

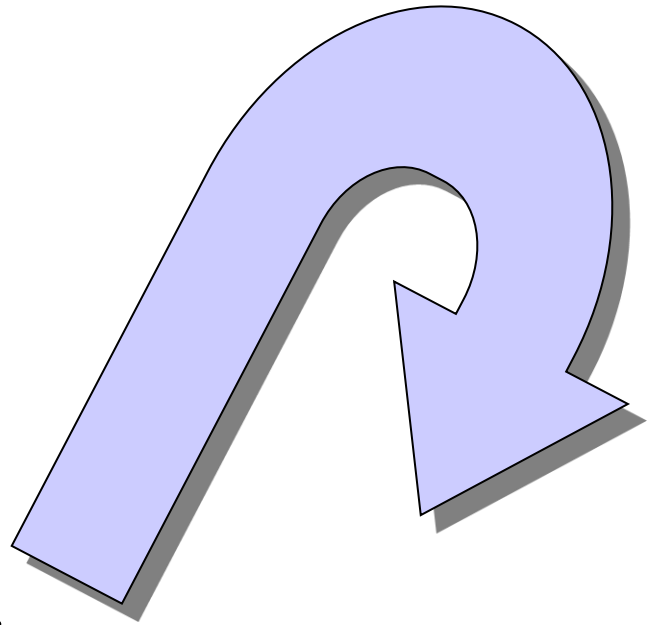
**STAR Initiative**: Responsiveness and Mutual Learning  
in Urban Education

**S**tudents

**T**eachers

**A**dministrators  
*developing*

**R**eflective Practices



Created as a cooperative endeavor between Professional Development Services, Special Education Services, Human Resource Services and Salt Lake Education Association

Revised 2017-2018

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# GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND CORE VALUES

*“For the children and youth in poverty from diverse cultural backgrounds who attend urban schools, having effective teachers is a matter of life and death”.*

- Martin Haberman

*Star Teacher of Children in Poverty*

Salt Lake City School District is committed to providing relevant and ongoing opportunities for beginning, new-to-district and provisional teachers in order to engage in mutual learning in an urban education district.

Our main core value is to create an environment where “reflective practice” is the norm and that students, teachers and administrators build a community of reflective and self-directed learners.

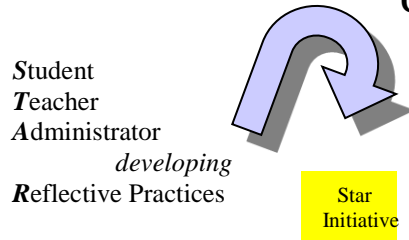
The **STAR Initiative** is specifically designed to support, assist and encourage **beginning/new-to-district/provisional and career (mentor) teachers**, so they will:

- Provide meaningful and quality education to their students
- Become reflective practitioners who assess, monitor and adjust their practice to improve student learning
- Increase their professional expertise, and
- Remain in the teaching profession

This Initiative also recognizes that support for beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers comes in a variety of forms. Key involvement for success may include: Salt Lake District office personnel, school personnel, Salt Lake Teachers Association, classified personnel and many others. In order to provide responsiveness and mutual learning for beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers, Salt Lake District is working to create a continuum of professional development that honors the work of all educators on behalf of students.

Support for beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers is built upon the premise that as adults, they are self-directed learners who have a natural, inherent potential to learn. As such, they will be able to work collaboratively with the mentor to create the kinds of learning that will improve their practice and improve student learning. Support will be individualized, based on the needs of students and teachers to improve student learning.

# STAR Initiative: Responsiveness and Mutual Learning in Urban Education



## OVERVIEW OF THE STAR INITIATIVE

Helpful information for the success of your school's ..... **STAR Initiative**

1. Schools need to provide mentors for ALL **beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers** (Utah Code Section 53A-10-108).
2. All Mentors are eligible to receive a stipend for successful completion of their responsibilities.

### STIPENDS

- ✓ \$30 for "Mentor Logs" September – May, for up to 3 new/provisional teachers = \$810
- ✓ Professional Development – 4 hours @ \$30 per hour = \$120
- ✓ TOTAL: \$930

*NOTE:* Any special circumstances that differ from the requirements require a personal conversation with Michelle Bachman, Teacher Support Coordinator.

3. Mentors can receive points for attendance at the **STAR** professional development seminars.
4. If you have any questions concerning the **STAR Initiative** please contact:

**Michelle Bachman – 801-578-8215 or [michelle.bachman@slcschools.org](mailto:michelle.bachman@slcschools.org)**



# STAR INITIATIVE GUIDELINES

## **Establishing the Initiative at the school site:**

- The principal will recruit a pool of Mentors in the spring who express interest in working with new teachers in the fall. The Principal will communicate any important information to the Mentors about Mentor responsibilities.
- Mentors should be experienced (more than 3 years), skilled teachers who can work directly with beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers. At the elementary level, the mentors should be exemplary in teaching literacy, math and English Language Learners. At the secondary level, mentors should be competent in content literacy and English Language Learners. Mentors need to be effective in assessing and monitoring student progress.

## **Prior to the beginning of school:**

- The Principal should match beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers with Mentors. At the elementary level, matches should be made between teachers on the same grade level, if possible. At middle and high schools, matches should be made between teachers with similar teaching assignments and common planning time. For new teachers in specific fields (i.e., special education, counseling) where the mentoring will encompass a broader range of topics, matches should first be considered based on comparable assignments (example: self-contained teachers with self-contained teachers).
- If there is not an appropriate match of a Mentor with the experience or background to mentor a new teacher in a specific field at the school level, the principal should contact the appropriate department at the district for suggested alternatives.
- Mentors will orient the new teachers to such things as:
  - ✓ tour of the building
  - ✓ tour of the school community
  - ✓ discussion of issues, rules, regulations, policies
  - ✓ role play of possible problems a new teacher might confront
  - ✓ learning needs of all students, especially those students at risk, with special needs and from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds
  - ✓ discussion of room arrangements
  - ✓ getting off on the right foot for the first day of school
  - ✓ meetings with the administration, guidance, library, clerical, custodial staffs
  - ✓ other activities appropriate for individual school
  - ✓ The SLCSO Teacher Evaluation System

### **During the School Year:**


- Mentors and their assigned teachers should meet on a regular basis according to guidelines.

Topics might include:

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| ✓ mentor information                | ✓ assessing student progress                               |
| ✓ curriculum design/lesson planning | ✓ multicultural/ESL issues                                 |
| ✓ classroom management              | ✓ special education topics                                 |
| ✓ parent communication              | ✓ progress reports   |
| ✓ portfolio development/ECAP        | ✓ information about professional development opportunities |

- Mentors of beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers will submit either a **Mentor Log** or a **Collaborative Reflection Log**.

### **In the Late Spring:**

- Mentors and their assigned teachers will evaluate the impact of the **STAR** Initiative through a survey designed and administered by the STAR Initiative Team. 
- Based on the Individual Spring Collaborative with their administrator, mentors and new teachers may assess their successes and challenges related to student learning and plan for the coming year.

## Responsibilities for the Principal

### General

- Become familiar with the district's **STAR** Initiative for beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers.
- Communicate to faculty about the **STAR** Initiative and the support career educators can provide.
- Identify the best mentors for new teachers (See page 10).
- Provide support to the mentors in the building. Such support might be updates on opportunities for professional development, release time for observations for the purpose of coaching (confidential not as a source of evaluation).
- Place new teachers in situations that give them a high probability of success.
- Ensure that the process of assigning students to classes gives a new teacher an appropriate group of students.
- Limit extracurricular assignments for the new teacher: Encourage career educators to fill extracurricular positions that would prove difficult for beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers.
- Share expectations for instructional practices, grading and student achievement.
- Communicate the school's culture, the history, traditions, legends and myths, heroes and heroines as well as policies and procedures (i.e. evaluation tool).
- Establish a welcoming culture for beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers.
- Identify staff in the building in addition to the mentor who can be helpful to the beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers in specific areas (i.e. computer tech).
- Spend as much time in the beginning/new-to-district/provisional teacher's classroom as possible.
- Monitor the **STAR** Initiative throughout the year.

### Guidelines for communication between principal, mentor and new teacher

- Communicates the importance of the Teacher Evaluation process (ECAP), making sure beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers have access to the Teacher Evaluation (ECAP).
- Ensure that confidentiality between mentor and new teacher(s) is observed. **Only if a mentor perceives that physical or sexual harm is being done to students will they communicate this concern.\***

\* Utah Code Section 53A-6-502

## Responsibilities for the Mentor

### General

- Improves their own professional growth and understanding in literacy and/or math, English Language Learners, and effective strategies for assessing and monitoring student progress.
- Attends required Professional Development Seminars.
- Provides support to their assigned beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers.
- Encourages beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers to attend appropriate professional development that supports and assists them.
- Maintains and disseminates **STAR** Initiative materials as needed.
- Establishes the **non-evaluative, confidential** nature of the relationship between mentors and beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers. **Only if a mentor perceives that harm is being done to students will they communicate this concern.\***
- Projects a professional image and positive role model.
- Ensures that new teachers are welcomed into the school environment (i.e. introduction to staff and community, orientation to building facilities and use of machines etc.).
- Explores with the appropriate administrator possible ways to support new teacher (i.e. extra funding, not assigning extracurricular activities etc.).

### Before the School Year Begins

- Discusses the **STAR** Initiative with the beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers.
- Orients beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers to resources available within the school and community and explains procedures for their use.
- Introduces the new teachers to the building, other teachers and staff.

### Throughout the School Year

- Meets with new teachers according to guidelines:
  - Mentors of Beginning Teachers** (zero years of experience): **Spend 4-5 hrs monthly** (fills out and turns in monthly mentor logs with beginning teachers).
  - Mentors of New-to-District Teacher** (experienced teachers): **Spend 3-4 hrs monthly** (fills out and turn in either mentor logs or collaborative reflection logs).
  - Mentors of Provisional Teachers** (2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> Year): **Spend 2-3 hours monthly** (fill out and turn in collaborative reflection logs).
- Communicates information about important local school events throughout the year and explains beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers' related responsibilities.

\*Utah Code Section 53-A-6-502



## Responsibilities for the New Teacher

### General

- Become familiar with the **STAR** Initiative.
- Attend Professional Development Seminars that support beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers.
- Be proactive in seeking support from mentor or other trusted colleague.
- Be proactive in communicating with administrator about mentoring needs or concerns.
- Take advantage of resources within district, building and community.
- Improve own professional growth and understanding in literacy and/or math, English Language Learners, and effective strategies for assessing and monitoring student progress.
- Work with mentor in developing effective skills, behaviors and attitudes that promote student learning (Mentor Log or Collaborative Reflection Log).
- Maintain an appropriate, non-evaluative and confidential relationship with mentor.

## Responsibilities for the **STAR** Initiative Team

### General

- Work closely with principal and mentors at individual schools to support their work around the **STAR** Initiative.
- Work closely with Salt Lake Teachers Association to make sure processes and procedures support distributive leadership that will then support beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers.
- Work to create a continuum of professional development opportunities that enhance growth, leadership and opportunities to improve practice for new/provisional teachers, career teachers and/or mentors.
- Establish a mechanism to review and provide on-going feedback to inform the revision of the **STAR** Initiative's goals, objectives and outcomes.
- Identify and problem-solve structural issues that limit beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers' engagement and student progress (i.e. scheduling and use of common planning time, coverage for new/provisional teachers and mentors for observation, feedback and debriefing sessions).



## CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF A MENTOR

Persons in the role of mentor should be chosen from a pool of willing volunteers rather than appointed. Selection needs to be from the submitted mentor interest form. All applicant forms will be given to the SIC for input with final decision being made by the principal. There are certain prerequisites, knowledge, skills, and attitudes mentors should possess to be effective in this role.

These include:


<p><b>Prerequisites</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Career status</li> <li>• Completed at least 3 years of successful teaching experience</li> <li>• Mentors beginning/new-to-district/provisional teachers at same grade level or subject area or a similar teaching assignment.</li> <li>• Professional Performance status on the most recent teacher evaluation instrument</li> </ul>	<p><b>Knowledge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs and concerns of new teachers</li> <li>• Adult development and learning theory</li> <li>• School and community cultures</li> <li>• Role of mentor</li> <li>• Styles of mentoring</li> <li>• Coaching and modeling</li> <li>• Reflective practice</li> <li>• Interpersonal development</li> <li>• Effective teaching practices in literacy and/or math, or content literacy</li> <li>• Effective language acquisition development of academic English for ELL students</li> <li>• Helpful relationship qualities</li> <li>• Assessing and monitoring student progress</li> </ul>
<p><b>Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem solving</li> <li>• Assessing responding to the needs and accomplishments of novice teachers</li> <li>• Data collection techniques</li> <li>• Observation and recording</li> <li>• Effective communication</li> <li>• Active listening</li> <li>• Time management</li> <li>• Reflection</li> <li>• Conflict resolution</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Give authentic feedback</li> </ul>	<p><b>Attitudes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional demeanor</li> <li>• Sensitive and genuine</li> <li>• Open-minded</li> <li>• Flexible</li> <li>• Positive and caring</li> <li>• Credible with peers</li> <li>• Trustworthy</li> <li>• Accepting and empathetic</li> <li>• Nurturing, supportive, non-competitive</li> <li>• Capable of challenging, high expectations</li> <li>• Enthusiastic</li> <li>• Confident</li> <li>• People oriented, friendly</li> <li>• Desire to mentor</li> <li>• Committed to professional growth</li> </ul>



# STAR INITIATIVE

## MENTOR INTEREST AND ASSIGNMENT

### Part A – To be filled out by Teacher

I am interested in being considered for the position of mentor for the  STAR Initiative. I understand that this role is a critical factor in the success of new teachers and experienced teachers new to Salt Lake City District.

**Directions:** Answer the following questions and forward the completed form to your principal.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Subject/Grade Level or Other** \_\_\_\_\_

**Why do you want to be a mentor? What abilities and experiences do you bring to the process of mentoring new teachers (no more than a paragraph explanation)?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Teacher's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

### Part B – To be filled out by Principal (send one copy to Professional Development)

I have assigned \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ to  
Mentor Grade level/subject/other

\_\_\_\_\_ for the  
New Teacher Grade level/subject/other

2015-2016 school year.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Principal Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**



# PROFESSIONAL AGREEMENT

## Mentor's Statement:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, would like to participate as a mentor for the school year, \_\_\_\_\_. In order to be paid as a mentor, I agree to:

- Participate in 2 mentor professional development seminars throughout the year
- Meet with the new or provisional teacher(s) according to guidelines within the STAR Initiative (page 6 of STAR Initiative)
- Read and/or respond to all e-mails and notices pertaining to mentor information or new/provisional teachers
- Hold in confidence information about the new teacher according to STAR Initiative
- Turn in all required forms (logs and survey) by due dates (December 1<sup>st</sup> and/or May 15<sup>th</sup>)
- Verify accuracy of periodic status reports (logs, attendance, survey etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mentor's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
School

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

.....

## Principal's Statement:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, the principal of the mentor teacher identified above, agree to:

- Assist the mentor in fulfilling the obligations of mentoring listed in the STAR Initiative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please send one copy to Professional Development Services. This form is the **required** agreement form for mentor payment.