

# Wyandanch UFSD Mentoring Program

## September Checklist for Teacher Mentors

*“Learning to teach is a bigger job than universities, schools, experience, or personal disposition alone can accomplish.”  
~ Sharon Feiman-Nemser*

Mentoring is a partnership created to help support new teachers by providing them with a veteran teacher to confidentially discuss topics and to provide guidance. As a mentor, we hope you will find that this experience provides you with great satisfaction by helping a colleague and an opportunity to grow as a teacher leader in the building.

Remember, we all faced our first days in our classroom with excitement, anxiety and feelings of being overwhelmed. Hopefully you had a wonderful mentor who provided the guidance which made those first few years more bearable. This will be your chance to pass your wisdom and experiences to help your mentee to discover the how wonderful it is to be part of the Wyandanch Staff.

Below you will find a checklist of topics which should be discussed with your mentee throughout the month of September. Please use these topics as starting point for discussions. These are not the only concerns or questions your mentee may have so please add to the list as needed.

### Topic

- \_\_\_\_\_ Show location of resources (class room supplies, copy machines, lab materials, and other teacher resources)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Share first day/week activities—provide guidance on organizing the first day & first week
- \_\_\_\_\_ Established a scheduled time to meet with your mentee for the first semester.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make sure the teacher understands the grading program, how to set up Infinite Campus, how to email student progress to parents, and input Grades
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make sure teachers were supplied with curriculum guides for the courses they teach, teacher editions of books, ancillary resources for the course
- \_\_\_\_\_ Introduce your mentee to other teachers, particularly staff members in their department and close proximity to their room.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make sure the technology including all necessary computer programs are working properly. Also make sure all their equipment is in the classroom and in good working order.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss and/or provide samples of course syllabi, classroom procedures, grading policies, attendance policies, and classroom set up.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make sure your mentee understands the evacuation and take cover procedures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss staff norms such as dress code, lunch, and the social events which occur throughout the year (over the hump days, cook offs, and homecoming traditions).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare your mentee for some of the school traditions such themed football games, fire day, or the schools endless legacies.

## October Checklist for Teacher Mentors

*"With the right leadership and work environment, employees will excel."*

*~ Brenda Nyhus*

For new teachers, after the anticipation of the first couple of weeks subsides they often reach a phase of survival. The survival phase is often a product of information overload. In the first month or so of teaching there are so many firsts that they often don't know if they are coming or going. So during this month, your mentee will need some extra attention, please take a moment to discuss the following topics and any thing else that may be on your mentee's mind.

### Topic

- \_\_\_\_\_ Check to make sure emergency lesson plans are in place. Encourage the teacher to have enough material for 2-3 days just in case.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss formal observation(s) or upcoming observations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Observe each others' classroom teaching sometime between October through December (one observation each during this time frame)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Debrief department, grade level, team, and committee meetings. Answer questions about unknown terms or unclear processes. Be prepared to explain the rationale for or history behind comments/decisions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss how their classroom management & discipline plans are going. Encourage the teacher to keep a list of changes they may want to make for the following semester.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Review how grades are reported & how grade reports will be distributed to parents
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss parent/teacher conferences including tips in how to conduct, handling parent issues, support staff available and what to prepare.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Explain the spirit week and homecoming activities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss their Individual Development Plan(IDP) and the goals they established.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Show the teacher where they may find opportunities for staff development or attend conferences (OWL Center).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make sure the teacher has received proper documentation or has access to necessary information for special education students, students with 504s, or are provided with other special services.

## November/December Checklist for Teacher Mentors

*"Life just is. You have to flow with it. Give yourself to the moment. Let it happen."*

*~Jerry Brown*

The months of November and December often bring about a lot of stress in a person's professional and personal lives. Unfortunately for new teachers this is compounded by the fact that the rose colored glasses about their career choice start to fade and they may be growing frustrated because everything did not work out as perfectly as they imagined. Your mentee may feel overwhelmed, mental and physical fatigue may be setting in, and may even question their ability as an educator. In addition to list below, take some time to share with your mentee times currently or from the past which did not work out as you had planned and some of the strategies you used to get past them. Please after meeting about the topics below, take a moment and point out all the wonderful ways your mentee has been successful.

### Topic

- \_\_\_\_\_ Share with one another your parent teacher conferences experience
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss how busy both professionally and personally it is between Thanksgiving & Winter Break and how to keep the students engaged & productive
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss parent communication
- \_\_\_\_\_ Share "tricks of the trade" to get through the upcoming weeks and preventing burn out
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss concerns/successes of students
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss the common assessment guidelines and procedures
- \_\_\_\_\_ Talk about the end of semester procedures
- \_\_\_\_\_ Review snow day procedures and how they will be notified
- \_\_\_\_\_ Share information from observations of each other
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss district and school holiday events and local happenings
- \_\_\_\_\_ Start discussing changes the teacher would like to make for 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make sure the teacher has all necessary materials for new classes they teach second semester. If no classes change make sure they still have everything they need for all classes.

## January Checklist for Teacher Mentors

*"The person determined to achieve maximum success learns the principle that progress is made one step at a time. A house is built one brick at a time. Football games are won a play at a time. A department store grows bigger one customer at a time. Every big accomplishment is a series of little accomplishments."*

*~David Joseph Schwartz*

Winter break provides everyone a chance to step away from the day to day and get a chance to rejuvenate the spirit. For your mentee this gives them a chance to catch their breath and find new promise in the career path they chose. Your mentee will return with new hope now that they have completed the first ½ of the school year. Often you will find that your new mentee has emerged from survival mode has started looking more at long term teaching strategies, becoming more focused on curriculum, and has a sense of being more organized. As they look to the start of the new semester, your mentee will start reflecting on their practices from the first semester and may make adjustments to their classroom procedures. Your mentee has made it to the top of the hill and can see where they need to go from here. Please make sure you discuss the topics below during your mentor/mentee meeting this month.

### Topic

- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss common assessment practices including testing procedures and testing ethics.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Marking semester grades
- \_\_\_\_\_ Calculating semester grades (each Quarter=17.5% Midterm=10% and Final=20%)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss the highs and lows of the semester
- \_\_\_\_\_ Changes they would like to make for second semester
- \_\_\_\_\_ Take a look at their new schedule and verify they have all necessary materials to effectively teach this course.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss strategies for working with struggling students
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss home communications & ideas to strengthen home/school connections—postcards home, e-mail communications, newsletters, tips to parents, etc.  
Remember these can be to acknowledge something a student is doing right or well, not always as means to correct a behavior or discuss a concern.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss how to prepare students for upcoming exams. Also share the common review guidelines of ethical and unethical practices.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Review the exam schedule and the use of time once the students leave.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Establish times for mentor/mentee meeting for second semester

## **February/March Checklist for Teacher Mentors**

*"The dream begins, most of the time, with a teacher who believes in you, who tugs and pushes, and leads you onto the next plateau, sometimes poking you with a sharp stick called truth."  
~Dan Rather*

During the months of February and March, your mentee should start adjusting to the new semester and possibly the new faces in front of them. February often brings about a sense of exhaustion from the students and staff. The affects of the winter blahs start sinking in and people are starting to look forward to spring. During this time it is important to check in with your mentee to make sure they are able to keep what they are feeling right now in perspective. One way you can help them is to have them reflect on positive changes they made through out the year. Also point out and focus them on how much they have learned about being an educator over their short time in this position. This should help them see the big picture instead of the one or more puzzle pieces they are still trying to figure out. In addition, there are some topics below concerning items they need to be aware of.

### **Topic**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Review up coming district and building activities
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss learning resources to suggest to parents when ask how they can help support their student's learning.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss upcoming observations and formal observations, walk-throughs, evaluation process, etc
- \_\_\_\_\_ Schedule a time to observe mentee's classroom teaching--between February and May.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have your mentee observe another teacher's classroom—between February and May.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss upcoming parent teacher conferences
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss NYS testing procedures and schedule.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss reviewing procedures and rules for students who will participate in NYS testing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Share some professional organizations in your mentee's discipline or area of interest.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Look for potential workshops or classes to enroll in to help guide your mentee with areas they wish to pursue or may want additional strategies or knowledge
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do something to acknowledge your mentee for something wonderful they have done or something they worked hard to accomplish.

## April Checklist for Teacher Mentors

*"If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant: if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome". ~Anne Bradstreet*

April brings to the school new challenges for all new teachers. Students are shedding their heavy clothing, the winter blahs are starting subside, and spring fever starts to set in. For teachers who have seniors, the season ailment called senioritis becomes an epidemic. Students are spending less time focused on what they can be doing in the classroom and more time thinking about the approaching summer or spring break trip. Keeping a student who has always been motivated focused on the task at hand becomes a huge challenge even for the most seasoned veteran. Your mentee may face new frustrations and need to lean on you again at this midpoint in the semester. In your monthly meeting please take time to discuss the topics below and any other topics you or your mentee may find important.

### Topic

- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss their evaluations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Marking grades
- \_\_\_\_\_ Continued partnerships with parents through communication
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss your observations of your mentee's classroom. Remember to keep criticism constructive, highlight improvements and things they do well, and provide references to people, websites, or books which may assist them in preparing for next year.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss their visit to another teacher's classroom. Inquire about what they liked, what they thought might work well for them, and observations they made about how the teacher related to the students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Review upcoming district and building events.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make sure they are aware of ordering procedures for the upcoming year.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss strategies for dealing with spring fever and senioritis.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Review their IDP and discuss their goals and if they felt they were on track to accomplishing them. Have them start compiling ideas about their goals for next year.

## May/June Checklist for Teacher Mentors

*"If I had to select one quality, one personal characteristic that I regard as being most highly correlated with success, whatever the field, I would pick the trait of persistence. Determination. The will to endure to the end, to get knocked down seventy times and get up off the floor saying, "Here comes number seventy-one!" ~Richard M. Devos*

The end of the year is quickly approaching with still so much to do. Your mentee is probably feeling a great sense of relief and success for they survived the year as an untenured teacher. During this time take a moment to celebrate both your guidance as a mentor and the growth your mentee has made. May and June are great times to reflect on what happened over the course of the year and build anticipation for a great year to come. During your final meetings this year with your mentee make sure you also find time to discuss the topics below.

### Topic

- \_\_\_\_\_ District and building level activities including prom, honors convocation, graduation ect.
- \_\_\_\_\_ School traditions for the end of the year.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Closing the classroom for the end of the year.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Check out procedures
- \_\_\_\_\_ Look at next year's calendar
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss any changes to courses being taught during the new school year and any necessary preparations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make sure you share summer contact information just in case.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cover how to mark final grades and what to do with corrected exams.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Celebrate the year!