Peru Elementary School District #124

Mentoring Program

August 6, 2018

Introduction

A mentoring program has been a part of the professional development at Peru Elementary School District #124 since 2002. The goal of the program is to provide support and assistance to new teachers as they start their careers. As members of the Peru Schools' family, we have a responsibility to help our new teachers as we would new members to any family. They need wise and trusted advisors to help them build a firm foundation for a successful career.

Mentors are chosen to support teachers new to our district. This support can help make their beginning experiences in our district positive whether they are beginning their careers here or coming from another position. All those involved can experience growth and pride in our profession.

The willingness of a mentor to assume responsibility is greatly appreciated.

"You can't ever pay back your mentors.
You must pass it on…not only in the knowledge,
but the kindness, the being there."
-Mary Alice Williams

Philosophy

Do you remember your first day of teaching? Remember the butterflies in your stomach and the insecure feeling? To provide a strong foundation for beginning teachers and teachers transitioning to a new district and position, support is needed by excellent, experienced teacher mentors. Research shows that new teachers who have had the support of a mentoring program are more likely to be successful and stay in the teaching profession. This is very important when dissatisfied first-year teachers are exiting the profession in record numbers. Experienced teachers who serve as mentors are not only helping the new teachers, but the many students that the teacher will teach during his/her career.

As a mentor, you will be there to help the new teacher deal with frequently cited problems such as: discipline, isolation, evaluation of student work, personal life adjustment, communication, and classroom management. You'll be the safe secure person they can go to and feel safe to ask that "dumb question" they are afraid to ask anyone else.

There will also be benefits for the mentor teacher. Each time we teach something we learn something new ourselves. By sharing with beginning teachers and teachers new to the district you will find they will also share their creative ideas with you and in turn you will grow as a teacher.

Goals of mentoring

Teachers new to the district:

1. To provide the new teacher with a guide, a sponsor, a confidant, and a loyal friend
2. To reduce anxiety and ease the transition into teaching
3. To help you develop and improve your knowledge and teaching skills thereby improving your teaching effectiveness
4. To increase the retention of a greater number of highly qualified teachers

Mentors:

1. To welcome newcomers into the profession and take a personal interest in their career development and well being
2. To provide opportunities for personal growth through collaboration with new teachers and other mentor teachers
3. To offer opportunities for professional growth by providing training and expansion of professional skills.
4. Organize and contribute to scheduled roundtables. i.e. classroom management

Four Functions of a Mentor

1. **Relating** – develop a relationship of mutual respect, trust and professionalism. Honesty and openness is the key.
2. **Assessing** – gather and diagnose data about the mentees' ways of teaching and learning: they should learn about a mentees competency and confidence in handling numerous situations: they understand the school/district culture.
3. **Coaching** – mentors help new teachers fine–tune their professional skills, enhance their grasp of subject matter, locate and acquire resources, and expand their teaching repertoire. Mentors encourage self–reflections so responsibility for improving teaching eventually falls upon themselves.
4. **Guiding** – teaching involves constant decision – making. Decisions about teaching are driven by self – reflections. You are guiding your mentee on their journey to be independent. Guiding behaviors stimulate the mentees' creative and critical thinking, empowers them to envision future situations and encourages them to take informed risks.

Roles in the Mentoring Process

Principal:

The principal will serve as a support to the mentoring process providing advice and counsel as needed. The principal works with the mentors and new teachers in a variety of capacities. The principal will….

1. Respect the confidentiality of the mentor/new teacher relationship.
2. Teacher evaluations will be kept separate from the mentoring process.
3. Advise on mentor selection and mentor/new teacher pairings.
4. Provide encouragement and support for the success of the mentoring program.
5. Provide release time, if necessary, for new teacher/mentor observations.

New Teacher:

The new teacher will be an open and willing learner who will willingly turn to the mentor for support and advice. The new teacher will turn to the mentor for aid in professional development and adjustment to the Peru Elementary Schools environment.

New teachers work with their mentors in a variety of capacities…

As a **LEARNER**, the new teacher will…

- organize the classroom and develop lesson plans for the beginning of school
- acquire an understanding of the school, school culture, community and staff
- gain knowledge of the methods, procedures and expectations of the building and district
- utilize resources, materials and services
- meet regularly as well as informally with the Mentor
- take the opportunity to observe mentor and other experienced teachers

As a **COLLEAGUE**, the new teacher will…

- respect confidentiality and mutual trust
- listen to the mentor's guidance and be respectful of his/her experiences
- be team oriented and accept diversity as a strength

As a **BEGINNING EDUCATOR**, the new teacher will…

- utilize a variety of teaching strategies
- conference with the mentor to receive feedback regarding observations
- seek support and assistance as needed and be open to new ideas and learn from experiences
- take advantage of learning opportunities to enhance professional skills that impact student learning

As a **PROFESSIONAL**, the new teacher will…

- demonstrate professionalism, lifelong learning, openness, flexibility and creativity
- set personal goals for professional growth
- support the efforts of all colleagues
- participate in professional development and apply the knowledge gained to improve teaching

Mentor:

The mentor will be many things to a new teacher. Paramount is a feeling of trust and sharing. The mentor is to aid the new teacher in professional development and adjustment necessary to a new job and organization.

Mentors work with new teachers in a variety of capacities…

As a **GUIDE**, the mentor will…

- assist the new teacher in organizing the classroom and the curriculum for the beginning of school
- orient the new teacher to the school, school culture, community and staff
- inform the new teacher of methods, procedures and expectations of the building and district
- help locate needed resources, materials and services
- meet regularly as well as informally with the new teacher
- model effective teaching strategies when observed

As a **COLLEAGUE**, the mentor will...

- welcome newcomers into the profession and take a personal interest in their career development and well being
- establish and maintain confidentiality and mutual trust
- listen to the new teacher's concerns and be supportive and understanding of his/her efforts and experiences
- offer support, challenge, patience, and enthusiasm while they guide others to new levels of competence
- serve as an advisor, not a supervisor or evaluator of the new teacher

As a **MODEL EDUCATOR**, the mentor will…

- model effective teaching strategies
- coach the new teacher through observations and conferences to develop effective skills and professional attributes
- assist the new teacher by functioning as a one-to-one staff developer; help process ideas and experiences; problem-solve; offer feedback, plan and test out ideas; encourage new teacher's self-direction and self-confidence
- expose the new teacher to new ideas, perspectives, standards, and to the values and norms of the profession
- suggest/arrange other valuable experiences for the new teacher, such as visitations and workshops

As a **PROFESSIONAL**, the mentor will…

- model professionalism, lifelong learning, openness, flexibility and creativity
- set personal goals for professional growth
- support the efforts of other mentors

Seven General Needs of Beginning Teachers

1. Curriculum (specific content)
2. Instruction (strategies and methods by which the curriculum is taught)
3. Lesson Planning (mapping out activities, sequence, use of resources, etc.)
4. Student Assessment (determining the extent to which students understand and can apply their knowledge)
5. Classroom Management (making sure that the classroom provides a safe and orderly place in which to learn)
6. School Policy (routines and procedures school personnel are expected to follow)
7. Parents and Community (the nature and degree of involvement, responsibility, and authority parents have within the school system)
8. Emotional (the stresses, feelings and attitudes experienced while carrying out various aspects of the profession

Winning Tips for First Year Teachers

1. Take time to understand the district's/school's culture. You will gain valuable insights by just watching, listening and learning.
2. Your students bring with them 20 different family cultures to form an extended family in your classroom. Expectations evolve slowly.
3. "When the going gets tough", don't lose your perspective (The sun will come up in the morning).
4. Be aware of those who know it all and have all the answers.
5. Take an interest, not a position. Voice your opinions later when you have digested district/school rites and rituals.
6. Comment only positive things about students, contemporaries, administrators, others – you never know who is related to whom or who knows whom.
7. Be angry/frustrated with student choices or inappropriate behaviors, not the student as a person or as a human being.
8. Disagree with an "issue", NOT the individual, the person.
9. Your work ethic reflects more than professionalism. You will earn the respect of your contemporaries, students and parents; it won't be given.
10. Teach as you would want your children taught or as you wish you had been taught.
11. Speak to all, "confide" in few. Good friends are few and trust takes time to develop. Once broken, trust can almost never be regained.
12. If you can't be of help to a child, at least don't get in his/her way. Teaching is much more than dispensing knowledge.
13. At the end of the day, recall five good things that happened to you during the day. Take those home with you and don't dwell on the ONE thing that didn't go well.
14. Believe in yourself. In the public's eyes, we are fix-it people for their children. We can't "fix" others if we aren't "fixed" ourselves.

What is Confidential, What is Not

What is Confidential:

- Your talk, dialogue with the mentor/new teacher

- Student files, information contained therein such as grades, personal concerns
- Parent Conferences information that is shared confidentially
- Personal feelings for contemporaries, administration, etc
- Your appraisal/evaluation comments
- Information about another parent's child, when talking to other parents or staff
- Usually "health histories" are held confidential among staff members and school nurse (shared for awareness)
- Students' names, addresses, phone numbers when solicited by anyone over the phone, or in person by unknown persons or even those known
- When contacted by phone, even a student's attendance is confidential when the caller is not known…(example: *Is the student in school?)*

What is NOT Confidential:

- Sharing teaching strategies, delivery techniques
- Sharing knowledge about how students reacted, performed for you…what worked, what didn't
- Sharing positive things about students
- Sharing what you wish or care to reveal about yourself
- Concerns regarding **child abuse** that might be heard, shared…**You are a mandated reporter** and need to share with the administration any concerns you have in this area. (What is shared is confidential with all others).
- Infectious enthusiasm for teaching
- General progress of a class, certain groups of students…how things are going

Additions Mentoring Information

Peer Observations: New teachers and mentors should observe each other at the times set in the New Teacher and Mentor Schedule. The purpose of these observations is to provide the new teacher with examples of exemplary teaching strategies and to initiate discussion between the mentor and new teacher regarding best practice. All observations will be logged into the Observation Log and initialed by both participants.

Communication: It is essential that the new teacher and mentor communicate with each other. If the mentoring program is going to have a positive impact on student learning, all participants need to discuss their successes and failures. At the end of the year, the new teacher as well as the mentor shall complete an evaluation of the program. Information that is received provides an opportunity to enhance future program efforts.

Resolving New Teacher and Mentor Concerns: In the event that a conflict between the new teacher and mentor exists, the building principal will establish an opportunity for resolving the concerns of both parties. Should the concerns not be resolved, the principal will establish a meeting with the superintendent to discuss the concerns and the possibility of reassigning the new teacher to a different mentor.

Orientation

District Level Topics for discussion:

- Health Insurance questions
- Payroll Information

- Identification of District personnel and their responsibilities
- Peru Educator's Association – Information regarding PEA membership

Building Level Topics for discussion:

- Accident report forms and the need to complete paperwork
- Building committees
- Building hours for staff access
- Calendar
- Curriculum materials/supplies
- Friday Professional Development
- Special Education (IEP meetings, Annual reviews, Re-evaluations, etc.)
- Student Records (temporary vs. permanent record files)
- Teacher Evaluation on Frontline and Student Growth component

Mentor/New Teacher Topics for Discussion:

Commonly used Acronyms

- *CPDU – Continuing Professional Development Units*
- *ELIS* – Educator Licensure Information System (formerly ECS – Educator Certification System)
- *IEP – Individualized Education Plan*
- *ISBE – Illinois State Board of Education*
- *LEASE – LaSalle Putnam Educational Alliance for Special Education*
- *MAP – Measures of Academic Progress*
- *NV – Northview School (PreK – 4)*
- *PARCC – Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers*
- *PEA – Peru Educators Association*
- *PBIS – Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports*
- *PS – Parkside School (5 – 8)*
- *PST – Problem Solving Team*
- *PTC – Parent Teacher Club*
- *RtI – Response to Intervention*

Professionalism

- Appropriate dress attire
- Certification and/or re-certification and ELIS recording procedures
- Classroom visitations
- Conferences/workshops/professional growth
- Observation documents and requirements
- Professional journals
- Professional organization membership
- Visibility at student activities

Classroom Environment

- Bulletin boards
- Classroom management
- Discipline and Detentions
- First weeks of school
- First day of class / setting the tone
- Holiday projects/Celebrations
- Physical learning environment
- Referrals to the Principal

- Room arrangement
- Rules and procedures

Curriculum and Related Areas

- Articulation
- Adaptations for special needs
- Curriculum mapping
- Field trips
- Gifted program (grades 5 – 8)
- Grade level teams
- Interventions for RtI
- Project Success
- Student supply needs
- Texts/Curriculum guides/Content
- Title I Reading (grades K – 4)
- Video Approval Form

Teaching Techniques

- Balanced Literacy Approach
- Computers
- Cooperative/Collaborative learning
- Differentiated Instruction
- Drill work strategies
- Grouping homogeneous/heterogeneous
- Positive vs. negative reinforcing
- Lesson planning
- Motivational techniques
- Questioning techniques
- Shared materials/ideas
- Smartboard Use
- Student-to-student peer tutoring
- Teaching/learning styles
- Co-Teaching

Parent Communication

- Open House
- Newsletters (if applicable)
- Parent conferences
- Parent contact by phone, e-mail or notes
- Parent Teacher Handbooks
- PTC
- Letters to parents about key programs and activities

Student Characteristics

- Expectations for students
- Grouping
- Learning styles of students
- Peer interactions
- Problem Solving referrals
- Students with special needs/IEP requirement

Scheduling

- Computer Lab
- Flexibility in scheduling special services - ESL, Resource, Speech, OT/PT, etc.
- Library time (if applicable)
- Long Range, weekly, daily schedules
- Specials Classes - Art, Music, P.E., etc (EXPO at Parkside)

Evaluation and Assessment

- Grading and grade book with TeacherEase
- Record keeping/paperwork related to Special Services
- Report card procedures
- Student Assessment
- Test interpretation and data analysis
- Text and material evaluation - feedback to curriculum committees

Other General Topics:

- Attendance procedures
- Before school/after school procedures
- Building level committees
- Certified Teacher handbook review
- Emergency procedures (Fire, Tornado, Lockdown, Bus Drills)
- Field trips (ordering buses, chaperones, etc.)
- Grants to apply for – Education Foundation dates and dealines
- Homework Policy
- Introduction to staff
- Lesson plans
- Lunchroom and playground procedures
- Parent/Student handbook review
- Problem Solving Meetings (referral procedures, forms, etc.)
- Procedure for maintenance repairs
- School Office procedures
- Sub Finder – Rita Strickler 1-815-488-6908
- Substitute teacher folder and information to have available
- Supplies and materials… where to get them.
- Support staff (Social Worker, School Psychologist, School Nurse, etc.)
- Teacher attendance (sick days, personal days, substitute)
- Teacher schedule format and basic requirements
- Tour of building
- Special schedules
- Attendance and lunch count
- Teacher's lounge – work area and how to operate machines, ins and outs of the teachers' lounge i.e. treats, coffee, water, etc.
- Ways to earn extra money:
    - *Athletic coaches*
    - *Athletic Scorebook*
    - *Academic team coach*
    - *Detention duty*
    - *District Committees (when applicable)*
    - *Lunch Supervision*
    - *PBIS Internal Coach*
    - *Project success*
    - *Supervise Concessions*
    - *Summer school?*
    - *Webmaster*

Resources

- Staff Resources found online resources at www.perued.net
- District *Acceptable Use Policy.*

Suggested List of Topics and Activities

This outline is intended to suggest topics that new teachers and mentors should discuss during the year. This suggested list is not to be interpreted as an all inclusive list but a guideline for discussion.

August/September

- ✓ Address any new teacher questions
- ✓ Address curriculum modifications/ strategies for special needs students
- ✓ Discuss Accelerated Reader as applicable
- ✓ Discuss appropriate phone use in the classroom
- ✓ Discuss classroom management - strategies and rules
- ✓ Discuss copier use
- ✓ Discuss field trip procedures
- ✓ Discuss homework and make-up work policies
- ✓ Discuss informal vs. formal assessments
- ✓ Discuss lesson planning and daily schedules
- ✓ Discuss lunchroom and playground rules and procedures
- ✓ Discuss problem solving process
- ✓ Discuss student entry and dismissal procedures
- ✓ Discuss support staff
- ✓ Discuss tips for keeping grade books/ assignment records/ grading policy
- ✓ Give overview of MAP and AIMSweb testing and make-up policies
- ✓ Identify PARCC assessment dates and practice tests for PARCC available at www.isbe.net and http://www.parcconline.org/practice-tests
- ✓ Identify organizations to join
- ✓ Identify students with special needs (i.e. IEP, 504 Plan, physical needs, medical needs, etc.)
- ✓ Introduce other staff (specials, support staff, etc.)
- ✓ Review curriculum guides and resources
- ✓ Review Emergency Procedures
- ✓ Review faculty meetings
- ✓ Review *IL Learning Standards*
- ✓ Review Incident Reports (referrals to the principal)
- ✓ Review Mandated Reporting procedures for DCFS
- ✓ Review preparations for Open House
- ✓ Review procedures for setting up substitute folders and procedures for reporting absence
- ✓ Review Progress Reports
- ✓ Review school policies/ procedures
- ✓ Review staff development procedures
- ✓ Review student assembly supervision
- ✓ Review student attendance procedures
- ✓ Review supply needs and procedure for requesting supplies
- ✓ Review Parent/Student Handbook
- ✓ Review the Evaluation Plan
- ✓ Share materials and ideas
- ✓ Tour the school building

October

- ✓ Address any new teacher questions
- ✓ Assist with Curriculum Mapping
- ✓ Check assessment schedules
- ✓ Continue discussions on classroom management
- ✓ Continue PARCC preparations/concerns
- ✓ Continue to review school policies/ procedures
- ✓ Discuss effective instructional techniques
- ✓ Discuss helpful strategies for supporting struggling students
- ✓ Discuss holiday parties (Halloween, etc.)
- ✓ Discuss means of collaboratively working with colleagues
- ✓ Discuss methods for parent contact and communication and completion of communication log (if applicable)
- ✓ Review problem solving process
- ✓ Review support staff services
- ✓ Review the use of the *IL Learning Standards* in lesson planning
- ✓ Share materials and ideas
- ✓ Talk about strategies for organizing yourself

November

- ✓ Address any new teacher questions
- ✓ Continue PARCC preparations
- ✓ Finalize plans for parent/teacher conferences
- ✓ Review Parent/Teacher Conference planning and strategies
- ✓ Review the use of the *IL Learning Standards* in lesson planning
- ✓ Revisit problem solving process and progress monitoring
- ✓ Share materials and ideas

December

- ✓ Address any new teacher questions
- ✓ Continue discussing effective instructional techniques
- ✓ Continue discussions on classroom management
- ✓ Continue discussions regarding strategies/ resources for struggling students
- ✓ Continue PARCC preparations
- ✓ Discuss meeting the needs of culturally diverse students
- ✓ Review MAP and AIMSweb testing and make-up policies
- ✓ Review staff development procedures/ schedules
- ✓ Review the use of the *IL Learning Standards* in lesson planning
- ✓ Revisit supervising students during assemblies
- ✓ Share materials and ideas

January

- ✓ Address any new teacher questions
- ✓ Continue discussion on management.
- ✓ Continue PARCC preparations
- ✓ Discuss strategies for organizing managerial aspects of your position
- ✓ Introduce retention policy and procedures
- ✓ Review Curriculum Guides and Mapping
- ✓ Share materials and ideas

February

- ✓ Address any new teacher questions

- ✓ Continue discussion on classroom management strategies
- ✓ Discuss PARCC schedule and practice testing (March testing dates)
- ✓ Discuss test taking techniques
- ✓ Discuss time management
- ✓ Review School Discipline Procedures for hall, playground, lunchroom, classroom and special areas
- ✓ Share instructional strategies
- ✓ Share materials and ideas

March

- ✓ Address any new teacher questions
- ✓ Discuss PARCC schedule
- ✓ Discuss the importance of continued contact with parents
- ✓ Identify opportunities for involvement in professional organizations
- ✓ Review Tornado Drill procedures
- ✓ Review/discuss physical layout of classroom (seating arrangements, centers, use of physical space, bulletin boards, etc.)
- ✓ Share instructional strategies
- ✓ Share materials and ideas

April

- ✓ Discuss “Spring Fever” and behavior management techniques that may help
- ✓ Discuss Annual Reviews
- ✓ Discuss end of the year tasks
- ✓ Preview end of the year assessments and procedures
- ✓ Review potential candidates for summer school, if available
- ✓ Share instructional strategies
- ✓ Share materials and ideas

May/June

- ✓ Address any new teacher questions
- ✓ Discuss end of the year activities and procedures
- ✓ Discuss professional development opportunities for the summer
- ✓ Review Awards ceremonies procedures
- ✓ Share highlights of the first year
- ✓ Share instructional strategies
- ✓ Discuss possible summer projects and planning for next year
- ✓ Gather information regarding building procedures for:
  students that are moving, student files (report cards), textbook collection, work order items, closing-up classrooms , check-out w/ Principal