

Introduction to Mentoring Essentials

Month-by-Month Success Strategies



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Month-by-Month Mentoring Topics and Tools

This document is packed with suggestions to help you make the most of your mentoring conversations with new-to-the-building/-district teachers or teachers who are new to the profession.

Each month features:

- 1) **Suggestions for Practical Conversations:** conversations focused on the nuts and bolts of working in your school (processes, procedures, etc.).
- 2) **Suggestions for Instructionally-focused Conversations:** conversations that have the potential to improve student learning, engagement, and success.

As a mentor, you are not expected to be an expert in all topics, but rather to serve as a collaborative learning partner as you work with the beginning teacher to explore topics and strategies that will support his/her development.

How to Use this Tool:

- Cross reference all suggestions with your district calendar and adjust timing accordingly.
- Add additional, district-specific items as needed.
- Use these topics to focus on priorities and provide support as needed and allowable within your mentoring schedule.
- Use the Mentoring Log at the end of the packet to track your work.
- You may wish to offer the list of instructionally-focused topics to your beginning teacher for self-selection in order to individualize support.

AUGUST CHECKLIST

August: Practical Conversations

- Attend or review Orientation curriculum to determine immediate supports.
- Invite the BT to coffee or lunch to get to know them, their background, interests, and concerns.
- Invite the BT to tour the community, district, and school.
- Provide your contact information and district/school emergency contact information:
 - Weather, fire, lock-down
 - Substitute hotline number
- Review process and procedures:
 - Emergency situations
 - Parking policy, dress code, access to office supplies, how to use copier and other machines, after-hours entry to building and classroom
 - Attendance and working hours
 - Obtaining and reviewing cumulative folders
 - Accessing office supplies
 - Remote access to web-based software, intranet and other technology applications
 - Open House/Back to School Night
 - Go over shortened/altered schedules related to start of school.
- Outline the Mentoring and Induction program
 - Your role
 - Meeting calendar for the year
 - Norms
- Ensure the BT has copies of:
 - District handbook, and school directory
 - [DPI EE System User Guide](#), CESA 6 [Effectiveness Project Teacher Performance Evaluation System \(TPES\) Guidebook](#)
 - Curriculum maps
 - Other manuals as needed.
- Go over shortened/altered schedules related to start of school.
- Conduct a building tour and introduce the BT to building staff (team members, specialists, Administrative Assistants, and buildings/grounds)
- Discuss the importance of record keeping, and the process for archiving documentation
- Assist in:
 - Securing a copier code and/or provide instruction on copier use
 - Voicemail and email set up

August: Instructionally-Focused Conversations

- Examine the structure, vocabulary, and language of the professional practice framework used in the district ([Framework for Teaching](#), or CESA 6 [Effectiveness Project Standards](#), etc.)
- Establishing a [Culture for Learning](#)
- Creating an engaging classroom environment and strategies for student engagement
- Creating a [classroom climate of respect and rapport](#)
- [Classroom management strategies](#)
- Assist in planning for beginning of year lessons and community-building activities

SEPTEMBER CHECKLIST

September: Practical Conversations

- Provide:
 - Access to the [WI Academic Standards](#) for the grade level/content area
 - Information related to Professional Development: Ongoing Support Seminars, conference and workshop attendance, etc.
 - Assistance in creating a “[substitute teacher](#)” folder
- Review:
 - Discipline procedures
 - Procedures for textbook/technology distribution
 - District policy and responsible/professional [use of Social Media](#)
- Introduce:
 - [WISELearn](#) and [Open Education Resources](#)
- Support:
 - Planning for effective use of paraprofessionals, co-teachers, and parent/community volunteers
 - Accessing and entering data into online grading and EE platforms

September: Instructionally-Focused Conversations

- Engage the beginning teacher in a student roster review; focus on historical, qualitative and quantitative data that might shape [perceptions, biases](#), and relationships with students.
- Observe a lesson for [Teacher-Student Interactions](#), and reflect on results with the BT
- Discuss the importance of, and methods which provide opportunity for [student voice](#).
- Nurture reflective practice through self-assessment activities:
 - Framework for Teaching (FFT) and EP [Self-Review](#)
- Guide the BT in analyzing evidence of [student baseline skills](#) and abilities related to the content standards

- Support the BT in writing Student Learning Objective and Professional Practice Goals

OCTOBER CHECKLIST

October: Practical Conversations

- Prepare for [Parent Teacher Conferences](#):
 - Getting ready
 - Scheduling
 - Family Communication
- Review:
 - [Holidays and Celebrations](#)
 - Technology and technology support
 - Specialist support (school counselor, nurse, psychologist, Library Media)
 - Building academic/behavioral supports ([Multi-Level Systems of Support](#), [RtI](#), [PBIS](#), [TAG](#), Special Education)
- Share information and process for professional development opportunities

October: Instructionally-Focused Conversations

- [Engaging families](#)
- [Culturally competent practices](#)
- [Implicit Bias](#) (See Unit 3: Student-Teacher Relationships)
- [Engaging Students in Learning](#)
- High-quality [Educator Effectiveness Plan Goals](#)

NOVEMBER CHECKLIST

November: Practical Conversations

- Discuss:
 - Work-life balance
 - [Stress reduction strategies](#)
 - Organizational and time-saving strategies
 - WI State and District Accountability Measures ([State Report Card](#))

- Review:
 - District policy on documenting and responding to [students in crisis](#) (abuse, bullying, trauma, self-harming behaviors)
 - Review process for weather-related delays and closure

November: Instructionally-Focused Conversations

- [Educator Effectiveness Artifacts](#), tagging evidence to components
- Quick and easy [formative assessment](#) strategies
- [Questioning and Discussion](#) Techniques
- Evaluator observation and conference debrief

DECEMBER CHECKLIST

December: Practical Conversations

- Review:
 - [Holidays and Celebrations](#)
 - Assembly processes and procedures
- Preparing for end of semester: assessing, grading, and reporting

December: Instructionally-Focused Conversations

- Ask the BT to identify the area in which they feel they've made the most growth, and one that is their greatest challenge. Develop a second semester plan to extend their learning, or address challenges for the second semester.
- Co-plan lessons ahead of time for use after the BT returns from winter break
- Guide the BT in developing (or offer to review and provide feedback on) the [SLO, mid-cycle interim assessment](#).

JANUARY CHECKLIST

JANUARY: Practical Conversations

- [State Assessments](#):
 - State administration window, and school timeline
 - Proctoring and practice procedures
 - Accommodations
- Prepare for [mid-cycle conference](#) with the evaluator (see document Table of Contents)

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JANUARY: Instructionally-Focused Conversations

- Analyze the results of the mid-cycle, interim assessment for achievement gaps in and across student groups.
- Observe (in classroom or via recording) a lesson and debrief the lesson together
- Identify a new instructional strategy that you'd both like to learn and practice
- Reflective Practices

FEBRUARY CHECKLIST

February: Practical Conversations

- Review:
 - Teacher contract renewal and timeline
 - Spring Parent-Teacher Conference preparation
 - Summer school selection, enrollment, and procedures

February: Instructionally-Focused Conversations

- [Differentiated instructional strategies](#)
- Evaluator observation and conference debrief

MARCH CHECKLIST

March: Practical Conversations

- Discuss Supporting specialized learning needs:
 - Special Education referrals
 - 504 Plans
 - Talented and Gifted screening and programming
- Review:
 - Final purchase orders, budget requests and timelines
 - Processes for determining next year's block/classroom and teacher assignments
 - Preparation for grade-level/building-level recognition or award ceremonies

March: Instructionally-Focused Conversations

- [Student-Centered instructional Strategies](#)

APRIL CHECKLIST

April: Practical Conversations

- Review:
 - Contract renewal reminders/processes
 - District supports for second year teachers
 - District/building committee opportunities
 - Applying for additional duties (coaching, after school programs, etc.)

April: Instructionally-Focused Conversations

- [Students assessing their own learning](#)
- [Elements of Assessment Design](#)

MAY CHECKLIST

May: Practical Conversations

- Discuss End-of-Year procedures:
 - Preparing the classroom for summer cleaning/maintenance
 - Summer building hours
 - End of year grading and reporting
 - Turning in keys
 - Textbook and technology collection
 - Field trips

May: Instructionally-Focused Conversations

- Strategies for end-of-year student engagement
- End-of-Year Evaluator observation and conference debrief
- Support BT in completing the EE [End-of Cycle Reflection](#)
- Getting feedback from [students](#) and families