**** Guide for Initial Mentoring Conversation

**Who are we?**

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| **Conversation Agenda** | **Strategies for Conversation** | **Possible Questions** |
| 1. Take time to get to know each other and each partner’s professional history | Share the highs and lows of teaching last year.  Search for commonalities and differences in your teaching paths. | *Tell me about your teaching history –where and what have you taught prior to this year?*  *What motivated you to become a teacher?*  *What are you most passionate about as an educator?* |
| 1. Share mentoring stories and perceptions | Share your previous mentoring experiences with your mentoring partner.  Discuss perceptions of mentoring in a school context. | *What did you like about your mentoring experiences? What did you learn from those experiences? What would you like to carry forward into this relationship?*  *What might be some of the pitfalls of mentoring we would want to avoid?* |
| 1. Discuss learning interests and focus | Discuss your mentee’s career vision and hopes.  Articulate broad learning goals and the reasons they are important. | *Tell me what encouraged you to apply as a mentee to this program.*  *What do you hope to accomplish this year?*  *What are you most concerned about?* |
| 1. Determine mentoring relationship needs, expectations, and assumptions | Ask your mentoring partner what he or she wants, needs, and expects out of the relationship. | *What are your expectations for me as your mentor?*  *In what ways do you hope I can directly support you this year?*  *What would ‘success’ look like for our mentor/mentee relationship?*  *Is there anything that makes you uncomfortable about establishing this mentoring partnership?*  *How do we see the roles and responsibilities for each of us in this relationship?* |
| 1. Discuss personal and learning styles | Talk about your learning styles and preferences and how these affect the way you work. You may have data from some learning style inventory instruments such as Myers-Briggs, Multiple Intelligences, etc. | *How would you describe your learning style?*  *How might we best build on our learning styles as we work together?* |

**Guide for Initial Mentoring Conversation (cont’d)**

**How are we going to learn and work together?**

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| **Conversation Agenda** | **Purpose for Conversation** | **Possible Questions** |
| Plan logistics of meeting arrangements (e.g., when to meet, best places, electronic communication guidelines, documenting meetings, etc.) | It is important that the partnership have flexibility to fit within your busy lives, and also that there be a way to create continuity between meetings.  Establishing the logistics of when and where to meet, and how to maintain communication and continuity will lead to a more successful and committed relationship. | * *What are some ways we can best maintain communication? How often do we want to connect with each other?* * *What electronic communication will work best for us?* * *Where is the best place for us to meet and plan together?* * *What are the best times to meet?* * *How can we document our activity and goals?* |
| Discuss confidentiality | Finding agreement between you and your mentee regarding what confidentiality looks like in your partnership is critical.  Trust can easily be undone if confidentiality is breached. | * *What does confidentiality mean for each of us?* * *What are we comfortable sharing about our work with others (colleagues and administrators)?* * *What are we not comfortable sharing with others (colleagues and administrators)?* |
| Create and discuss ground rules | Establishing norms and guidelines to manage mutual expectations will minimize the likelihood of issues arising.  It also provides a means of giving ongoing feedback to one another about how things are going in the mentoring partnership. | * *What are our expectations for meeting together?* * *Is it okay to drop in on each other?* * *Are there times we want to reserve as personal time?* * *How shall we deal with cancellations of planned meeting time?* * *What process can we have in place if we come across stumbling blocks that interfere with our partnership (e.g., feeling overwhelmed by the commitments made)?* * *How might we revisit these guidelines periodically?* |
| Discuss hot buttons | Being aware of one another’s hot button issues early in the relationship helps to avoid pushing them. | * *What are the things that personally irk you? (Examples: answering your cell during our meeting time, being late, multitasking, not following through with a commitment, etc.)* |

AD:wl:tfeu