Maine Principals' Association

HELP WANTED:

Mentor/Coaches for Novice and Experienced Principals and Assistant Principals ~ 2019-2020

Free Professional Development

Overview

During the 2019-20 school year, the Maine Principals' Association (MPA) will continue to implement a mentoring/coaching program, as part of its comprehensive induction plan, for new principals, assistant principals, and CTE Directors. We have expanded the mentoring/coaching program to include experienced principals and assistant principals who have changed jobs and desire a mentor/coach.

At this time, the MPA is looking for practicing and newly retired principals, assistant principals and CTE Directors to expand the pool of mentor/coaches from all over Maine. The mentoring/coaching program includes a formal process through which mentor/coaches and protégés are screened, selected, and matched to ensure the greatest potential for developing positive relationships. Our intent is to match mentor/coaches and protégés regionally in what will be two-year formal relationships.

There is mandatory training, feedback, and continuous support for each new mentor/coach. A required orientation for those selected to be part of the mentor pool will take place on May 8, 2019 and again on July 23, 2019 at the MPA Conference Center in Augusta. To be a mentor/coach, you must attend one of the trainings. Those who are ultimately matched with protégés will receive a stipend.

Benefits to Each Mentor/Coach . . .

The MPA anticipates significant positive outcomes for each mentor/coach:

- Each mentor/coach will learn, practice, and receive feedback regarding coaching skills, including trust building, listening, questioning, problem solving, assessment, and goal setting. These skills are indeed necessary in every principal's daily work.
- Each mentor/coach will gain enhanced confidence and competence as an educational leader, including areas such as common core implementation and deeper learning.
- Professional development will be individualized and flexible to support the learning of each mentor/coach.
- Each mentor/coach will develop enhanced networks and professional relationships.
- Each mentor/coach will have the professional satisfaction that comes from a significant relationship with a protégé.
- Each mentor/coach will be paid a stipend of $1,000, which covers mileage and other expenses.

****

Expectations for Each Mentor/Coach . . .

- Each mentor/coach will have weekly contact with the protégé – by phone, e-mail, or other technology. Monthly in-person meetings are required. Each mentor/coach will visit the protégé's school (e.g., attend a faculty meeting as an observer and give feedback; go through an evaluation cycle as an observer – pre-conference, observation, and post-conference – and give feedback); review and discuss with the protégé intervention strategies based on student achievement data; and other mutually agreed upon activities that are determined by the protégé.
- Each mentor/coach will assist the protégé in the development of a written learning plan, which reflects the protégé's needs and facilitates his/her work.
- Each mentor/coach will submit a reflection regularly on work with the protégé.
- Each mentor/coach will attend required trainings and meetings at the MPA Conference Center in Augusta. This includes:

  * ***May 8, 2019*** – Orientation Option #1
    8:30 - 2:30 p.m.
  * ***July 23, 2019*** – Orientation Option #2
    8:30 - 2:30 p.m.

  School Year Dates:

  * ***September 17, 2019***
    8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., mentor/coaches and protégés

  * ***October 17, 2019***
    8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., mentor/coaches only

  * ***December 13, 2019*** (snow date—December 16)
    8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., mentor/coaches and protégés

  * ***January 13, 2020*** (snow date—January 27)
    8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., mentor/coaches only

  * ***March 13, 2020*** - - (snow date—March 16)
    8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., mentor/coaches and protégés

  * ***May 4, 2020*** - - **Year One and Year Two Cohorts**
    8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., mentor/coaches and protégés

  - Each mentor/coach will participate in one coaching session to be scheduled with the facilitator at a site to be determined by the mentor/coach and protégé.

Qualifications of Effective Mentor/Coaches . . .

- Mentor/coaches should have at least five years' experience as practicing school principals or assistant principals, and their peers and others should generally regard them as being effective.
- Mentor/coaches must demonstrate generally accepted positive leadership qualities such as: intelligence; good oral and written skills; a capacity to understand the messages of the past as a guide; acceptance of multiple alternative solutions to complex problems; and clarity of vision and the ability to share that vision with others.
- Mentor/coaches ask the right questions of beginning administrators rather than providing the right answers all the time.
- Mentor/coaches must accept an alternate way of doing things and should avoid the tendency to tell beginners that the way to do something is "The way I used to do it."
- Mentor/coaches should express the desire to see people go beyond their present levels of performance – even if it might mean that the protégés are able to do some things better than the mentors can.
- Mentor/coaches model the principles of continuous learning and reflection.
- Mentor/coaches must exhibit the awareness of the political and social realities of life in at least one school district – they must know the real way to get things done.
- In addition to the above, they typically demonstrate: enthusiasm that is sincere and convincing; the ability to communicate in sensitive ways the type of feedback that is needed regarding another person's progress towards desirable goals; the ability to listen to a colleague's ideas, doubts, and concerns; a caring attitude and belief in their colleague's potential; flexibility; and a sense of humor.
- Five important skills must be shown by mentor/coaches:
  1. Willingness to invest time and energy in the professional development of their colleagues;
  2. A strong conviction and belief that other administrators are likely to have a positive effect on the quality of schooling;
  3. Confidence in their own abilities to coach as well as lead;
  4. Possession of high standards and expectations for their own abilities and for the work of their colleagues; and
  5. A belief that mentoring/coaching is a mutually enhancing professional development opportunity in which both partners will achieve satisfaction from the relationship.

****

What Previous Mentor/Coaches Have to Say . . .

"This two-year mentoring program is really great for both parties. I am a better leader because of my learning through this process, and I believe that my protégé is as well. Being a principal is a job that is high impact and high stress, and we must support those who are willing to take on that role."

"As a retiree, having a protégé allows me to use my expertise and give back to another person just starting out."

"Having a protégé is an expanding experience. You get a peek into another school's culture, and it forces you to be reflective about your own work."

"I cannot overstate the learning I have had around being a stronger listener and understanding that supporting someone means listening and questioning and not always answering or dictating."

"I have truly enjoyed and learned from my time with other principals. It is such a wonderful cross section from different areas of the state. I always walk away with a new insight or reflection."

"I am by nature a problem solver, and this work forces me to sit back and encourage my protégé to find solutions. In fact, I got some unsolicited feedback from a colleague recently commenting on how she appreciated the fact that I listened and just didn't jump to problem solving."