



Mentorships & PLCs

Jenna Harland, Gifted Educator, Williamson County Schools

"If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else." – Booker T. Washington

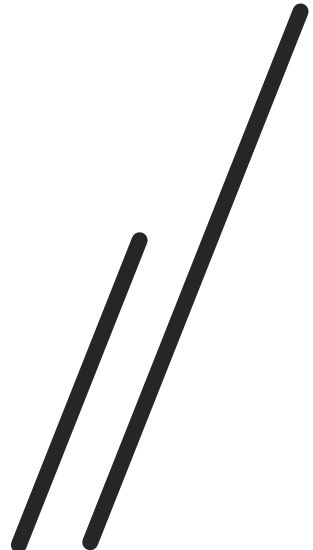
Mentorships & PLCs

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Understanding Need

While many gifted educators come to their positions through other avenues of teaching, administrators need to view them as new educators. All research regarding induction and mentoring programs applies to new gifted educators.

See research here: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/0034654311403323>

The Impact of Induction and Mentoring Programs for Beginning Teachers: A Critical Review of the Research

Richard M. Ingersoll, Michael Strong

First Published June 1, 2011 Research Article

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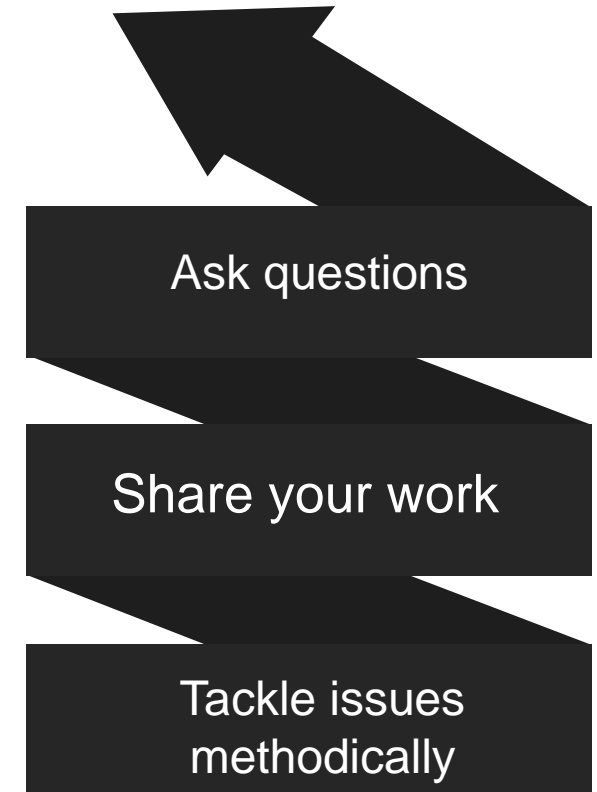
For classroom instructional practices, the majority of studies reviewed showed that beginning teachers who participated in some kind of induction performed better at various aspects of teaching, such as keeping students on task, using effective student questioning practices, adjusting classroom activities to meet students' interests, maintaining a positive classroom atmosphere, and demonstrating successful classroom management. For student achievement, almost all of the studies showed that students of beginning teachers who participated in induction had higher scores, or gains, on academic achievement tests.

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Mentorships in Practice



Mentor



Mentee

Guiding Documents

- WCS uses TWO major guiding documents for mentor/mentee meetings.
 1. A comprehensive list of topics to discuss to get the mentee acquainted with all things gifted.
 2. An overview of expectations for the year guiding the nature of the relationship and the focus each quarter.
- Though we will give you ideas, create documents that work for your district. Beware of over-creating documents. These items need to be easy to reference and use. Too many documents can be overwhelming and result in teachers tossing these aside.



Guiding Document 1– Meeting Topics

(Break these down into sub-categories as necessary)



Meeting Topics

● EdPlan

File Management

Creating a Schedule

Maintaining Logs

● Referrals

Acceleration

Collaboration with Gen. Ed/ Meeting Goals

Parent Communication

Guiding Document 2— Mentor/Mentee Expectations

(Create an explanation/definition for each section)



Expectations

1. Building the Relationship – schedule required meetings, build in time for fostering trust/comfort
2. Exchanging Information and Setting Goals – Mentor watches for readiness and introduces new information. The mentee asks questions and reviews information.
3. Working Towards Goals/Deepening the Engagement – go back and review info from beginning of year; that is an overwhelming time. Further understanding and troubleshoot problems
4. Ending the Formal Mentoring Relationship and Planning for the Future – the idea is that the relationship will continue, but the mentee will have more and more to contribute.

Practical Advice

Work with the willing.

Every year is hard, but every year you become more efficient and better with the work. It does get easier.

As a gifted teacher, your job is to stretch them above their strengths, not to remediate their weaknesses.

You are rebuilding what gifted services look like at this school – it will not happen overnight.

If it all seems confusing now, things will sort themselves out with the passage of time.

Help them feel secure in their own ability to design their program well.

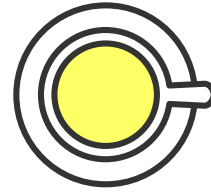
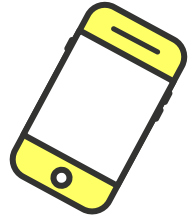
Support and just be there to help her with anything she needs help with. Don't be judgmental because we all make mistakes.

Offer emotional support- This job is overwhelming at the beginning and you don't feel like you are ever organized enough to make it through the week, month year at first. The "specifics" are learned over time, but the emotional part is huge.

Model good practices in not just teaching but also the meeting, paperwork side of the job.

Answer all of his/her questions in a timely manner and create an IEP checklist





Q: What makes the mentor program at WCS so successful?

A: “The interpersonal relationships it creates builds a strong foundation for our department.”

PLCs

Journal of Educational Change

December 2006, Volume 7, Issue 4, pp 221–258

“Professional Learning Communities: A Review of the Literature”

Louise Stoll, Ray Bolam, Agnes McMahon, Mike Wallace, Sally Thomas

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10833-006-0001-8>

Professional Learning Communities

PLCs



Someone is always there to answer, inspire, and engage when PLCs meet. Do not let gifted educators be an island!



Questions?

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Thank you!