Superior-Greenstone District School Board

MENTORING HANDBOOK for NEW TEACHERS and

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TEACHER INDUCTION PROGRAM. This program was designed to support the growth and professional development of new teachers in their first and second years of teaching.

The four components are:

Orientation for all new teachers to both the school and the board Mentoring for new teachers by experienced teachers Professional development and training appropriate to new teachers

THE FIRST YEARS CAN BE THE TOUGHEST!

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GOALS of MENTORING

The goals of the SGDSB mentoring program are:

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MENTORING and THE STANDARDS of PRACTICE

A well-planned mentoring program can increase teacher commitment to the highest standards of professional practice as outlined in the Ontario College of Teachers Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession.

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Mentors have a depth of knowledge and experience that they can share with the novice teacher. They are able to help novice teachers gain insight into student needs and how they learn, as well as provide information on specific curriculum, valuable resources, and teaching and assessment practices. Through this collaboration new teachers will be better equipped to instruct, manage student behaviour and evaluate student learning. Increased student learning is a key result of teacher growth.

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Although novice teachers gained knowledge and practical experience through their teacher training there is still much to learn as they embark on their careers. Through a mentoring program, novice teachers are provided opportunities to seek answers to their questions and to become more proficient as educators. Mentors can help new teachers find their own solutions to issues they face. Planned professional development activities are also part of the mentoring program and provide formal instruction in a variety of topics.

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Mentoring programs are about professionals working together to help develop their teaching practices thereby enriching the learning environment for students. Not only do novice teachers make great strides in developing their expertise, but mentors also benefit from reflecting on their practices and acquiring new ideas from the novice.

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Mentoring is a collaborative effort by all the participants. The collegial nature of the program lends itself to problem solving, decision-making, team work, sharing and celebrating successes.

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Professional development is the cornerstone to a mentoring program. Formal and informal on-going learning opportunities are made available and professional growth is a benefit for both the novice and veteran teachers.

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WHAT MAKES A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP WORK?

A sustained and satisfying mentoring relationship is based on proper preparation of mentors and proteges. In addition, mechanisms must be provided which offer on-going support and opportunities for skill development.

Another key to successful mentoring is the match between the partners. The mentoring relationship is built on trust and needs to be cooperative, not competitive. The protégé must be willing to identify strengths and weaknesses and the mentor must be generous in sharing information and resources. As partners they should:

share mutual goals

Individual Strategy Form maintain confidentiality determine what the protégé knows/what the mentor can provide develop an openness/rapport enabling two people to agree/disagree with dignity protect some on-the-job time for needed dialogue establish regular times for some pre-planned meetings together

WHAT IS AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR?

A mentor is a professional role model for a beginning teacher to emulate and from whom to learn. Usually this person works with the new teacher on a one-to-one basis throughout the school year or possibly for two years. The mentor helps the new teacher develop skills to meet the demands of teaching.

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- * Teachers
- * Professional role models
- * Educational supporters
- * Administrators
- * Teacher evaluators

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CHALLENGES IN ESTABLISHING A SUCCESSFUL MENTORING PROGRAM

There are potential obstacles that must be addressed in order for a mentoring program to be successful. Some of the most common are:

Lack of time in order for partners to meet regularly

Lack of interested teachers to volunteer for mentoring position

Lack of expertise to help new teachers mentors may not be able to verbalize their thinking clearly, nor explain the principles behind their practices or break down complex teaching into components that are understandable to a beginner

Lack of a Code of Conduct and an inability to achieve a relationship based on trust

Unrealistic expectations on the part of the novice or the mentor

Inappropriate matching and lack of procedures to follow if match does not work out

Concern about who is teaching the ropes to the novices and what implicit/explicit messages new teachers will hear and affect their attitudes

Lack of communication about the program

Lack of direction with the mentor partnership

Lack of resources such as release time for planning and team teaching, observing practice and follow up feedback, or professional opportunities that support mentoring

These obstacles can be eliminated or reduced by:

Good communication on the part of all involved. Knowledge is the key to understanding and reducing issues.

Using release days provided for both partners to work together.

The development of a joint mentoring plan and a focus for each meeting.

Recognizing the benefits that will result from the effort put in.

Seeking assistance from other sources (other teachers, the SERT, Principal, the School Effectiveness Lead, Student Success Lead etc.)

Developing a collaborative school culture with mentoring as one component.

ROLE OF THE BOARD NTIP STEERING COMMITTEE

Conduct a minimum of two yearly meetings

Promote and facilitate the program within the schools and throughout the Board

Participate in Board Orientation session if available

Provide input into completion of the NTIP Continuum

Develop criteria/goals/expectations at the Board level

Evaluate and identify positives, negatives and next steps for the program

Facilitate workshops and teacher training by offering training sessions or by finding trainers to bring in

Conduct union/federation presentations

Assist with sustaining the program

COMPOSITION OF THE NTIP STEERING COMMITTEE: Membership should be voluntary. Members can be nominated by self, a peer or an administrator. Members should represent various aspects of our education community. Suggested representation:

1 Board Lead

1 Human Resources representative

1-2 mentors from each panel

1-2 new teachers from each panel

1 Principal or Vice-Principal from each panel

Union representation

ROLE OF THE NTIP BOARD LEAD

Promote, facilitate and sustain the program within schools and throughout the Board

Collaborate with the Board NTIP Steering Committee to develop yearly criteria/goals/expectations for the program

Assist with scheduling mentors and new teachers

Organize workshops, training and other activities for the year

Conduct surveys to identify positives, negatives and next steps for the program

Participate in Ministry communications and directives

Develop communication resources

Research and purchase appropriate resources for the program

Deal with situations that surface

NEW TEACHER ORIENTATION at HOME SCHOOL

New teachers are required to attend an orientation session at their home school prior to the start of classes in order to have a tour, meet staff, and become familiar with school culture, mission, policies, procedures, routines, and the mentoring program. Teacher Handbooks will be distributed.

It is highly recommended that the mentor participate in all or part of this orientation. New teachers will complete a Needs Assessment Form for mentoring.

NEW TEACHER ORIENTATION to SGDSB

All teachers new to SGDSB will attend a mandatory orientation session conducted by the Human Resources department in August or early Septembel 0 7w to SGDSB w0rit on coed a

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Professional development opportunities will be provided throughout the year. The focus of these activities will be on new teacher needs.

Some activities will involve only the new teachers and some will involve mentors.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Program evaluations will be completed by June 10th of each year.

Input will be solicited from new teachers, mentors, administrators and members of the steering committee.

YEAR-END CELEBRATION

Activities recognizing successes will be held.

Partnerships might be dismantled or they might continue on to year two.

- 2. In instances where issues cannot be resolved either the mentor or new teacher has the option of discontinuing the mentor relationship without prejudice. Neither partner is required to give an explanation/reason for the dissolution.
- Either participant may chose to notify the other person of the desire to dissolve the relationship or consult with the Board Lead to seek support in concluding the relationship.
- 4. The partner who wishes to dissolve the partnership will inform the NTIP Board Lead that there is a need to change the relationship. The individual can also inform their Principal if they desire.
- 5. The Board Lead will inform the other partner of the need to dissolve the relationship, if it has not already been done, and follow up with any outcomes of the dissolution.
- 6. The Board Lead will contact the principal and inform him/her of the need for a new pairing for the new teacher. Based on recommendations from the Principal and the new teacher, the NTIP Board Lead will assist in reassigning the new teacher to another mentor since it is a requirement of the induction period.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

Partners express mutual appreciation for their contributions to the relationship if possible.

The NTIP Board Lead and Steering Committee will take an active role in communicating this Exit Strategy to mentors, new teachers and principals. Board Lead will provide yearly data on the number of times the dissolution of partnerships occurs to the Steering Committee.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Observations are an effective method of job-embedded learning. They are NOT evaluative in nature. There are several types of observations:

SOURCES AVAILABLE TO ASSIST NEW TEACHERS

SURVIVE AND THRIVE present an on-

BOOKS

Breaux, Annette L. and Harry Wong. <u>New Teacher Induction: How to Train, support, and Retain New Teachers.</u> Mountain View, Calif.: Harry K. Wong Publications, Inc. 2003

Boreen, Jean; Johnson, Mary; Niday, Donna; Potts, Joe. <u>Mentoring Beginning Teachers</u> Guiding, Reflecting, Coaching. Maine: Stenhouse Publishers, 2000

WEBSITES RESOURCES

http://www.nde.state.ne.us/EEC/Mentor%20web/MentorHP.htm (Leslie Huling Styles of Mentoring)

http://teachersmentors.com/200/AprConfr.htm/

(Barry Sweeny - Leading the Teacher Mentoring and Induction Program)

http://www.teachermentors.com/mCenter%20site

http://www.ed.gov/pubs/FirstYear/ack.html

(What to Expect Your First Year of Teaching, Sept 1998)

http://www.ed.gov/databases/ER Digests/ed399888.htm/

(Empowering the Faculty: Mentoring Redirected and Renewed and Teacher Mentoring as

Professional Development. ERIC Digest)

http://www.quasar.ualberta.ca/AISI/LessonPlanlinks.htm

http://www.gse.uci.edu/MentorTeacher/Chap8.1

(Mentoring: An Online Toolkit)

http://www.schoolnet.ca

www.ucalgary.ca/~distance/c//

(Linking Research to Educational PractiseII)

www.newteachercenter.org/article3.html

FOR MENTOR TRAINING

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Wh is h p rpos of h n i i I r g orm It provides the impetus for discussion between the new teacher, the Principal and the mentor. It allows for planning, tracking and recording of the individual NTIP elements in

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