

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

MENU OF OPTIONS – AUGUST

Personal

- Contact your Candidate at the earliest opportunity. It is best to contact them, and even meet with them, prior to the new teacher orientation or the opening of school work/planning days.
- Share your contact information with the Candidate.
- Greet your Candidate on the first day of orientation and escort them to first meetings.
- If the new teacher is moving into the area, get to know their interests and provide information about places in and around the community they may be interested in such as recreational facilities including gyms, restaurants, and parks.
- Brief the new teacher on the school staff and their responsibilities. Introduce the Candidate to the staff and key people they will be working with.
- Plan a “Get Acquainted” meeting of all new teachers and Mentors where questions can be answered “off-the-record” in an informal but professional way.

Professional

- Explain the Induction and mentoring program. Include what they can expect from you and their responsibilities as well. Create a time and day to meet. All Mentors and Candidates must meet for a minimum of one hour per week. Inquire about their goals for this year.
- Identify the Candidate’s problems, concerns and challenges that are the biggest issues for them at this point in the school year.
- Discuss professional dress.
- Go over or check for understanding with any payroll, benefits, or sick leave questions. (Examples: HR, the Principal, a new teacher’s orientation, or the School/District Handbook may have already addressed these issues.)

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

- Debrief all district and school curriculum meetings. Some terms and examples may have had no meaning for the Candidate, in any case, check for understanding by asking explicit questions of the Candidate.
- Fill in any gaps in the overview of curriculum not covered by district or school meetings.
- Locate and provide access to, either in hard copy or online, district standards, pacing guides and other curriculum documents.
- Use the pacing guide and the district standards to assist the Candidate in chunking the year.
- Do go over the Standardized Testing Process. Discuss with the Candidate how the testing relates and aligns with curriculum and instruction.

Organizational Systems

- Set up a communication system through which you can provide the Candidate organizational tips throughout the year. (Examples: card file, three-ring binder, or online communication)
- Point out the classroom organization tips.
- Explain procedures for attendance, e-mail, voice mail, etc.
- Help clean out “old” stuff in the room.
- Check classrooms for furniture and supplies.
- Collect materials needed by new teachers.
- Coordinate with department chair, grade level, or team leader to ensure that the Candidate has what everyone else has.
- Discuss and share examples of bus/hall passes, fire drill sheets, and referral sheets.
- Ensure the Candidate has an appropriate calendar. Have the Candidate fill in important dates already scheduled for the school year. (Examples: meeting dates, field trips, due dates, and/or workshops, etc.)
- Go into each other’s rooms and discuss room arrangement.

Students

- Discuss student demographics. Describe any recent changes.
- Discuss building a learning community in the classroom. Explore how to establish and implement procedures and routines with students.

Colleagues

- Work with the Principal in planning the Individual Learning Plan with your Candidate. Remind them of the Site Admin Collaboration meeting that will take place at the beginning and end of the year and their role in adding comments and suggestions for the Candidate.
- Explain to colleagues the role they can play in welcoming new teachers and helping them be successful and contributing faculty members.
- Explain the support services available and provide a list of the names of willing providers at the school and district level.
- Identify staff members who have expertise in particular areas and who would be supportive to the Candidate for the “just in time” support, if needed.

School and School System

- Using the district’s handbook as a tool, provide overview of procedures and policies.
- Provide a map or tour the buildings on campus.
- Explain to the Candidate the resources and services that will be provided by the school and/or district.
- Identify whom to call for what at the school/district level.
- Discuss and view the online website or visit the TCOE Educational Resource Services, review the process for ordering and receiving materials.

Parents and Community

- Assist in planning early home contact.
- Take a tour of the community pointing out demographics and local amenities.
- Discuss the importance of keeping parents informed about curriculum, course content, and important dates throughout the year.
- Explain how community resources including the school/business partner and other programs outside the school system can provide additional support to the teacher/school/students.
- Explain how email, as well as classroom and school web sites, is used as communication tools.

Education Specialist

- Provide an overview of the special education services offered in the school and in the district.
- Explain the referral process and pre-referral process used in the district, with details about how the process operates in the school.
- Supply a list of key personnel at the school and district, their responsibilities, and contact information for each of them.
- Explain and provide models of paperwork requirements, procedures, and time lines for child study, evaluation, and IEP's.
- Describe in a professional but truthful manner the norms of interaction between general education and special education staff members.
- Provide inventory of supplies and instructional materials available in the department and explain the process for ordering additional supplies and instructional materials.
- Assist them in accessing general education curriculum materials including both student texts and teacher's manuals.
- Discuss strategies for early contact with parents and suggest setting up meetings to introduce themselves and to establish a positive context for future interactions.
- Provide an overview of the norms and practices around curricular adaptations, inclusion, and co-teaching.
- Assist the new teachers in reviewing their caseloads and reading IEP's.
- Review accommodation forms and guide the new teachers in completing the forms.
- Discuss with the new specialist the best way to introduce themselves and their students to the general education teachers with whom they and the students will be working.
- Either provide or help the new teachers prepare a calendar of when IEP's and other important documents are due.
- Discuss role of teaching assistant, one-on-one aides, and related service providers.
- Check on their experience with and skills for working with paraprofessionals and provide guidance as appropriate.