

Introduction

The next section of this report will focus on findings from the 2005 Mentor survey. The ITP program redesigned the survey instrument to obtain more information from mentors who participate in this program. The ITP recruits mentors from all across the world to work with students who want to become "proactive learners." In this section, only 2005 data will be reported since the mentor survey was changed in 2005. In 2005, 497 mentors worked with the International Telementor Program. The results of the mentor survey will be reported below in their relation to the survey questions.

Question 1 asked mentors, "Please indicate the student skill areas that you feel you influenced through this project." Mentors were given choices of N/A, No, or Yes based on the criteria presented. The findings are found below in Table 5:

Table 5

Area	N/A	No	Yes
Math Reasoning	334	93	70
Science Reasoning	238	65	194
Written Communication Skills	77	49	371
Basic Research Skills	74	28	395
Project Management Skills	154	64	279
Collaboration Skills	99	42	356

According to Table 5, mentors felt that they influenced students in the majority of areas asked in the survey expect for Math. These results show a positive for the program given that mentors were able to influence so many areas for students. This will ultimately benefit students in their academic careers and help teachers by assisting students to become more proactive in their learning.

Benefits of Mentoring

Question 2 asked mentors, "Please indicate if your mentoring support aided students in the following areas." The areas are listed below in Table 6 along with the results.

Table 6

Area	N/A	No	Yes
Better understanding of a professional work environment	163	96	238
Improved awareness of postsecondary educational opportunities	197	117	183
Increased desire to research and plan for postsecondary education	189	108	200
Improved awareness of the value of a professional support network	144	61	292

According to Table 6, mentors indicated that they felt that their support aided students in every area listed above. This is a positive given that the areas listed above are critical to students becoming proactive learners. By being assisted in these areas, students participating in this program have an advantage over their classmates that did not participate in the program.

Quality of Messages

Question 3 asked mentors, **"Please indicate the quality of the messages received from your student throughout the project."** Mentors were given choices ranging from 1=Poor Quality to 5= Above Average Quality. Findings are found below:

Overall Mean Score: 3.39

This mean score indicates that mentors believed that messages received from students were slightly above average during this project. This program may have helped many students improve their writing skills given that they had to communicate with their mentor via the Internet.

Final Products

Question 4 asked mentors, **"Did your student share a final product (presentation, research report, plan, etc.) with you for this project?"** Findings are found below:

Overall Totals: N/A=32, No=125; Yes=340

The findings from this question indicate the program was productive because students submitted a final product (presentation, research report, plan, etc.) with their mentors. This is a positive for the mentors and students given that a "tangible product" was given at the end of the project.

Assistance from the Teacher

Question 5 asked mentors, **"Please rate the level and quality of assistance you received from the teacher throughout the project."** Mentors were given choices ranging from 1=Low Quality, Infrequent through 5=High Quality, Frequent. Findings are found below:

Overall Mean Score: 3.94

This mean score reflects that mentors did receive adequate assistance from the teacher throughout the project period. This is a critical aspect of the program given that the mentors and teachers should work together to assist the students.

Assistance from ITP Staff

Question 6 asked mentors, **"Please rate the level and quality of assistance you received from ITP staff throughout the project."** Mentors were given choices ranging from 1=Low Quality, Infrequent to 5=High Quality, Frequent. Findings are found below:

Overall Mean Score: 3.73

This mean score reflects that mentors did receive "above average" assistance from the ITP staff. This is also critical to the overall success of the program for mentors and teachers to work together to help students.

Future Success

Question 7 asked mentors, **"What can either the teacher or ITP staff do to make a similar project more successful?"** Mentor responses are found below:

- "I'd like to see more deliverables to the mentors. The students were assigned projects but I rarely, if ever, saw anything related to those. I would just get email updates describing them."

- "I think with any new undertaking, it takes trial and error to tweak the process. I think it might have helped to work with the students more closely and review their e-mail messages to make sure they understood what was expected of them and review their responses."

Given the responses of the mentors, they would like to see more deliverables and a closer monitoring of students that are working on these projects. This may be something that the ITP program should examine in the future.

Feedback on Student's Final Project

Question 8 asked mentors, **"Please share your feedback regarding the quality of the student's final project as well as suggestions for improvement."** Samples of mentor responses are found below:

- "It would have been great to have the final report presentation loaded up to the website so we could see it. Even some photos of the actual night. I don't want to use the funds to send a DVD around the world, but would be interested in a direct upload to the site after the presentation night."

- "I think the project turned out fabulously. It was very interesting to see it come together. It might have been nice to see some samples of the information from my student throughout the project."

The suggestions provided by the mentors above will be especially useful for strengthening the ITP program. For example, uploading the final project to the website will be especially useful for mentors.

Overall Experience

Question 9 asked mentors, **"Please rate your overall experience in the program."** Mentors were given the range of choices of 1=Negative through 5=Positive. Findings are found below:

Overall Mean Score: 4.08

This mean score illustrates that mentors had a very positive experience in the ITP program. Also, many of these mentors are more likely to return to the ITP program since they have reported positive experiences.

Mentoring New Students in the Future

Question 10 asked mentors, **"Would you consider mentoring new students in the future?"** Mentors were given the options of "Yes" and "No" to respond to this question. The findings are found below:

Overall Totals: Yes=480; No=17

Rewards of Mentoring

Question 11 asked mentors, **"What was the most rewarding aspect of participating?"** Mentors comments are found below:

- "Seeing the kids grow and be successful with their ideas and what they are learning and its application."
- "Knowing that at some point in the distant future a student will understand what life is really about and make a better decision because of our short time together with them."

Mentors definitely reported many rewards by participating in this program. By taking time to give back to the students, mentors felt rewarded when they saw their students develop. This is a positive of the ITP program since mentors take so much of their own time to work with students.

Difficult Aspects of the Program

Question 12 asked mentors, **"What was the most difficult aspect of participating?"** Mentor comments are found below:

- "Trying to help the students through infrequent and short web messages and coaxing them to think about what they are doing without giving them the answers."
- "It seemed like my mentee had a hard time focusing, so many times I felt I was not helping or simply, my contributions were not taken into consideration."

Given these responses, mentors did experience difficulties working in the ITP program. Mentors expressed frustrations with communication from their students and also having students take the mentors advice into consideration in the projects.

Participation in a Formal Mentoring Program

Question 13 asked mentors, "Was this the first time you've been part of a formal mentoring program?" Findings from this question are found below:

Overall Totals: Yes = 79; No= 418

The findings from this question shows that many of the mentors that participated in this program were already experienced in mentoring students. This is positive given that most mentors have worked with students before and this makes the wealth of experience much more positive for students participating in this program.

2003-2004 Student Survey

Introduction

The next section of this report will focus on findings from the 2003-2004 Student survey. The ITP works with students from all across the world to encourage them to become "proactive learners." In this section, only 2003-2004 data will be reported because the student survey was changed in 2005. The 2005 student survey results will be reported in a later section of this full evaluation report. In 2003-2004, 1889 students worked with the International Telementor Program. The results of the student survey will be reported below in their relation to the survey questions.

Question 1a-p asked students, "Please select those areas where you experienced impact from communicating with your mentor in this telementor program." The results are found below in Table 7:

Table 7

Area	Yes	No
Improved math comprehension and ability	1335	554
Improved science comprehension and ability	1770	119
Improved communication skills (written or oral)	1275	614
Standardized test improvement	1753	136
Improved critical thinking skills	1448	441
Improved teamwork	1511	378
Increased responsibility for learning and academic success	1284	605
Increase integration of knowledge across subject areas and interest areas	1210	679
Increased desire to become a proactive learner	1283	606
Increased desire to go to college	1050	839
Other areas	1189	700

n=1889

Based on the results in Table 7, students reported that they benefited greatly from communicating with their respective mentors. This shows the effectiveness of the ITP program in helping students in critical areas that are important in their quest to become proactive learners.

Question 1q was a follow-up question that asked, "Please describe additional areas that were impacted by this program?" Responses from the mentors are provided below:

- "My mentor really emphasized that I should go to college and how I should go as far as I can go with my education."
- "I was impacted in just being me. I learned that their really are nice people out there who want to help you, and I'm VERY glad that I got this unique opportunity to do it."
- "This program helped me so much! Here are just some of the things it helped me with. It helped me to explore the internet a little more. It helped me talk to people and not to be shy."

Level of Impact on Grades

Question 2 asked students, "Please indicate the level of impact this program had on improving your grades in the primary subjects (math, science, language arts, etc.). Students were given choices of 1=Low Impact to 5=High Impact. Results are found below:

Overall Mean Score: 2.74

The mean score of 2.74 documents that students felt that this program was only slightly beneficial in helping their grades in the primary subjects (math, science, language arts, etc.) in school. This may be the case because students may not have seen their grades change in these core courses.

Improving School Attendance

Question 3 asked students, "Please indicate the level of impact on improving your school attendance." Students were given choices of 1=Low Impact to 5=High Impact. Results are found below:

Overall Mean Score: 2.65

The mean score of 2.65 documents that students did not feel the ITP program significantly improved their attendance at school.

Messages to Mentor

Question 4 asked students, "Please indicate the average number of messages you sent to your mentor each week." Students were given choices 1=one message to 5=greater than 5 messages. Results are found below:

Overall Mean Score: 2.50

The mean score of 2.50 illustrates that students sent approximately 2 messages a week to their mentors. This is relatively efficient given that students usually have limited Internet access at their respective school sites.

Messages Received from Mentor

Question 5 asked students, "Please indicate the average number of messages you received from your mentor each week." Students were given choices ranging from 1=one message to 5=greater than 5 messages. Results are found below:

Overall Mean Score: 2.77

The mean score of 2.77 reports that students received almost 3 messages a week from their mentors. This is also efficient given that mentors working in the ITP program work full-time and are volunteering to support students in this program.

Questions to Mentor

Question 6 asked students, "How comfortable were you asking your mentor questions about your project and responding to messages sent from your mentor?" Students were given choices ranging from 1=Uncomfortable to 5=Very comfortable. Results are found below:

Overall Mean Score: 4.22

The mean score of 4.22 documents that students were very comfortable in asking their mentors questions about their respective projects. This is a positive finding for the ITP program given that students should feel comfortable in asking their mentors questions about their projects.

Development of Independent Learning Plan

Question 7 asked students, "Are you interested in developing your own independent learning plan or career plan as a result of your participation in the program?" Students were given choices ranging from 1=Low Interest to 5=High Interest. Results are found below:

Overall Mean Score: 3.15

The mean score of 3.15 that a majority of students participating in the ITP program were interested in creating their own independent learning plan as a result of their participation in this program. This is another positive finding for the ITP program because the majority of students are now taking ownership for their own learning.

Overall Experience

Question 8 asked students, "Please rate your overall experience in the program." Students were given choices ranging from 1=Negative to 5=Very Positive. Results are found below:

Overall Mean Score: 3.98

The mean score of 3.98 illustrates that many students had a positive experience in this program. By students enjoying the program increases their chances of becoming "proactive learners" in the future.

Topic Enjoyment

Question 9 asked students, "Which topics did you most enjoy discussing with your mentor?" Student responses are found below:

- "I enjoyed learning about my mentor's career and also discussed the career I want to have when I get older. I also enjoyed learning about the some of the classes I would have to take in high school and college."

- "I enjoyed discussing my career choices and what to do to accomplish my goal of being a lawyer."

Positive Aspect of Participation

Question 10 asked students, "What was the most positive aspect of participating in this program?" Student responses are below:

- "I figured out what I wanted to do and am most passionate about. I learned how passion and ambition is important to accomplish what I call my 'Golden Goal'."

- "The most positive aspect of participating in this program was this program helped to decide and pursue the career I plan to study in college."

Future Participation

Question 11 asked students, "Do you want to participate in the program next year?" Results are found below:

Overall Totals: Yes=1359; No=530

This total overwhelmingly shows that students want to participate in the program next year. This is a positive for the ITP program because the longer students remain in the program the likelihood of them becoming a "proactive learner" increases.

Difficulties in Participation

Question 12 asked students, "What was the most difficult aspect, if any, of participating?" Student responses are below:

- "We didn't really get enough time to work and communicate with our mentors. I think that we should have gotten to do this program the whole year."

- "Trying to get the project tracker done on time and getting worksheets done, depending on your career."

Participation in a Formal Mentoring Program

Question 13 asked students, "Was this the first time you've been part of a formal mentoring program?" Results are found below:

Overall Totals: Yes=1630; No=259
These results show that many of the students that participated in 2003-2004 were participating for the first time. Given that so many of these first-time students enjoyed the program really speaks to the positive things students received from the program.

2005 Student Survey Results

Introduction

The next section of this report will focus on findings from the 2005 Student survey. The ITP program redesigned the survey instrument to obtain more information from students who participate in this program. The ITP programs works with students from all across the world who want to become "proactive learners." In this section, only 2005 data will be reported since the student survey was changed in 2005. In 2005, 853 students were involved in the International Telementor Program. The results of the student survey will be reported below in their relation to the survey questions.

Working with a Mentor

Question 1 asked students, **"Please describe the best part of working on this project with your mentor."** Samples of student responses are below:

- "The best part of working on this project with my mentor was that I got to learn more things about Pearl Harbor and that I got to meet someone who is as interested in WWII as I am."
- "My mentor helped me in a lot of ways. Like helping me with finding webpages and gave me so much info on the project!!!. SHE WAS THE BEST!"

As noted in the comments above, students really enjoyed working with their mentors. It seems that mentors helped students to expand their knowledge base along with provided additional resources to help students on their assignments.

Future Help from Mentors

Question 2 asked students, **"Please share any other academic areas where you'd like to receive help from a mentor."** Samples of student responses are below:

- "Really the only thing the telementor needs to help us kids on is math."
- "I would like someone to help me in the area of math."

Given the sample of student responses from 2005 survey, it appears that students would like help in the future in the area of math. Since most students tend to struggle in this area, it may help to

get assistance from mentors who use math in their jobs so they can pass on their knowledge to students.

Advice for Mentors

Question 3 asked students, **"What advice would you give your mentor as he or she works with a new student?"** Samples of student responses are found below:

- "They should constantly write to the student to keep them well informed."
- "Really listen and try to be more available also try to answer all their questions."

In examining the comments from the students, mentors who work with new students need to have constant written communication with the students and really be patient with them and try to answer their question as much as possible. This will give the students more confidence in their mentors.

Communication with Mentor

Question 4 asked students, **"How comfortable were you communicating with your mentor about your project?"** Students were given choices ranging from 1=Uncomfortable to 5=Very Comfortable. Results are found below:

Overall Mean Score: 4.36

From the mean score above, students were very comfortable in communicating with the mentors about their specific project. This is a positive given that students should be very comfortable in this on-line mentoring environment.

Areas of Improvement

Question 5a-5g asked students to rate those areas where they experienced improvement from participating in this program. Students were given choices of "No" and "Yes". Results are found below in Table 8:

Table 8

Area	No	Yes
I have a better understanding of the importance of doing well in math	449	404
I have a better understanding of the importance of doing well in science	362	491
I have a better understanding of the importance of doing well in reading and writing	314	539
My writing skills have improved	329	524
My teamwork skills have improved	240	613
I'm taking more responsibility for my academic success	198	655
I plan to further my education beyond high school (trade school, community college, university)	164	689

n=853

Based on Table 8, students were very positive in the areas where they experienced improvements. The only area without an overall favorable response was in the area of the importance of doing well in math.

Experience with the ITP Website

Question 6 asked students, "What was your overall experience using the International Telementor Program website?" Students were given responses ranging from 1= Difficult to 5= Easy. Results are found below:

Overall Mean Score: 4.04

From the mean score above, students were very comfortable using the ITP program website. This is a positive since students were able to navigate this site to communicate with their mentors.

Experience in the ITP program

Question 7 asked students, "Please rate your overall experience in the program." Students were given responses ranging from 1=Negative to 5=Very Positive. Results are found below:

Overall Mean Score: 4.18

The mean score of 4.18 illustrates that students had a really positive experience in the ITP program. Apparently, students felt like they really benefited from participation.

Receiving Mentoring in the Future

Question 8 asked students, "Would you be interested in receiving mentoring support from professionals in the future?" Students were given choices of "No" and "Yes". Results are found below:

Overall Totals: Yes=675; No=178

Given these results, it appears that many students are very interested in receiving mentoring support in the future. Hopefully, these students will be able to work with mentors again in the future to enhance their academic capabilities.

Question 8a asked students a follow-up question, "Please describe why or why not."

- "I would like to receive help from professionals in the future because if I don't quite understand something it would be nice to have a professional helping me out. Reason being they are a professional and actually know what they are doing. It would be nice for them to share their experiences out in the business world so I can see what it's really like."

- "Yes, I would like to receive mentoring support from professionals in the future. I have enjoyed writing back and forth to people I don't know, but people who are smart about life and want to help and teach people like me."

These responses really show that students enjoy their interactions with their mentors. It appears that students really look at their mentors as role models in their respective fields. As a result, students really look forward to future communication with them.

Participation in a Formal Mentoring Program

Question 9 asked students, "Was this the first time you've been part of a formal mentoring program?" Results are found below:

Overall Totals: Yes=580; No=273

These results show that many of the students that participated in 2005 were participating for the first time. Given that so many of these first-time students enjoyed the program really speaks to the positive things students received from the program.

Difficulties in Participation

Question 10 asked students, "What was the most difficult aspect, if any, of participating?" Student responses are below:

- "Not being able to contact very much. Waiting a week for an e-mail and not being able to write an e-mail for a week was kind of hard."

- "The most difficult part was probably when I wouldn't hear from her when I came to check my messages. In the time period when we were communicating, I had spring break and long weekends where we couldn't correspond."

It appears that the main difficulties of participating in this program were the communication between the mentor and the student. Since many students did not have access to the computer very often it was hard to communicate with their mentors.

Additional Comments

Question 11 asked students, "Did we miss something? If so, please share any additional comments you might have about your experience in the program." Responses are found below:

- "Make sure the mentors have time to help the students and make sure they can communicate with the students."

- "This program is spectacular for kids our age and it would be at any age. Not all people will agree that you need to know about the stock market at this point in your life, but honestly this experience has helped me tons in my math skills, people skills, writing skills, etc. This is a wonderful program and should be in the curriculum of grades 8-12 each year for schools all over the nation. I am a big supporter of the International Telementor Program. Thank you for letting me be a part of this academic excellence.

The last quote really summarizes how students feel about the ITP program. This student noted that this program should be implemented in schools all over the nation. Given this response from students, school districts should become more interested in getting their student involved in the ITP program.

Summary

In summary, after evaluating the teacher, mentor, and student surveys from 2002-2005, it appears that the International Telementor Program has been very successful in assisting students to become more "proactive learners." With so many teachers, mentors and students involved this program, as one student noted; this program should be in schools across the nation.

After an in-depth examination of the findings, this program is doing quite well. Mentors noted that they have really enjoyed working students. Teachers have noted that have seen quite a change in their students after being involved in this program. Finally, students have noted that they have enjoyed participating in this program.

To paint a picture of the complexity of the program, the reader must know the amount of mentor/student matches were made as a result of this program. In 2003, 1079 matches were made between mentors and students around the world. In 2004, 680 matches were made between mentors and students. Finally, in 2005, 1506 matches were made between mentors and teachers. This provides context into how many students have been impact as a result of this program.

Researcher's Recommendations

As a result of this program evaluation research, several recommendations are provided for the ITP program to consider in its future programmatic efforts:

1. Work with teachers and schools to find ways for schools to obtain more computer equipment to increase the time students can work on their projects and communicate with their mentors. By doing so, will increase the overall effectiveness of what students can get out of this program.

2. Find ways to have mentors, students and teachers communicate more often via the ITP website. Various comments from all three constituents noted that more communication was needed in this program.

3. Make sure the teacher is involved with the various aspects of communication with the student and the teacher. Many mentors noted that the teacher was not very involved in the entire process.

4. ITP staff should assist teachers to help create projects that develop solid skills in the areas of math and science. By doing so, the program will be able to demonstrate greater effectiveness in improving math and science comprehension.

5. Provide background data to students and mentors before a match is made. Many mentors and students noted that the initial stages of the mentor/student match were a little slow in development because the different parties did not know much about each other.

6. Additional mentor recruitment is needed as this program continues to grow. By increasing the mentor base, students can be exposed to more professionals in the work world that can help provide advice on how to become a proactive learner.

7. In the area of research, the ITP program should work with the researcher to make the survey instruments are more efficient for mentors, teachers and students. The survey instruments should be refined for clarity and greater effectiveness for obtaining program data.

8. Evaluation data should be conducted at the end of each academic semester for the mentors, teachers and students. This will help the ITP program to stay current on how mentors, teachers and students are doing in the program. Also, this will be helpful to provide feedback to the many constituents that ITP works with.

Contact ITP

ITP is one of the largest virtual mentoring programs to date. ITP received a national award from the National Mentoring Partnership organization in 1997. David Neils, ITP founder and director, serves on the National Mentoring Partnership Policy Council and works with top mentoring organizations including the National Mentoring Center, The Mentoring Institute, and America's Promise. ITP will collaborate with mentoring organizations and communities around the world.

Please direct all comments and questions to ITP Director, David Neils
Phone: (970) 206-9352; FAX: 888-453-0635, davidn@telementor.org, www.telementor.org

About the Researcher

Chance W. Lewis, Ph.D. is an education research consultant with the Research and Development Center for the Advancement of Student Learning and an Assistant Professor in the School of Education at Colorado State University. If there are any questions related to the research results, Dr. Lewis can be contacted at (970) 491-1807 or by e-mail at chance.lewis@cahs.colostatate.edu.