

Duanesburg Central School District

Mentor Program

2020-2021

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Duanesburg Central School District

Mentor Program Overview

Program Goals

1. To be in compliance with New York State law
2. To enculturate and guide newly hired teachers through common challenges and demands of the teaching profession; e.g., discipline, classroom management, interaction with parents, diversity in students and instructional issues
3. To develop and enhance the knowledge, skills, positive attitudes and values that are vital to teacher success through career long professional learning
4. To foster the professional learning culture where collegiality, collaboration and reflection are valued for all teachers
5. To retain highly qualified, newly hired teachers

Who oversees this program?

As mentoring is one the fullest expressions of professional development, Duanesburg's mentor program will function in conjunction with the District's Professional Development Committee. Two building Mentor Coordinators are appointed by building administrators each year to oversee the implementation of the program within each building.

The Professional Development Committee will oversee the creation and implementation of our mentoring program. Mentor Coordinators will submit year end evaluations to the building administrator. Mentor Coordinators meet with building administrators in order to refine or modify the program as necessary to ensure its success. Mentor Coordinators and building administrators will also approve the teachers accepted to be mentors.

Who coordinates the mentor program?

The Duanesburg Central School District will appoint two mentor coordinators, one per building, to direct the mentor program each school year. Duties of the mentor coordinators shall include:

- Periodic attendance at meetings of the Professional Development Committee to guarantee that the district's professional development offerings include appropriate in-services activities and materials for each mentor and mentee
- Collaborating with building principals to recommend pairings of mentors with mentees
- Facilitating mentor visitations of mentees
- Conducting monthly meetings for mentors and mentees
- Overseeing the collection of data used to evaluate the program
- Informing mentors and mentees of relevant professional development activities and providing logistical support to teachers who wish to register for these activities
- Attending mentor training as appropriate.
- Training other mentors.
- Assessing and adjusting mentor/mentee pairings, if necessary,
 - in consultation with the building administrators
- Overseeing the general operation of the program throughout the school year
- Communicating regularly with the building administrators to address concerns brought by administrators or general building-related questions. Specific issues are to be kept confidential between the mentor/mentor coordinator and mentee unless such issues might endanger the safety and well being of students or staff.

What is the eligibility/criteria for mentor selection?

Mentors are teachers who operate at the highest levels of their profession and whose efforts are essential to the success of our school district. Recognizing these facts, the DCS Mentoring Program strives to select mentors who exhibit the following characteristics:

- Tenured in the district *Required
- Mastery of skills and methods
- Respected by peers
- Empathetic and approachable
- Effective listening and questioning skills
- Effective classroom management
- Evidence of lifelong learning and commitment to professional development
- Committed to and passionate about teaching
- Non-judgmental and accepting of diverse styles and methods

Research indicates successful mentors need not possess all of these traits but should demonstrate many of them. By choosing mentors with these characteristics we will have identified our best, brightest and most committed to the improvement of our school.

Who are the participants and how are they selected?

The mentor selection process is conducted by the building Mentor Coordinator and Administrator. The program participants are the mentor coordinators, mentors, mentees and long-term substitutes. Substitutes covering leaves of 6 weeks or shorter will not be supported by The Mentor Program. Long term substitutes may be mentored by the Mentor Coordinator if their work in the district extends between 7-12 weeks. Long term substitutes working in the district for 13 or more weeks will be assigned a mentor if their work is projected to continue. The principal and mentor coordinator will assign a mentor at this time.

The position of mentor is open to all tenured teachers in the district. Teachers should speak to their building Mentor Coordinator or Administrator if they are interested in being selected as mentors. Once selected, mentors will be expected to complete training in the skills that will make them successful mentors.

Mentees may be new to the teaching profession or new to the district. The mentor coordinators and building principals will assign mentors to mentees. The best possible selection of pairings will be made in a confidential and non-judgmental manner.

Can mentor pairings be adjusted?

The mentor coordinators and building principals will be responsible for adjustments to the pairings. The coordinators, the mentor, or the mentee can request or suggest an adjustment to the pairing. It is recognized that initial pairings may be affected by a variety of factors including teaching schedules, room assignments, and personalities. Such an adjustment should not be viewed as a result of failure on the part of either the mentor or mentee.

What do we mean by confidentiality?

Confidentiality is the foundation of the mentoring process. The trust that must be established between mentor and mentee can only be created if there is knowledge that the words and actions of mentors and mentees do not become public knowledge. As the sharing of confidences with an administrator or colleague can undermine the entire mentoring process, all communication between a mentor and mentee must be kept confidential. Mentors will never make evaluative reports about mentees to administrators or colleagues, and visa versa.

This paragraph in no way exempts the mentors or mentees from obligations described in district policy that might endanger the safety and well being of students and staff.

How long are the mentorships and what types of activities are expected to occur?

Beginning teachers will be provided mentors for one year. Teachers coming to Duanesburg with previous teaching experience will be provided mentors for one year. An additional year of mentoring may be provided if requested by both the Mentor Coordinator and Building Administrator. If additional years of mentoring are required, a new mentor may be assigned.

Mentors and mentees will be engaged in a variety of activities including:

- o An initial orientation and tours of the school and district before the start of the school year
- o Training seminars/conferences/in-services
- o Monthly mentor/mentee meetings with coordinators
- o Informal drop-ins into each other's class
- o Reflective journaling
- o Long term planning

A schedule of monthly meeting dates and other activities throughout the year will be created prior to the start of the year's mentoring activities. Some topics that might be discussed at monthly meetings include:

- o Confidentiality
- o Suggestions for Open House and Parent-Teacher Conferences
- o Classroom management techniques
- o Differentiated Instruction
- o Pedagogy
- o Classroom visitations
- o Current professional literature
- o Education training
- o Evaluation by administrators
- o District services for students with special needs – what's available and how to obtain them
- o Developing professional relationships with colleagues
- o Review and practice with the APPR rubric and understanding teaching expectations
- o Grading and Report Cards
- o Communication with families

At a minimum, it is expected that mentors and beginning teachers **meet regularly with one hour of contact time per week times forty weeks** during the beginning teachers' first year. It is expected that in all other years mentees may need less than an hour of contact with their mentors each week. In all cases, mentors and mentees must log all contact time using the Time Log contained in the appendices of this document. It is the responsibility of the mentor to keep the log and the mentee to keep it at the end if the state asks to see it.

What is the role of the mentor?

The role of mentor is critical to the success of mentees and the overall increase of professionalism and performance at Duquesburg. Teachers serving as mentors will be expected to:

- Serve as a conduit for information and resources
- Orient the mentee to the culture of the school and community
- Provide continuing coaching and support by listening first, answering questions and promoting reflection
- Build collegiality and provide support to help mentees develop and maintain a commitment to teaching
- Ensure a mentee's first year includes a broad variety of professional experiences
- Help the mentee develop classroom instruction/management
- Help mentees make a smooth transition into teaching

Topics that might be addressed are:

- Classroom confidentiality
- Materials/supplies for grade level/subject area
- Texts for your grade level/subject area
- Classroom organization
- Building forms, rules and procedures (Binder)
- Duplicating materials
- Technology – what's available and how to obtain them
- Cafeteria procedures
- Emergency Building Procedures
- Substitute plans and procedures for requesting a substitute
- Review of NYS Standards
- Various district policies
- Preparing effective lesson plans
- Samples and explanations of tests for your grade level/subject area
- Report card grading
- Use of computer technology
- Record keeping methods
- Recording student attendance
- Field trip procedures, permission slips
- How to arrange for attendance at conferences
- Library procedures and facilities
- Evaluation by administrators
- Discipline policy
- Faculty/department meetings
- Building duties
- Fire drill procedures
- Assembly procedures

- Hall passes

Examples of some specific things mentors might do are:

- o Model instructional strategies
- o Offer to take over a class so the mentee can plan
- o Supply sample lessons and offer alternative activities for the mentee
- o Arrange for the mentee to visit other classrooms
- o Work with the mentor coordinator to arrange planning and release time.

What are the responsibilities of the mentor?

Mentors provide field knowledge and demonstrate pedagogical skills in their curriculum. To fulfill their responsibilities, mentors:

- o Maintain confidentiality, which includes not discussing what goes on in each other's classrooms.
- o Schedule time to meet with your mentee.
- o Initiate and build the relationship with their mentees.
- o Establish a climate of peer support.
- o Model reflective teaching practices.
- o Apply and share effective classroom management strategies.
- o Facilitate interaction between mentee and other colleagues to share expertise.
- o Encourage and nurture an appreciation of diversity.
- o Embrace mentoring as an investment in professional development.
- o Complete Time Log and turn in at monthly meetings.
- o Complete all Mentor Program forms.

Mentors are expected to attend an initial training session scheduled by the Mentor Coordinator. Mentor Coordinators will meet with and train all mentors for the equivalent of one half day (3 hrs). In addition, Mentor Coordinators will participate in the new staff orientation. To allow mentors and mentees the ability to plan their summer schedules, the date for the summer orientation will be set by the district no later than June 1. Once the school year begins, mentors should meet with their mentee on a regular basis, logging all contact time. In addition, mentors are expected to conduct a minimum of two informal classroom visitations of their mentee. These visitations are intended to be confidential and provide peer guidance and should not take the place of formal observations by administrators. The district will provide substitutes to allow these visitations to occur.

If a mentor does not or is not able to live up to these responsibilities, stipends will be prorated accordingly and the pairing will be terminated.

What training will be provided to mentors?

Mentor Coordinators will make mentors aware of upcoming training and will assist in seeing that this training is provided. In addition, Mentor Coordinators will provide a half day of training prior to the start of the school year for all current mentors.

Training should provide opportunities for mentors to:

- o Study the broad issues of induction of mentees into the school, the district, the community and their profession
- o Enhance or expand upon the knowledge and skills needed to assist mentees
- o Share techniques, experiences and learning with other mentors and mentees
- o Learn and practice strategies for developing trusting relationships and enhancing communication skills
- o Understand and assess the needs of mentees
- o Learn and use coaching strategies in order to conduct classroom observations and provide feedback
- o Understand and put to use theories of adult learning and development
- o Cultivate an analysis of one's own teaching practices

Mentors may attend training through the Greater Capital Region Teacher Center, BOCES, or higher educational mentoring course options. Those who attend these sessions will be encouraged to share their experiences and information with others. It is expected that training will be offered at additional times throughout the school year (e.g. early release days, conference days). Whenever possible, Mentor Coordinators will offer one training each year during a Professional Development day to allow for ongoing mentor growth and development.

Additional training will be available through collegial circle discussions of critical questions in education offered through the auspices of the district's Professional Development Committee.

What are the responsibilities of the mentee?

In order to make their initiation into teaching more successful, mentees should:

- o Recognize that you have the responsibility of building a collaborative relationship with your mentor.
- o Find out if veteran teachers have materials or insights that would help them
- o Be willing to admit they have a lot to learn
- o Ask to visit colleagues' classrooms to learn about different approaches to teaching
- o Seek out assistance from the mentor coordinators in the event that the mentor /mentee relationship is not helpful
- o Complete and hand in all other required Mentor Program forms
- o Notify mentor of mentor/mentee meeting conflicts and make rearrangements necessary to fulfill time commitments in accordance with Mentor Document requirements.

- o Schedule additional meetings and seek assistance when necessary
- o Additionally, mentees should make themselves available for:
 - Summer orientation training (first year only)
 - Regular monthly meetings with coordinators
 - Informal visits by mentor

What are the responsibilities of the Board of Education and Administrators?

Education Law Section 3033, as amended by Section 117-b of Chapter 436, states that Boards of Education and Boards of Cooperative Educational Service are authorized to participate in the NYS MTIP in accordance with the law. The DCS BOE , in compliance with the law, understands that a District mentoring program shall be developed and implemented consistent with any collective bargaining obligation required by Article 14 of the Civil Service Law. By regulation, any items of the mentoring plan that fall within the purview of Article XIV of the Civil Service (Taylor Law) must be negotiated contractually in accord with those provisions.

The Board of Education and administrators should help to promote the Mentor Program, make mentees feel welcome and help celebrate the mentoring process. Administrators should seek Board of Education support and work with the Professional Development Committee to provide training opportunities for both mentors and mentees. Administrators should also pursue professional development activities that deepen their understanding of their role in the mentoring program and that give them the knowledge to more effectively work with mentor coordinators, mentors and mentees.

How are the participants compensated?

(See current DTA contract for mentor and Mentor Coordinator compensation)

If applicable, the mentees will earn 40 professional development credits towards their 100 hour CTLE requirement. Mentors and Mentor Coordinators will earn 20 hours of CTLE credit for a full year of service.

Why and how will the Mentor Program be evaluated?

The program will be evaluated in a variety of ways to determine its overall impact on teacher retention, instruction and the professional climate of our school community. While this evaluation will be long-term in nature, the program will also be evaluated for operational efficiency and its success in meeting the more immediate needs of mentees. Shorter-term

evaluations will consider issues such as the assignment and training of mentors, the success of the program in meeting the identified needs of mentees such as dealing with planning and preparation, classroom organization and environment, instruction, discipline issues, and professional responsibilities.

Specific forms of evaluation will include:

- o Fall goal-setting/self evaluation
- o Quarterly reflective summaries from mentors and mentees
- o End-of-year evaluation forms
- o Monthly meetings with mentors and mentees
- o Teacher retention rate
- o Exit interviews/job satisfaction survey

What additional resources are needed to ensure the success of the Mentor Program?

Adequate resources must be committed to the Mentor Program to ensure it functions effectively. The district will provide the time necessary for mentors, mentees and mentor coordinators to fulfill their responsibilities. The district will provide regular substitutes for classroom coverage to allow visitations and follow-up meetings.

The district will support the activities of The Mentor Program by:

- o making available conferences and mentor training activities
- o facilitating summer orientation sessions for mentees
- o making available the supplies and materials needed for the mentor program

Quarterly Reflective Summary

(Can be done together)

Name _____ School Year _____ Quarter _____

Briefly summarize the previous quarter as follows:

What's going well?

What will your focus be next?

List any needs that you have at this time that the Mentor Program is not addressing:

Your comments/suggestions are welcome:

D. C. S. Mentor Program

Initial Goal-setting and Self Evaluation

Completed by Mentee at the beginning of the first year.
Shared with Mentor Coordinators and building principal.

Date: _____

Part I

Please circle your level of interest in the following components of the DCS Mentoring Program. (1=disagree; 5=strongly agree)

The DCS Mentoring Process:

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Integration into the culture of the school, district and community. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Collaboration with peers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Explore professionalism. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Understand teaching expectations. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Overcome challenges. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Reflect on teaching. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Enhance my instructional practices. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Improve classroom management. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Securing teaching resources. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Prepare to communicate with parents. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Grow from meaningful professional development. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Part 2

What can your mentor do for you this year to fill any professional or informational gaps you would like to learn about?

What professional goals do you have for your first year?

What do you think your mentor, the program, and/or administration could do to help you work toward this goal?

What is it about working at Duanesburg Central School that appeals to you?

D. C. S. Mentor Program

Evaluation of the Mentoring Process

Completed by Mentee at the end of the first year.
Shared with Mentor Coordinators, and building principal as needed.

Date: _____

Part I

Please circle your level of agreement/disagreement in reference to the following statements involving the DCS Mentoring Program. (1=disagree; 5=strongly agree)

The DCS Mentoring Process:

1. Helped to establish a smooth integration into the culture of the school, district and community. 1 2 3 4 5
2. Fostered a spirit of collaboration. 1 2 3 4 5
3. Promoted a climate of professionalism and trust. 1 2 3 4 5
4. Helped me to understand what was expected of me as a teacher. 1 2 3 4 5
5. Helped to reduce concerns and overcome challenges. 1 2 3 4 5
6. Provided a means to sufficiently communicate with my mentor. 1 2 3 4 5
7. Caused me to reflect on my teaching. 1 2 3 4 5
8. Helped improve my teaching knowledge. 1 2 3 4 5
9. Helped to enhance my instructional practices. 1 2 3 4 5
10. Helped with classroom management. 1 2 3 4 5
11. Provided assistance in securing needed resources. 1 2 3 4 5
12. Helped me to prepare to work with parents. 1 2 3 4 5
13. Provided beneficial professional development. 1 2 3 4 5
14. Provided ongoing support as needed. 1 2 3 4 5
15. Included administrative support. 1 2 3 4 5
16. Included program coordinator support. 1 2 3 4 5
17. Played an integral role in the success of my first year(s) at DCS. 1 2 3 4 5

Part 2

What did your mentor do for you this year that was invaluable?

What did not work for you in this program?

What do you wish your mentor, the program, and/or administration had done for you this year?

What is it about Duanesburg Central School that made you decide to stay?

D C. S. Mentor Program

Schedule/Checklist

Mentor Coordinators update annually with meeting dates and times.

August Meeting

New Teacher Orientation and Mentor Training

Paperwork:

N/A

September Meeting

Paperwork:

September Log (Mentor),
Initial Goal-setting and Self Evaluation (New
Teacher).

October Meeting

1st Mentor Visitation completed this month.

Paperwork:

Log (M),
Quarterly Summary (M&NT)

November Meeting

Paperwork:

Log (M)

December Meeting

Paperwork:

Log (M)

January Meeting

2nd Mentor Visitation completed this month.

Paperwork:

Log (M)
Quarterly Summary (M&NT)

February Meeting

Paperwork:

Log (M)

March Meeting

Paperwork:

Log (M)
Quarterly Summary (M&NT)

April Meeting

Paperwork:

Log (M)

May Meeting

Paperwork:

Log (M)
Quarterly Summary (M&NT)
End of Year Evaluation (NT)

June Meeting

Paperwork:

Log (M)

D. C. S. Mentor Program

Time Log

Completed by Mentors and submitted to Mentor Coordinator monthly.

Month: _____							
Type of Assistance	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	
Human Resources services							
Understanding building policies							
Understanding district/building Culture							
Routine school procedures							
Securing teaching materials							
Professionalism							
Union issues/legal rights							
Communicating with administrators							
Collaborating with other teachers							
APPR-/Observations							
Teacher expectations							
Visitation by mentor/intern							
Moral support and encouragement							
Stress management							
Time management							
Classroom discipline/PBIS							
Classroom organization/management							
Student records							
Curriculum support							
Differentiating instruction							
Rtl/Special Education							
Instructional techniques							
Standardized tests							
Student Assessment							

Grading							
Progress Reports & Report Cards							
Communicating with parents							
Eschool							
Emergency Protocols							
Other:							
Total Time of Each Meeting							
Please record total time in partial or							
full hour increments. (.25,.50,.75)							
Total Time for the Month -							
Mentor: _____							
Mentee: _____							