

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### MENU OF OPTIONS – OCTOBER

---

#### Personal

- Check on balance of work and life. Reality sets in during October and the long hours of preparation and grading begin to take their toll.
- Place cartoons or inspirational quotes about school, teaching, and students in the new teachers' mailboxes, emails, or on their desks.
- Bring a brown bag lunch to share and talk about not only school but also the fall weather, sports, movies, and good books to read.
- Take a walk around the block together at lunch or after school.

#### Professional

- Preview professional development opportunities and make suggestions as appropriate.
- Ensure that the new teachers are feeling informed and ready for the first round of formal observations.

#### Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

- Now that the Candidate knows their students and their learning needs, revisit the pacing guide and corresponding lesson plans.
- Using the Continuum of Teaching Practice-Standard 5: Assessing Students for Learning assess how their classroom assessment repertoire is working.
- Discuss how the cumulative records and the student achievement data match the classroom assessment data and how they can use both sets of data to plan instruction.

#### Organizational Systems

- Review grade book and record keeping systems. Examine the efficiency and effectiveness of current review and grading of student work and the way the students and teachers use the information provided on returned papers.
- Discuss time management both at school and during the after-school hours.

#### Students

- Ask the new teachers to share stories about evidence of student learning that has been rewarding.
- Have the Candidate describe how students are becoming more comfortable with each other and with the learning process.
- Discuss concerns about students who are struggling and identify interventions that might work.

- Go over learning profiles of students identified as special education students and assist the new teachers in scaffolding instruction for those students.
- Be sure that the Candidate is comfortable contacting building and district specialists for assistance. As appropriate, have the Candidate sit in on a meeting you hold with instructional specialists or accompany Candidates to their first meetings with specialists.
- Discuss impact of Halloween, homecoming, and other special events on student learning.

## Colleagues

- Check in with other Mentors to seek and provide support for the mentoring process.
- Debrief department, grade level, team, and committee meetings. Answer questions about unknown terms or unclear processes. Be prepared to explain the rationale for or history behind comments and decisions.
- Invite the Candidate to join grade level or subject area meetings to analyze student achievement data and to discuss how to use the information to inform instructional decisions.
- Arrange a meeting of classroom teachers and the special educators who support the learning of special needs students in the classroom. Design an agenda that helps the two get to know each other on a personal level and for each to better know how to make connections between the two programs for the learners.
- Have a conversation with the Principal or other administrators to let them know the support you are providing.

## School and School System

- Explain which TV/radio station announces foggy day schedules, late openings, or school closings.
- Explain how teacher and student schedules operate when there are foggy days, other emergency late openings, or school closings.
- Discuss rationale and procedures around interims and intervention plans.
- Go over end of the grading period procedures and emphasize the importance of completing forms correctly and submitting them in a timely fashion. Explain systems that have worked for others.
- Discuss the school holiday policies with an emphasis on how Halloween is handled, class parties etc.
- Go over field trip procedures.
- Explain how book fairs are organized and why they are held in your school.

## Parents and Community

- Explain the norms and procedures for parent conferences.
- Provide appropriate assistance with parent conferences.
- Discuss the pros and cons of having student led conferences.
- Share examples of letters and other home communication about conference schedules and purposes.
- Do a room tour and help the Candidate see the classroom through the eyes of parents. Ensure that learning standards and student work dominate.

- Brainstorm ways to stay on schedule during conferences.
- Discuss what to do should the conference become confrontational.
- If a new teacher is expecting a particularly challenging conference role play the conference, and if necessary, sit in on the conference.
- Suggest that general education teachers collaborate with special educators in planning and holding parent conferences of students they both teach.

## Education Specialist

- Review first few IEPs prepared by the Candidate and provide feedback on accuracy and completeness of documents.
- Hold a planning conference for an IEP meeting, observe the IEP meeting, and provide feedback about how actual outcomes matched desired outcomes. Discuss implications for next IEP meeting.
- Facilitate the observation by the Candidate of students on their caseload in the general education setting.
- Coach the new teachers around collaboration with general education teachers in the planning and holding of parent conferences of students they both teach.