

Rocky Point UFSD Mentor Plan

Those having torches will pass them on to others.

Plato, the Republic

The origin of the term “mentor” dates to the time of Homer, specifically to *The Odyssey*. Homer describes his hero, Odysseus, preparing to set out on an epic voyage, though his son, Telemachus, must remain behind. Odysseus asks a trusted friend, Mentor, to guide and counsel Telemachus in his absence. From this ancient literary figure, mentor has come to mean one who helps guide a protégée through a developmental process, whether that process be the transition from childhood to adulthood or from student to professional. Because of the complexity of this task, mentors are considered to be teachers, counselors, friends, role models, and more.

The benefits derived from working closely with a mentor are great. “The condition of not knowing is common to beginning teachers. No matter how extensive the beginner’s pre-service education, beginning teachers are faced by and accountable for or to – sometimes it is not clear which - unknown students, teaching colleagues, administrators, university supervisors, and parents. In the midst of so many strangers, it is difficult to know to whom to turn or where to begin. In addition, the school and community environments have norms and rituals that to most probably are new and strange. The large number of factual and procedural unknowns can send the beginning teacher into a state of shock wherein it becomes impossible to transfer previously mastered concepts and skills from the university to the public school classroom” (Corcoran 1981). The increased demands on teachers have only exasperated this situation for beginning teachers.

Purpose

The purpose of the Rocky Point Union Free School District’s Mentor Plan is to provide structured guidance and on-going support for first-year teachers. In conjunction with the Professional Development Plan, the Mentor Plan will give support to new teachers in meeting the demands of higher instructional standards, guide them to implement best practices, provide for professional sharing, growth, observations, discussions, and model the belief that educators must be life-long learners. Congruent with the school district’s goals, the Mentor Plan will also help to improve student achievement through more effective instruction, incorporate technology as a learning/instructional tool and provide tools to the new teacher for increased communication with all stakeholders.

Scope

Mentoring will be provided to all first-year teachers with an initial or transitional certificate.

Intended Outcomes

- Provide guidance and support to first-year teachers
- Assist new teachers transitions from preparation to practice
- Ease their assimilation into the culture of the school
- Familiarize the mentees with the district and building resources
- Improve instruction for students and insure that instruction is aligned with the New York State Standards
- Increase the rate of new teacher retention
- Create a professional learning culture

Mentor Selection Criteria

- Tenured teachers with at least 5 years' experience
- Evidence of superior teaching abilities, mastery of pedagogical and subject area skills as demonstrated by formal observations, performance reviews, participation in staff development projects, achievements and teacher leadership roles
- Effective interpersonal skills as proved through administrative, peer and community relationships
- Ability to allow the intern to develop his/her own effective teaching style
- Willingness and time to serve as a mentor
- Active member of the Rocky Point school community
- Proficiency/ knowledge in technology integration
- A model of life-long learning
- Certification areas will be a primary consideration

Role of the Mentor

Mentors will function as the partner, support system and guide to their interns. The primary objective is to establish a nurturing and trusting relationship, which will allow the intern to be open and reflective about his/her professional growth needs and for the mentor to present supportive ideas in a non-threatening atmosphere. **The mentor will not evaluate the intern and interactions between the intern and mentor will not be used in any evaluative manner. All participants will respect the confidentiality of the mentor-intern relationship.**

Activities of the mentor may include but are not limited to:

- Assisting the mentee in setting goals
- Modeling effective instruction
- Assisting with effective lesson planning
- Assisting the intern in assimilating into the culture of the building and district
- Guiding the mentee in the areas of classroom management, scheduling, planning and organization
- Providing guidance, methodology and teaching strategies such as cooperative learning, differentiating instruction, integration of technology, multiple intelligences, classroom management techniques, standards based instruction, inclusion groups, etc.
- Participating in training activities and collegial circles
- Participating in regular meetings with the intern to provide support, guidance and coaching
- Maintaining an open door policy for the intern to visit the mentor's classroom
- Modeling effective teaching practices as outlined in Danielson's [A Framework for Teaching](#)
- Engaging in collaborative needs assessment of the interns pedagogical knowledge and experience
- Assisting in the collaborative establishment of goals and activities for the mentoring experience
- When possible, attending with the intern staff development conferences
- Providing collaborative consultation on the intern's lesson and unit planning
- Providing opportunities for the intern to become familiar with resources, building and organizational structure, and support systems available in the district
- Assisting the mentee with parent contact/conferences
- Assisting the mentee with field trips

Development of District Needs Assessment

- Determine the scope and depth (topics to cover) of training (1 day)
- Assess the amount of training or skills already in place
- Identify the internal and external resources available
- Determine when training will be provided
- Include prospective mentors in the training

Preparation of the Mentor

Training may include but should not be limited to:

- Elements of a mentoring relationship
- Development of coaching skills
- Adult learning theory
- Teacher development theory
- Peer Coaching
- Time management
- Strategies for engaging beginning teachers in critical reflection of their teaching practice

Implementation Strategy

- Activities may include peer coaching, classroom observation, co-teaching, team teaching, lesson planning
- Activities should be consistent with programs and goals of the district and include needs common to the group (district policies and procedures), individual needs, needs specific to a group (special education, speech, etc)
- Activities should be researched based in the areas of instructional strategies and classroom management
- Log of activities and dates will be maintained by the mentor and mentee

Compensation

- Stipend for the mentor for before or after school meetings

Time to Perform Mentor Activities

- Before and/or after school, release time, Superintendent's Conference Days, Superintendent's Meetings, building, departmental and grade level meetings
- Release time may include duty, instructional and professional development time
 - Prior approval is required by the building principal or designee

Record Keeping

- Mentor and mentee will complete a weekly activity log with topics and times listed
- The mentor will complete an evaluative instrument each semester and submit it to a subcommittee of the PDP to review/ revise the program. This evaluation is for the sole purpose of assessing the program and not the participants.
- The district is required to maintain all mentor/mentee records for a period of 7 years

Oversight

- The mentor program will be jointly reviewed by the teaching and administrative staff

Problem Resolution Mechanism

- Concerns will be brought to the attention of the president of the Rocky Point Teacher's Association president who will ameliorate the situation and may present problems to the PDP committee chairperson for resolution.

Resources

New Teacher Workshops, MESTRACT, Eastern Suffolk BOCES, Scope, Enhancing Professional Practice: Framework For Teaching by Charlotte Danielson, How To Be an Effective Teacher: The First Days of School by Harry Wong, Technology Integration Teachers, Lighthouse Teachers, Literacy Collaborative Coaches, Rocky Point School District Staff Development Workshops, Instructional Support Teams, District Office Personnel



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Mentor Program 2023-2024
Year End Evaluation

Mentee's Name: _____

Please respond to all questions that apply as of this time:

Check one Mentor _____ Mentee _____

1. Has the mentor program met your needs as a new teacher?

2. Has the mentor program been supportive? Please explain.

3. What types of assistance did you receive through this program?

4. Has the feedback you have received been helpful?

5. Has the experience been professionally rewarding for you?

6. Has the mentor program afforded adequate time at regular intervals for mentor/protégée to meet and conference?

7. What suggestions do you have for improving the mentor program at this time?
