

Richland County Community Unit #1 Mentoring & Induction Program 2016-2017



Growing Together

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Introduction

Richland County Community Unit #1 believes that excellent teaching is a determining factor in student success. Supporting new teachers during their first two years is vital to their development into highly effective teachers who engage students in quality learning experiences. A support system of mentoring, professional development, and accountability will encourage development of new teacher skills and instructional strategies.

Richland County's mentoring and induction program for new teachers is based on Illinois Induction Program Standards approved by the Illinois Certification Board in December, 2008.



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Illinois Induction Program Standards

Standard 1: Induction Program Leadership, Administration, and Support

The induction program has an administrative structure with specified leaders who plan, implement, evaluate and refine the program through data analysis, program evaluation, and stakeholder communication linked to relevant standards.

Standard 2: Program Goals and Design

Local program design is focused on beginning teacher development, support, retention and improved student learning. The goals are guided by current induction research, effective practices, Illinois Induction Program Standards, the district/school improvement plan and local concerns/context.

Standard 3: Resources

Program leadership allocates and monitors sufficient resources to meet all goals and deliver program components to all participants.

Standard 4: Site Administrator Roles and Responsibilities

Site administrators lead efforts to create a positive climate for the delivery of all essential program components. Site administrators and program leadership collaborate to ensure that they are well prepared to assume their responsibilities for supporting beginning teachers in the induction program.

Standard 5: Mentor Selection and Assignment

Mentors are recruited, selected and assigned using a comprehensive strategy that includes a clearly articulated, open process and specific criteria that are developed by and communicated to all stakeholder groups.

Standard 6: Mentor Professional Development

Mentor professional development provides a formal orientation and foundational mentor training before they begin their work with beginning teachers and should continue over the course of the mentor's work with beginning teachers. Mentors have time, supported by the program, to engage in this mentor learning community and are consistently supported in their efforts to assist beginning teachers in their development, with a focus on student learning.

Standard 7: Development of Beginning Teacher Practice

Beginning teachers have regularly scheduled time, provided during the two year program, to participate in ongoing professional development that is focused on their professional growth to support student learning.

Standard 8: Formative Assessment

Beginning teachers and mentors participate in formative assessment experiences, collaboratively collecting and analyzing measures of teaching progress, including appropriate documentation, mentor observations and student work, to improve classroom practices and increase student achievement.

Standard 9: Program Evaluation

Programs operate a comprehensive, ongoing system of program development and evaluation that involves all program participants.



Program Goals

The goals of Richland County Community Unit's mentoring program are:

- To optimize student learning
- To retain high-quality teachers
- To cultivate best teaching practices
- To provide high quality mentoring experiences for new teachers
- To provide leadership opportunities for experienced teachers
- To encourage collaboration and reflective practice



Leadership Roles

The collaborative leadership team consists of building administrators, program director, and representative mentors. This team should meet at least annually to evaluate program effectiveness and make revisions based on that evaluation.

Collaborative Leadership Team will:

- Determine program goals
- Create program timelines
- Identify resources to support program
- Communicate program goals to community stakeholders
- Assess program effectiveness
- Provide for smooth leadership transitions
- Provide orientation experiences for new teachers

Program Director will:

- Attend professional development and network with other providers
- Provide mentor training
- Provide support to mentors
- Monitor mentoring process
- Mediate incompatibility issues between mentor and new teacher
- Collaborate with building administrators to facilitate program implementation



Administrators will:

- Assign mentors using policy criteria
- Provide resources/time to mentors and new teachers
- Honor confidentiality of mentoring relationship

Mentors will:

- Complete mentor training
- Commit to supportive mentor relationship
- Honor confidentiality of mentoring relationship
- Focus on best teaching practices

New Teachers will:

- Attend orientation sessions
- Meet regularly with mentor
- Commit to pursuing best teaching practices
- Complete required mentoring activities



Program Resources

District will provide:

- Program director professional development
- Administrator training
- Mentor training and continued professional development
- Release time for mentoring activities
- Schedule flexibility for mentors and new teachers to complete mentoring activities
- Materials required for program participation



Mentor Selection

Professional Qualities of Mentors

Mentor must:

- Have three or more years of teaching experience in district
- Have received Proficient or Excellent ratings on last two performance evaluations
- Demonstrate best teaching practices in his or her teaching assignment
- Be a reflective practitioner
- Be dedicated to his or her own professional growth
- Model effective research-based teaching strategies

Personal Qualities of Mentors

Mentor must:

- Be willing to work collaboratively
- Maintain confidentiality in mentoring relationship
- Be willing to commit time to mentoring relationship
- Have the interpersonal skills of caring, kindness, and active listening
- Participate in training
- Be committed to the success of new teacher

Mentor Selection Process

- Mentor will possess professional and personal qualities listed above
- Principals will select and match mentors with new teachers in collaboration with program director
- Matches should be based on proximity, availability, and area of expertise as much as possible
- Mentors and new teachers should have common plan time, where possible
- Personalities of both mentor and new teacher should be considered



Program Activities

Before school starts:

- Principals, mentors and new teachers meet before school year to:
 - Provide new teachers with **Resource Binder or Digital Folder**
 - Tour building and community
 - Review beginning of year expectations: classroom setup, open house, etc.
 - Review available resources: copier, technology, textbooks, etc.
 - Review school & district safety & emergency plans
 - Review teacher job description and contract
 - Provide instruction about district technology & learning management system
- Train mentors
- Make arrangements to cover classrooms for observation activities
- All parties provided with mentor program goals, expectations, and resources

Expectations for 1st & 2nd year teachers with no prior experience:

- Participate in two-year program of mentoring activities
- Attend orientation and professional development before school starts
- Complete New Teacher Needs Assessment
- Meet regularly with mentor to reflect, discuss best practices, set up observations, etc.
 - Weekly during first month
 - Bi-weekly during remainder of first year
 - At least monthly during second year
- Attend monthly meetings for collaboration, support, and targeted professional development



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- Observe exemplary teachers at least once per quarter
- Participate in one observation cycle per semester
- Maintain documentation of activities
- Complete end-of-year program evaluation survey

Expectations for newly hired teachers with 3+ years of previous experience:

- Participate in one-year program of mentoring activities
- Attend orientation and professional development before school starts
- Complete New Teacher Needs Assessment
- Meet regularly with mentor to reflect, discuss best practices, set up observations, etc.
 - Bi-weekly during first quarter or trimester
 - At least monthly for remainder of school year
- Attend monthly meetings for collaboration, support, and targeted professional development
- Observe exemplary teachers as needed or requested
- Participate in observation cycles as needed or requested
- Maintain documentation of activities
- Complete end-of-year program evaluation survey



Resource Binder/Digital Folder Contents:

- School calendar
- Description of building routines
- Emergency plans
- Emergency drill procedures
- Open house dates and expectations
- List of go-to people for various situations and/or crises
- Picture directory of people in building & what they can help new teacher with
- Building schedules
- Requisition procedures
- Duty schedules & expectations
- Technology plan
- Evaluation instrument & procedures
- Course syllabi and pacing guides
- List of school resources & where to find them
- Where to find:
 - School improvement plan
 - Employee manual
 - School handbook
 - Evaluation instrument
 - Teacher contract



Suggested Meeting Topics:

- Response to intervention
- Special education referral processes
- Best teaching practices
- Classroom management
- Teacher evaluation
- Organization & time management
- Assessment
- Data gathering & interpretation
- Technology use & integration
- Legal issues in education
- Differentiated instruction
- Other topics of interest revealed by New Teacher Needs Assessment data



Formative Assessment Activities

Formative assessment activities for the new teacher include reflective activities such as mentor/new teacher conversations, pre- and post-observation cycle conferences, and mentor feedback. Mentor teachers should also work with new teachers in learning to analyze student work to determine lesson effectiveness. Based on new teacher needs, mentors should review beginning teacher lesson plans and curriculum design and delivery. Above all, mentors should focus on helping new teachers become as effective as possible in their classrooms so that student achievement is optimized.

New Teacher Needs Assessment

Each new teacher will complete the New Teacher Needs Assessment document at the beginning of the school year. This data-gathering tool will help inform professional development choices.

Contact Log

The mentor teacher should keep a contact log of mentor/new teacher interactions and activities. Mentor may use the form included in the Appendices or the provided electronic form. New teachers should also keep track of their mentoring activities. They may use the same forms as the mentors.

Observation Cycle

An important part of formative assessment is the observation cycle. Observation cycles should occur at least once per semester for new teachers with one or two years of experience.



Newly hired teachers with three or more years of experience will complete observation cycles as agreed upon with their mentors. An observation cycle includes:

- Planning conference: Mentor meets with new teacher to determine what areas to observe.
- Classroom observation: Mentor observes classroom instruction for a pre-determined period of time and records non-evaluative data on pre-selected recording instrument.
- Reflecting conference: Mentor shares data with new teacher and the two discuss possible areas for change and/or improvement.

The mentor and new teacher may decide to use the current district evaluation instrument for observation and feedback purposes. However, they may decide to focus on one domain or parts of domains. Feedback gathered from this exercise will be kept confidential between the mentor and the new teacher.

Informal Feedback

In addition to the methods described above, mentors and new teachers may decide to use other feedback processes. Often, informal conversations, emails, or quick questions answered in passing serve effectively as feedback. Journaling, texting, and talking by phone are also forms of communication and feedback.



Program Evaluation

At the end of each school year, the collaborative leadership team will meet to evaluate mentor program effectiveness. The team should focus on available data. Mentors and new teachers should provide documentation to the team so they may determine participation levels in mentoring program activities.

In addition to contact hours recorded on mentors' contact logs, the leadership team should consider new teacher attendance at professional development sessions and student test scores. The team will also decide study survey data and other forms of feedback to judge the effectiveness of the current program.

As needs of the district grow and change, the mentoring program should also grow and change. Any changes or deletions to current policy will be collaboratively determined by team members with the goal of increasing new teacher effectiveness and retention.



General Agreements

Richland County's mentoring program embraces the following agreements:

- Mentoring program includes all newly-hired teachers, transferred teachers, and alternatively certificated teachers.
- Teachers in their first or second year of teaching will participate in mentor program activities for two years; all others will participate for one year.
- Interactions between mentors and new teachers are confidential.
- Observation documentation will never be discussed with administration or be used as part of formal evaluation procedures.
- Mentoring processes should be differentiated to meet mentor and new teacher needs.
- Mentor should focus on supporting new teacher in providing the best instruction possible.
- Mentoring activities and assignments for new teachers should be limited to those that are most immediately applicable to individual practice.
- Mentor must be available to new teacher to provide reasonable support.
- New teachers must engage as fully as possible in mentoring process.



APPENDICES



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Appendix A

Definitions

Beginning teacher: (also new teacher, mentee, protégé, or novice): a teacher entering the profession of teaching for the first time and in the first or second year of teaching. This induction program will also involve teachers who are new to the district but have teaching experience elsewhere.

Confidentiality: agreement between program participants that the mentor/new teacher relationship is a confidential one and that mentoring activities are separate from formal evaluation processes.

Formative assessment: ongoing, non-evaluative, evidence-based measurement of growth over time, involving various sources of data with the goal of informing professional development needs.

Induction: distinct phase of teacher development that occurs upon a person's entry into the profession; a period of socialization and enculturation into norms and practices of teaching profession; formal program for beginning teachers

Mentoring: one-to-one individualized support of a new teacher.



Appendix B

Activities Checklists



Mentoring Activities Checklist

Year 1

New Teacher's Name: _____

Mentor's Name: _____

School Year: _____

Orientation (Beginning of Year)

Date	Activity
	New Teacher Orientation
	Review School Improvement Plan
	Review School/District Safety Plan
	Review Teacher Evaluation Instrument & Procedures

Observation Cycle #1

Date	Activity
	Planning Conference
	Observation
	Reflecting Conference

Observation Cycle #2

Date	Activity
	Planning Conference
	Observation
	Reflecting Conference

Professional Development

Date	Activity



Mentoring Activities Checklist Year 2

New Teacher's Name: _____

Mentor's Name: _____

School Year: _____

Coaching Cycle #3

Date	Activity
	Planning Conference
	Observation
	Reflecting Conference

Coaching Cycle #4

Date	Activity
	Planning Conference
	Observation
	Reflecting Conference

Professional Development

Date	Activity



Appendix C

Classroom Observation Techniques & Instruments



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Common Observation Techniques

Selective Verbatim

The observer makes a written record of exactly what is said within a certain category. The observer and the teacher select beforehand certain kinds of verbal events to note. For example, the observer might write down teacher questions or student interactions with one another.

Verbal Flow

The observer records verbal interactions during a specified time frame in the classroom. The observer uses a seating chart and indicates verbal flow by placing arrows pointing away from the speaker and numbering interactions sequentially.

Categories of verbal interaction can also be recorded: teacher questions, student answers, teacher praise, student questions, or inappropriate comments. Verbal flow is similar to selective verbatim in that both techniques deal with verbal behavior. Selective verbatim is concerned with content while verbal flow identifies only who is communicating and perhaps what kind of communication they are engaged in.

At Task

The observer systematically notes the behavior of each student at regular intervals during the lesson. The behavior for each student is recorded in categories agreed upon by the teacher and observer in the planning conference.

The observer uses a classroom seating chart and numbers each desk with the number of times he or she plans to scan the room. The observer notes the time of each scan, looks systematically around the classroom, and records each student's behavior at that moment in time.



The observer repeats this process every 2-3 minutes during the pre-arranged observation time. A form for recording at task behaviors is included in the appendices.

Class Traffic

The class traffic technique illustrates how much and where a teacher moves during the course of a lesson. The observer notes how the teacher moves (or doesn't move) about the room during class time. The observer uses a classroom seating chart and draws arrows to represent where the teacher starts and stops during a pre-arranged time frame. The observer numbers the arrows to indicate sequence of the movement.

Interaction Analysis

Categories of verbal behavior (praise, directions, criticisms, etc.) are charted over time within a lesson. The observer and the teacher agree on a specified time within a lesson and which teacher behaviors to note. The observer plots points on a graph noting the time and the category of each interaction.

Selecting a Technique

If you're looking for:	You could use:
Involvement of students in lesson	Verbal flow, at task
Individualized instruction	Class traffic
Levels of student thinking	Selective verbatim
Problem student behavior	At task, verbal flow, selective verbatim
Amount of teacher talk	Selective verbatim



Observation Technique: At Task

Times		
1	8	15
2	9	16
3	10	17
4	11	18
5	12	19
6	13	20
7	14	

Codes
A: at task (overt)
P: at task (passive)
O: off task (overt)
T: off task (talking)
D: off task (distracted/ daydreaming)
H: Requesting or receiving teacher help

S1:		
1	8	15
2	9	16
3	10	17
4	11	18
5	12	19
6	13	20
7	14	

S2:		
1	8	15
2	9	16
3	10	17
4	11	18
5	12	19
6	13	20
7	14	

S3:		
1	8	15
2	9	16
3	10	17
4	11	18
5	12	19
6	13	20
7	14	

S4:		
1	8	15
2	9	16
3	10	17
4	11	18
5	12	19
6	13	20
7	14	

S5:		
1	8	15
2	9	16
3	10	17
4	11	18
5	12	19
6	13	20
7	14	

S6:		
1	8	15
2	9	16
3	10	17
4	11	18
5	12	19
6	13	20
7	14	

S7:		
1	8	15
2	9	16
3	10	17
4	11	18
5	12	19
6	13	20
7	14	

S8:		
1	8	15
2	9	16
3	10	17
4	11	18
5	12	19
6	13	20
7	14	

S9:		
1	8	15
2	9	16
3	10	17
4	11	18
5	12	19
6	13	20
7	14	



Observation Technique: Verbal Flow

Teacher

1. Label seating chart with student names.
2. Draw arrows to indicate interactions.
3. Number interactions to show order of occurrence.

Key:

↑ Teacher calls on or speaks to student

↓ Student responds to teacher

?↑ ?↓ Question



Appendix D

Contact Log Sheet



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Appendix E
New Teacher Needs Assessment

New Teacher Needs Assessment

Please rate each item below to indicate your level of concern about or interest in that topic at this time.

Possible Ratings

- 1 for a low level of concern or interest at this time
- 2 for a moderate level of concern or interest at this time
- 3 for a high level of concern or interest at this time

Personal

- ___ Making living arrangements
- ___ Locating gyms and recreational facilities
- ___ Getting to know people

Professional/Human Resources

- ___ Payroll, benefits, and investment information
- ___ Certification and tenure requirements
- ___ Teacher performance evaluation system
- ___ Professional development opportunities
- ___ Professional organizations

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

- ___ District and state learning standards
- ___ Planning for instruction using the SBE planning process
- ___ Building a repertoire of instructional strategies
- ___ Differentiation of instruction
- ___ Assessing student learning (formative and summative)
- ___ Using student work and achievement data to inform instruction
- ___ Going from rubrics to grades

Organizational Systems for the Classroom

- ___ Setting up the classroom
- ___ Classroom organizational systems
- ___ Organizing my time and work

Getting to Know and Working with Students

- ___ Getting to know the students
- ___ Creating a learning community
- ___ Working with students to establish norms and rules
- ___ Diagnosing student needs
- ___ Teaching diverse learners
- ___ Motivating students
- ___ Assisting students with special needs

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New Teacher Needs Assessment

Collegial Interactions and Collaboration

- Establishing a professional relationship with the administrative staff
- Working as a member of a grade level, interdisciplinary, or departmental team
- Working with my mentor
- Co-teaching and collaboration between general and special education teachers
- Working with a paraprofessional

School and School System Policies and Procedures

- Understanding my legal rights and responsibilities as a teacher
- School and district policy handbooks
- Completing administrative paperwork
- Administration of standardized achievement tests
- Obtaining instructional resources and material
- Ordering materials and supplies
- Use of district and school library, media, and technology resources

Parents and Community

- Establishing positive home contact
- Working with parents as partners
- Working with parents of special needs students
- Back-to-School Night
- Parent conferences
- Grading and reporting student learning

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