

Monthly Mentoring Ideas

These tasks are suggestions based on issues that commonly arise during each month. Use this list as a reminder, and feel free to add any additional tasks that may be specific to your district. Items have been divided to show which items should be completed by the principal and items that can be completed by the mentor.

August

BUILDING A KNOWLEDGE BASE

PRINCIPAL

- Introduce staff members, including support staff.
- Familiarize the beginning teacher with his/her class roster and schedule.
- Be sure teacher knows where he or she may park a vehicle.
- Set up an e-mail account for the new teacher and explain its use.
- Orient the beginning teacher to the daily record keeping procedures of attendance, lunch count, etc.
- Orient the beginning teacher to his/her room and help locate texts and needed supplies.
- Discuss “first day of school” plans, including classroom management plans, room arrangement, orientation materials, staff meetings, etc.
- Share building and district policies and procedures, including sick leave, personal leave, and other types of leave used in the district.
- Outline procedures for ordering transportation and policies for taking students off school site.

MENTOR

- Orient the beginning teacher to the building, including copy machines, mail boxes, restrooms, workroom, staff room, first-aid kit, basic cleaning supplies, and other essentials.
- Instruct the teacher in use of the copy machine and policies related to its use.
- Share gymnasium policies and equipment.
- Show the teacher the outdoor areas and explain playground rules.
- Assist in filling out new employee paperwork.
- Accompany the teacher to the business office to purchase a meal ticket.
- Explain lunchroom procedures and rules.
- Review the August calendar and schedule weekly meetings convenient to both of you.
- Help review “the first day of school” plans.

- Explain school procedures, traditions, and the “unwritten” rules for the school district.
- Explain the community’s expectations for teachers.
- Visit about classroom climate and environment.
- Assist the mentee in establishing a classroom management plan.
- Discuss goals for the semester/year.
- Talk about cultural differences in students.
- Give the mentee a tour of the library and discuss rules and procedures.
- Instruct new teacher in the use of technology and audiovisual equipment and check out of these items.

BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP

PRINCIPAL

- Schedule mentor and new teacher for the same planning time, if possible.
- Visit the new teacher in his or her classroom.

MENTOR

- Recall the characteristics of the Anticipation Phase of Teaching.
- Make plans to sit next to the beginning teacher at all group meetings and at lunch, if possible.
- Exchange phone numbers, e-mail addresses, planning times, schedules.
- Talk about teacher dress codes and student dress codes.
- Have the beginning teacher complete the self-assessment and then discuss your mutual goals for the mentor/mentee experience.
- Make it a point to be helpful without being controlling.
- Share professional and personal experiences in order to develop trust and confidence.
- Give the beginning teacher an overview of the parameters of the mentoring relationship.
- Hand out the mentor/mentee contact log and discuss its use.
- Complete in-kind forms with your mentee, except for Date and Hours.
Make eight (8) copies of the form for later use.

OTHER IDEAS

SEPTEMBER

BUILDING A KNOWLEDGE BASE

PRINCIPAL

- Discuss emergency health, safety, and weather procedures, including fire and tornado drill procedures.
- Discuss grading procedures and deadlines.
- Discuss absences and substitute plans.
- Discuss the requirement of student confidentiality.
- Discuss extra duty assignments.
- Discuss administrative forms and where to submit them.
- Discuss student supervision responsibilities, including hall or playground duty and chaperoning of special events.
- Discuss office referrals and student discipline.

MENTOR

- Tactfully offer suggestions for those issues that may cause later problems.
- Share experiences, especially in those areas where the mentee is having difficulty.
- Introduce the new teacher to all of the support staff.
- Offer classroom management tips.
- Share the school's parent communications policies.
- Encourage the teacher to practice documentation and use a communication log.
- Locate phones and discuss building policies regarding their use.
- Instruct the teacher on use of e-mail.
- Discuss computer lab policies and scheduling.
- Review and discuss short/long term planning.
- Review state and district curriculum guidelines and standards.
- Set up opportunities for the mentee to observe your teaching and ask questions.
- Review the monthly calendar. Discuss the procedure for scheduling events.
- Discuss identification of special needs students, IEP's and other resources for meeting their needs within the classroom.
- Discuss professional organizations and professional obligations.
- Talk about students' physical, social, and academic development.

BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP

PRINCIPAL

- Visit the teacher in his or her classroom.
- Find opportunities to offer positive reinforcement.

MENTOR

- Recall the characteristics of the Anticipation Phase of teaching.
- Find opportunities to offer positive reinforcement.
- Recognize that your way isn't necessarily the only way.
- Offer advice when asked, being careful not to be overly controlling.
- Treat the mentee as a fellow professional, not as a student.
- Schedule meeting times for the month, reaffirming your accessibility.
- Create a new-teacher survival basket, including pain reliever, sticky notes, fun treats, etc.
- Re-visit mentee's needs assessment and discuss mentoring plans for the month.
- Continue to maintain daily or weekly contact, depending on the needs of the mentee.
- Take the mentee on a community tour.
- Plan a social event with the mentee and the rest of the teaching staff.
- Attend a school board meeting with your mentee.

OTHER IDEAS

OCTOBER

BUILDING A KNOWLEDGE BASE

PRINCIPAL

- Discuss holiday celebrations for the month.
- Discuss storm day and school closure procedures.
- Discuss state standards and assessments.
- Discuss staff development opportunities.
- Review student support services provided by the district: counselors, nurses, etc.
- Show the teacher where the students' cumulative files are and how to access them.

MENTOR

- Discuss holiday celebrations for the month.
- Begin discussing and role playing in preparation for parent-teacher conferences.
- Discuss the importance of documentation.
- Discuss and assess progress toward curriculum goals.
- Design a new lab or learning center collaboratively.
- Share syllabi, units, and lesson plans that have worked well.
- Offer to share computer software or show where other software can be obtained.
- Review the monthly calendar.
- Discuss student motivation.
- Assist with time management.
- Help mentee evaluate students.
- Offer to videotape the mentee's teaching for future private discussion.
- Set up an opportunity to observe the mentee teaching.
- Discuss coping strategies for stress.
- Discuss any specific problems the beginning teacher is experiencing.
- Discuss exceptional and special needs students and procedures for working with them.

BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP

PRINCIPAL

- Visit the teacher in his or her classroom.
- Find opportunities to offer positive reinforcement.

MENTOR

- Recall the characteristics of the Survival Phase of teaching.
- Surprise your mentee with a small gift in his/her mailbox.
- Do a self-evaluation of your mentoring, and list your goals for the second quarter.
- Help the mentee become part of the teaching community by including him/her in faculty social activities.
- Have the mentee re-evaluate his/her needs based on the first two months of teaching, and make plans to address any new concerns.
- Schedule meeting times for the month, reaffirming your accessibility.
- Remember to be supportive of your mentee at all times, praising him/her openly to others and keeping areas of concern to yourself.

OTHER IDEAS

NOVEMBER

BUILDING A KNOWLEDGE BASE

PRINCIPAL

- Discuss teacher evaluation procedures and concerns.
- Review storm day and school closure procedures.

MENTOR

- Discuss holiday celebrations, gift giving, school holiday programs, etc.
- Discuss cultural differences of students and their individual needs.
- Review the monthly calendar.
- Invite other teachers to join you in watching a professional development video.
- Discuss professionalism in the workplace, teacher/principal relations, teacher/school board relations, etc.
- Help the mentee define goals for self improvement based on last month's observation.

BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP

PRINCIPAL

- Set up times for the mentee to observe the classroom of several teachers.

MENTOR

- Recall the characteristics of the Disillusionment Phase of teaching.
- Invite the mentee to observe you in both planned and unplanned situations in order to further develop trust.
- Plan a time to discuss questions resulting from the mentee's observations of your teaching.
- Recognize that the mentee, as a recent student, has knowledge from which you could benefit.
- Show an interest in the mentee's personal life as well as in his/her professional life by becoming aware of family members, birthday, personal interests and hobbies, etc.
- Invite the mentee to attend an extracurricular school event such as a game, play or concert with you.
- Schedule meeting times for the month, reaffirming your accessibility.

DECEMBER

BUILDING A KNOWLEDGE BASE

PRINCIPAL

- Discuss the end of semester procedures: testing, grading, etc.
- Discuss any schedule changes at semester.
- Discuss holiday celebrations and policies.

MENTOR

- Discuss holiday celebrations and district policies.
- Offer to videotape the mentee so he/she can observe his/her teaching.
- Revisit pedagogical issues such as multiple intelligences, technology in the classroom, etc.
- Discuss any changes in classes at semester.
- Assist the mentee in self-reflection and the setting of goals for second semester.

BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP

PRINCIPAL

- Plan a social event with the staff.

MENTOR

- Schedule meeting times for the month, reaffirming your accessibility.
- Invite mentee to faculty holiday events.
- Share vacation plans and family traditions with the mentee in order to build the friendship or further knowledge of your cultural background if it is different from that of the mentee.

OTHER IDEAS

JANUARY

BUILDING A KNOWLEDGE BASE

PRINCIPAL

- Discuss the evaluation criteria and procedures for the second evaluation.

MENTOR

- Evaluate progress toward curriculum goals during first semester and discuss necessary modifications.
- Discuss the school guidelines for bringing in guest speakers.
- Discuss assessment procedures for both formal and informal assessments.
- Revisit the teacher evaluation procedures and address concerns.
- Invite other teachers to join you in watching a video on a professional development topic.
- Help the new teacher get a jumpstart on budget/ordering activities by sharing catalogs, ordering procedures, etc.

BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP

PRINCIPAL

- Plan a visit or tour to another building or school district.

MENTOR

- Recall the characteristics of the Rejuvenation Phase of teaching.
- Schedule meeting times for the month, reaffirming your accessibility.
- Discuss what mentor/mentee activities have been most/least helpful, and discuss possible changes.
- Consider extending the mentee's circle of support by including other beginning and experienced teachers for sharing, and for professional and social relationships.
- Visit a teacher supply store.

OTHER IDEAS

FEBRUARY

BUILDING A KNOWLEDGE BASE

PRINCIPAL

- Discuss summer school teaching opportunities.
- Discuss teacher transfers.
- Discuss holiday celebrations and policies.

MENTOR

- Help the mentee begin an in-depth analysis of individual student success in order to help him/her assist students who may be struggling.
- Talk with the mentee about extra duties and time management.
- Discuss holiday celebrations, if appropriate.
- Help the mentee to begin to be proactive by asking, “What challenges do you anticipate this month?” and “How will you handle them?”
- Help the mentee set monthly mentoring goals based on his/her needs and help him/her list possible resources for meeting those needs.

ENCOURAGING INDEPENDENCE

MENTOR

- Foster the growing independence of the mentee by meeting informally on an as-needed basis rather than scheduling meetings in advance.
- Point out resources for individual exploration, including workshops, school visitations, on-line training, etc.
- Build the mentee’s self-confidence through the use of well-earned praise.

OTHER IDEAS

MARCH

BUILDING A KNOWLEDGE BASE

PRINCIPAL

- Discuss the offering of contracts and related details.
- Discuss field trip policies and plans.
- Discuss school-wide achievement testing policies and plans.
- Discuss resources for enrichment of district curriculum and district policies.

MENTOR

- Review the offering of contracts and related details.
- Attend a collaborative bargaining meeting with your mentee.
- If there are indications that perhaps the mentee may not be offered a contract, begin preparing for the eventuality.
- Revisit the appropriateness of upcoming holiday decorations and celebrations for students of all cultures.
- Discuss plans for spring parent/teacher conferences.
- Assist the mentee in self-reflection and the progress toward meeting goals for second semester.

ENCOURAGING INDEPENDENCE

- Encourage the mentee to observe other teachers' teaching styles.
- Encourage the mentee to keep a log of his/her successes and goals for improvement.

OTHER IDEAS

APRIL

BUILDING A KNOWLEDGE BASE

PRINCIPAL

- Discuss the end of the year procedures: graduation, locker clean-out, book check-in, tests, field trips, etc.
- Discuss end of the year procedure for teachers: turning in books/keys, preparing classroom, etc.

MENTOR

- Discuss weather concerns and student motivation.
- Discuss stress relief.
- Discuss the school's policy on student retention and the procedure for recommending that a student repeat a grade, if necessary.
- If the mentee does not receive a teaching contract for the next year, offer support, a letter of recommendation, and help in preparing a resume.
- Work with the mentee to compile a list of most worthwhile activities/topics for future use.

ENCOURAGING INDEPENDENCE

MENTOR

- Discuss things the mentee would or would not repeat in the following year.
- Help mentee conduct a year end self-assessment and help him/her get a jumpstart on planning for next year.
- Review the mentee's budget for the following year, if applicable.
- Discuss professional development opportunities available in the summer.

OTHER IDEAS

MAY

BUILDING A KNOWLEDGE BASE

PRINCIPAL

- Discuss any remaining end of the school year procedures.
- Discuss policies on gaining access to the building during the summer months.

MENTOR

- Recall the characteristics of the Reflection Phase of teaching.
- Encourage the mentee to self-evaluate through the use of a student survey.
- Discuss your perceptions of the mentee's growth throughout the year, noting areas of greater and lesser strength.
- Assist the mentee in any remaining end of the school year procedures.
- Discuss the common practice among teachers in getting classrooms ready for the next school year.
- Discuss the transition to year two. Will there be a new mentor? No mentor? Will the relationship continue?

ENCOURAGING INDEPENDENCE

PRINCIPAL

- Work with staff to plan an event to celebrate the conclusion of the teacher's first year of teaching.

MENTOR

- Recognize the end of the first year of teaching with a celebration.
- Help the mentee "scrounge" castoffs from teachers who are cleaning their rooms or retiring.

OTHER IDEAS