**Hamilton USD 390 Teacher Mentoring Program**

**Overview of Mentoring Program**

**New Teacher Assistance (1-2 years)**

The Kansas State Board of Education through K.A.R. 91-1-203(b)(1)(A), (b)(2)(A), (b)(3)(A), and (b)(5) requires a research-based peer mentoring process in which all new educators participate in one year of structured, intensive support with a documented plan for providing a second year of support if a second year is needed. This includes establishment of professional development programs specifically designed for beginning teachers who have no prior teaching experience. By offering collegial support and practical assistance, these programs should help beginning teachers polish their skills, improve their chances for success, and encourage them to stay in the profession.

**New Teacher Assistance (3+ years)**

The Kansas State Board of Education through K.A.R. 91-1-203(b)(1)(A), (b)(2)(A), (b)(3)(A), and (b)(5) requires a research-based peer mentoring process in which all teachers new to the school district must participate. New teachers with three or more years’ experience will participate in the mentoring program for one year. By offering collegial support and practical assistance, peer mentoring should help new teachers with transitioning into the school district.

**Professional Development Plan (pdp)**

The purpose of the professional development plan is to assist, not to evaluate, teachers. Every teacher must complete a professional development plan through the McRel evaluation system. The goals identified in the plan should relate to the evaluation criteria required by the state of Kansas and the district’s own evaluation criteria. All goals must be approved by the principal. Teachers new to the school district will be trained in the use of the McRel Professional Development Plan.

**Administrator Responsibilities**

**Guidelines For Administrators To Follow In Mentor Selection and Training**

The principal should work collaboratively with the Professional Development Team to select mentors. Mentors should be identified in time to allow for training and so they can help beginning teachers with their professional development plans. Mentor must have a minimum of three years of successful experience and have a professional license in effect. Ideally, a mentor should be teaching in the same area of certification as the beginning teacher. Initial training of mentor must occur by October 1 of each school year.

**Administrators’ Responsibilities:**

* **Scheduling observations:** Suggests teachers to model areas of expertise to meet needs of new teacher
* **Coaches mentors**
* **Participation:** Involved in evaluation of mentoring process
* **Support:** Creates supportive, encouraging environment
* **Appointment of mentors:** Leads ongoing progress to cultivate leaders
* **Administrative support:** Offers resources to mentor and new teacher

Mentoring at Hamilton USD 390

**The Mentor**

The mentor influences the new teacher in his/her development by acting as a guide, a coach, a confidant, and a source of inspiration to the profession of teaching. The selection of mentor teachers; therefore, should follow a careful process.

**Type of Mentoring**

* **Beginning Teacher**-This teacher is within their first two years of teaching. They are required by the Kansas Education Systems Accreditation to complete one year of mentoring and a second year if needed. They will follow the quarterly log for new teachers. These logs will be turned in quarterly to the principal for review.
* **New Teacher to the District**-Teachers who have completed three or more years of teaching. These teachers will complete one year in the mentoring program to assist in transitioning to the Hamilton School District. They will follow the quarterly log for new teachers. These logs will be turned in quarterly to the principal for review.

**Goals**

* To provide new teachers a professional relationship with a mentor for professional growth and development
* To retain new teachers in the profession by providing opportunities with a mentor to develop necessary knowledge and skills in teaching
* To provide mentors opportunities for personal growth through collaboration with new teachers and other mentor teachers
* To offer mentors opportunities for professional growth by providing training and expansion of professional skills

**Mentor Selection**

There are certain factors to consider when selecting mentors. Experienced teachers who have demonstrated success in the classroom, who are open to continued training, and who have a positive attitude toward mentoring should be recruited as mentor teachers.

* **Method of appointment:** Administrator analyzes data for teacher effectiveness and appoints mentors after interviewing volunteers.
* **Teaching experience of mentor:** Three years – two or more in district
* **Proximity to new teacher:** Same building, common plan time if possible
* **Attitude toward teaching:** Positive attitude toward learning, teaching students, and guiding a new teacher in a caring, supportive way
* **Commitment to mentoring role:** Willing to commit as much time and effort as needed
* **Compatibility with new teacher:** Same certification area if possible, along with shared beliefs and philosophies of teaching

**Mentor Training**

Thorough and consistent training of mentors is a key to the success of the program. The Professional Development Team will arrange training through the Greenbush Service Center for mentors that address these topics:

* Addresses the mentor’s role
* Develops strategies for building relationships with new teachers
* Development of skills for observation of new teacher’s practice, assessment of needs of new teacher, strategies to address those needs
* Coaching language and practice
* Strategies for guiding new teachers to use reflection in their practice
* Skills for guiding new teachers in using various types of formative assessment to focus instruction and differentiate for student needs
* Guiding new teachers in collecting and analyzing various types of student date to show evidence of learning
* Guiding new teachers in their use of content standards when planning lessons/units
* Skills in using the professional education standards as a measure of assessing teacher practice

**Mentor Rules and Responsibilities**

Taking time to listen and understand a new teacher’s experiences and problems builds professional respect and leads to the sort of dialogue needed for professional growth.

* **Contact with new teacher before school starts:** Mentor provides state standards, previous teacher’s files, materials, and human resources.
* **Communication, feedback and observations:** Communication must be on a weekly basis (e-mail, face to face, phone, etc.). Observations will be a minimum of three per year. There must be a system for mentor to provide reflective verbal dialogue and feedback. (Use the *New Teacher Observation* *Form*) The Kansas Professional Education Standards will be topics of discussion for ongoing support for mentees. Please see the document for details on learner development, learning differences, learning environment, content knowledge, application of content, assessment, planning for instruction, instructional strategies, professional learning and ethical practice, and leadership and collaboration.
* **Availability** Always available to listen and answer questions
* **Professional relationship with new teacher:** Mentor develops strong professional relationship with new teacher, based on mutual respect and trust
* **Confidentiality** Mentor maintains confidentiality at all times and reinforces trust
* **New teacher’s professional development plan:** Mentor explains the process encouraging growth and career advancement
* **District policies and building rules:** Mentor continually discusses policies, rules and cultural norms

**Time For Mentors to Observe and Give Feedback**

* **Observations:** Observe lessons at least three per year and feedback provided to new teacher.
* **Format:** Mentor observes lesson focused on the common core state standards, plus use of school and district growth areas. (Use the *New Teacher Observation* *Form*)

**Guidelines for Observations**

Making time for observations, like going to the doctor, is better done sooner than later.

Isolation is a barrier new teachers can overcome by simply going outside their classrooms to learn from master teachers.

* Prior to observation, the mentor and mentee should meet to have dialogue regarding what area will be observed and what the mentor expects to see.
* The mentee should observe a master teacher at the minimum of twice per year during the first two years.
* Observations should be arranged and requested through the building principal.
* Mentor will provide reflective verbal dialogue and feedback.

**The New Teacher’s Responsibilities**

**New Teacher Responsibilities**

* **Communication:** 
  + Shares mutual respect with mentor and engages in both formal and informal communication
  + Seeks support and assistance on a regular basis and reflects with mentor and colleagues
  + Engages in in-depth conversations while seeking answers to questions
  + Uses team-based approach to solving problems
* **Documentation:** 
  + New teacher documents observing and being observed on *New Teacher Observation Form*, completes *Mentor/Mentee Log* quarterly, completes Greenbush PDP to record professional development hours, and documents other related topics.

**Mentor Accountability and Program effectiveness**

* **Accountability** 
  + The principal will conduct a survey to assess the mentor program’s effectiveness and success by the second week of May. The survey will be given to mentors and mentees. The survey will assess the following: observations, weekly meetings, new teacher orientation, professional development, communication, and future needs/concerns. Criteria to assess the quality of the program will be at the developing, transitioning, and implementing levels.
* No later than the last day in June of each school year, the principal, in collaboration with the Board of Education, will analyze the results of the survey and make program changes/additions as needed.
* The results of the survey will be shared with the Superintendent, Board of Education, mentors, and mentees.
* As a result of the survey, observations, and evaluations, a documented plan will be devised to provide additional training and support for the new teacher.