

PERSONNEL SERVICES

Policy 4440
(Regulation 4440)

Professional Activities, Training and Professional Grants

Mentoring

The District's mentoring goal is to facilitate the growth and development of new educators by pairing them with experienced veteran educators. Through the effort of both the mentor and the mentee, the mentee shall draw upon the experience and knowledge of the veteran mentor to enhance their own professional skills and enhance student learning. It is vital to the success of our students that new educators become integrated, through the mentoring program, into the school's culture and are given the opportunity to better themselves with the assistance of one of their veteran peers.

Through the mentoring program the Board hopes to not only create a stronger learning community but also a community where the strong professional and personal bonds between the educators in the District provide students and employees the best possible working and learning environment.

Professional Activities, Training and Professional Grants

Mentoring

District mentoring guidelines are as follows:

- I. The mentor will introduce and help to integrate the mentee into the culture of the school, the district, and the community by:**
 - a. Instructing the mentee on the District's policies, procedures, CSIP, and goals.
 - b. Communicating the social environment of the surrounding community.
 - c. Familiarizing the mentee with local, district, and national organizations that are active within the school environment.
 - d. Discussing any classroom issue the mentee may have; such as how the school handles race, gender, or disability issues.
 - e. Providing ongoing assistance with data analysis, assessments procedures/practices.
 - f. Discussing any district initiatives or parental concerns the mentee would find helpful to know about.
 - g. If necessary, explaining district acronyms.

- II. The mentoring program will provide a systematic and ongoing program review/evaluation by all stakeholders:**
 - a. The program will identify all stakeholders.
 - b. The program will identify desired mentoring outcomes, timelines for those outcomes, and how the desired outcomes will be measured.
 - c. The program will include a systematic and continuous system for gathering feedback on the mentoring program from mentors, mentees and administrators. (One possible method of gathering data would be through pre and post surveys of mentors and mentees, etc.).
 - d. The program will be based on a foundation of best teaching and student learning practices.
 - e. The program will require independent/anonymous exit interviews, so clear reasons for staff departure can be determined.
 - f. The program will be supported by central office and school board trend data.
 - g. The program will be included in broader Professional Development program evaluations.

III. The mentoring program will include an individualized plan for beginning educators that aligns with the district's goals and needs and:

- a. The individualized plan will be aligned with the District's Teacher/Educator Evaluation standards.
- b. The individualized plan will be a systematic and concise mentoring and professional development plan that prioritizes the immediate and future needs of the new educator.
- c. The individualized plan will align with all the district's CSIP and certification requirements.
- d. The individualized plan will establish outcomes for new educators.
- e. The individualized plan will be an extension or part of a professional development plan that may have begun during student teaching/internship or culminating project in college.
- f. The individualized plan will establish classroom or on the job observations that are guided by and contain a checklist of best practices observed by the mentor.
- g. The individualized plan will encourage structured experiences and expectations for all new educators.

IV. The mentoring program will have appropriate criteria for selecting the mentors that will operate within the program:

- a. The mentor will have a minimum of three years of teaching experience.
- b. The mentor will be committed to optimizing student learning.
- c. The mentor will show enthusiasm and a commitment to the education profession.
- d. The mentor will have a commitment to self-growth and a commitment to the growth of any future mentee.
- e. The mentor will hold the same or similar position in respects to the grade and subject area of the mentee.
- f. The mentor/mentee will have the ability to use mechanisms that will be in place to end the pairing if either the mentor or mentee is not satisfied.
- g. The mentor will have an understanding of both broad educational issues and specific teaching/learning issues.
- h. The mentor will have a strong understanding of pedagogy, instructional expertise and relevant administrative issues.
- i. The mentor will be made available, through release time or some other mechanisms, to mentor their assigned mentee.
- j. The mentor will be assigned by the building principals with input from the grade level or department level chair person.
- k. The mentor shall be supported in time and effort by the administration and the school board.

V. The mentor program will provide comprehensive mentor training to all mentors:

- a. The mentor training program will teach the prospective mentors that the mentoring process is not an evaluation and that confidentiality is required between mentor and mentee (unless it is a situation involving child endangerment).
- b. The mentor training program will include cognitive coaching and collaborative training skills.
- c. The mentor training program will include observation and feedback on the training and skills of the mentors.
- d. The mentor training program will provide the mentors with an awareness of the phases of first-year educators (stress, depression, etc.).
- e. The mentor training program will provide mentors with a catalogue of the resources that are available to beginning educators.
- f. The mentor training program will teach mentors the need to recognize the need for knowledge and strategies in regards to classroom management.
- g. The mentor training program will provide for formation of mentoring consortia.
- h. The mentor training program will teach mentors to focus on exemplary teaching and assessment practices.
- i. The mentor training program will teach mentors to build working strategies that encourage problem solving and independent thinking.
- j. The mentor training program will teach mentors the importance of student assessments and how these assessments may be utilized to guide future classroom instruction.
- k. The mentor training program will instruct the mentors on the importance of including a self-assessment that identifies whether mentoring is meeting both the mentor's and the mentee's expectations.
- l. The mentor training program will stress the importance of student learning.

- VI. During the mentoring program mentors will be given sufficient time to observe the beginning educators and for the beginning educators to observe master educators. The times of the observations should be structured in a way that limits that amount of time a substitute teacher is required while still allowing multiple opportunities for the observations. These results may be achieved by:**
- a. Aligning class schedules and planning periods in a way that allows for the completion of mentoring duties.
 - b. Utilizing state and local professional development funds, career ladder, or stipends to support the mentor's additional duties.
 - c. Providing release time for at least three observations and meetings between the mentor and the mentee.
 - d. Encouraging colleges to support mentors and mentees, using online classes, having personal visits and/or using a beginning educators' assistance program.

Mentor Assignments/Program Delivery

Mentors will be allowed a sufficient amount of time to observe the teaching of the mentee. These observations should be accomplished via release time and schedule coordination. Additionally, when executing the mentoring program the following elements should be met:

1. That every new educator participates in a mentoring program approved and provided by the district for a minimum of two years.
2. That the program should provide the new educator with an introduction to District students, community, district, school, and classroom in a way that is systematic, ongoing and individualized.
3. The program will have classrooms visits with pre and post conferences and allow time for mentor/mentee activities and meetings.

Program Accountability

All mentor programs will have systematic and ongoing program review and evaluation by all stakeholders that identifies mentoring outcomes and their measurements, gathers feedback from stakeholders, and includes anonymous exit interviews.