Rye City School District
New Teacher / Mentor Academy
2025-2026

"…leaders are people who 'walk ahead', people genuinely committed to deep changes in themselves and in their organizations. They naturally influence others through their credibility, capability, and commitment."

-Peter Senge (The Dance of Change)

Special thanks to: La Plata R-II Schools, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Grain Valley School District, River Trails School District 26, Toms River School District, Foxborough Public Schools and Craig Dreves.

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STATEMENT of PURPOSE

The Rye City School District's New Teacher/Mentor Academy exists to establish a professional network of support which will promote the personal and professional growth and development of beginning and experienced teachers that are new to the district.

GOALS

- *To assist new teachers in classroom effectiveness and daily instruction*
- *To retain capable new teachers by ensuring their satisfaction with their teaching position*

New York State Mentoring Standards

The philosophy of the mentoring program upholds the assertion that mentoring is a crucial transition between teacher preparation and continuing professional development.

1. The mentoring program is designed as a crucial component of a comprehensive induction plan and is embedded in an integrated professional culture.
2. The mentoring program is implemented to meet NYS Teaching Standards and sustain program activities that support the development of all beginning teachers.
3. Mentors are recruited and selected through a rigorous and transparent process guided by criteria that consider the mentor candidate's commitment to the profession and teaching experience.
4. Mentoring is a professional practice with its own knowledge and research base, strategies and best practices.
5. The role of the mentor is to engage, inspire, assist, encourage, and advance the professional learning of a beginning teacher and to model professional conduct.
6. Mentors must be familiar with research based practices, data analysis, and technological advances that promote student learning and growth at the various stages of development.
7. Leadership of the mentoring program is a shared responsibility among all stakeholders.
8. Beginning teachers bring valued knowledge, skills and disposition to the new context of the classroom, school, and districts where they are first employed.
9. The mentoring program includes a comprehensive system of formative and summative assessments.

Program Overview

1. What are the basics of the mentoring program?

Who: All beginning teachers, new to the profession and/or new to the district, and leave replacements that are new to the district will receive support from an experienced mentor teacher to assist them as they begin their teaching careers.

What: The RCSD mentoring program combines school level and district level support to reduce attrition and enhance student achievement by providing dedicated, experienced teachers to support the growth and well-being of new teachers.

When: The program will begin with a 2-3 day 'Welcome Workshop' in August and continue through June of the first year, possibly continuing into the second year of teaching in the district.

Why: The 'sink or swim' or 'trial by fire' approach to new teacher induction has failed many educated and enthusiastic educators over the years. Studies have estimated that between 40% and 50% of new teachers leave within the first five years of entry into teaching. (Ingersoll, 2003)

How: Through a mix of intensive teacher welcome workshops, district level professional development meetings, and 1 to 1 teacher mentoring, we hope to dramatically improve the effectiveness and satisfaction of teachers who are new to the Rye City Schools.

New Teacher / Mentor Academy
Frequently Asked Questions

1. **How are the mentors compensated?**

Mentors will receive a stipend of $1,500 for the full mentorship program, which typically begins sometime in August and runs through the end of June.

2. **How many hours are expected of a mentor?**

Mentors should expect to spend a minimum of 30-40 hours in the program over the course of the year. There is typically some training towards the end of August and mentors should anticipate an average of 1 hour of meeting time each week. Additionally, a minimum of 3 informal classroom visits/observations should take place during the course of the year (with pre and post observation discussions/feedback). Overall, it's important to keep in mind that needs and conditions may change, and a new teacher may need more time and support, so a mentor teacher should be prepared to offer whatever help is necessary.

3. **How many teachers do we expect to hire this year? How many mentors do we need?**

The number is dependent upon the number of new hires and long term leave replacements.

4. **Will induction be conducted only for year 1, or throughout years 1-3?**

All new teachers and leave replacements in the district will be required to participate in the mentoring program for the first year. The option may be offered to teachers in their second year, if needs require it and resources allow.

5. **Do we require a portfolio for teachers to graduate / gain tenure?**

Though it is always good to have a portfolio of great lessons and student work that has been collected while in Rye, it is not a requirement of the mentor program.

6. **Do mentors apply for the position? What are the criteria for choosing them?**

Mentors do apply for the position and must complete a very streamlined application. They are chosen by the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, along with building principals. The criterion for choosing mentors is delineated in this booklet.

7. **Do mentors observe new teachers and vice versa?**

Teachers should not work in isolation. It's important for new teachers to see excellent teachers in action, as well as for mentor teachers to see the new teachers in action. For this reason, informal visits are required over the course of the year. The teacher mentors are coaches helping new teachers to improve and their observations will not be considered in any official observations by the district.

8. **Will there be a confidentiality agreement between mentors and mentees?**

Yes. Confidentiality is key to the success of the mentor program and there is an expectation that mentors will NOT speak about their mentee teachers with anyone on the staff without the mentee's expressed agreement. Mentors and mentees will sign a confidentiality agreement and any discussions or paperwork that is created via participation in this program will not be considered in the tenure granting process.

9. **Who will cover classes of mentors/mentees when they are observing other teachers?**

When possible, substitute teachers will be procured to cover classes of observing teachers. Requests should be made through AESOP following a discussion with the principal or person in charge of arranging subs.

10. **Can mentors mentor more than one teacher?**

No. Due to the time commitment and requirements of the program, only one mentor per new teacher/leave replacement will be allowed.

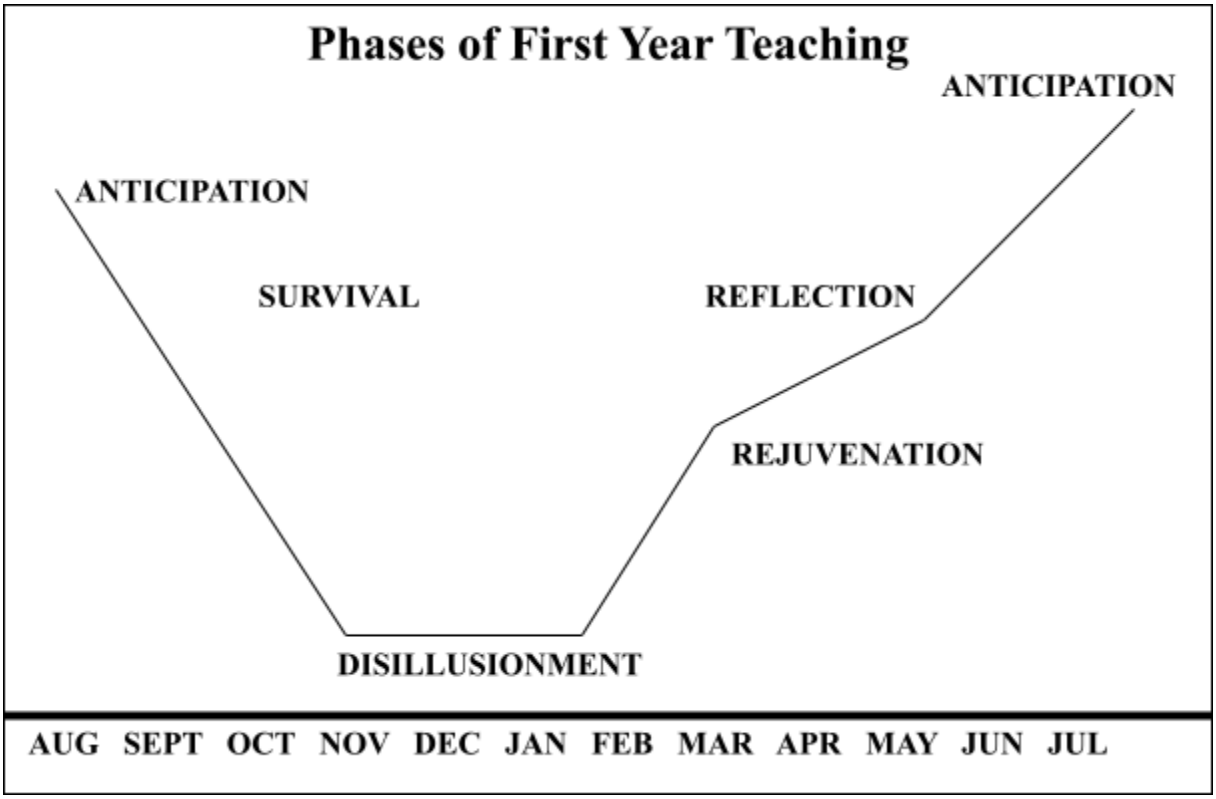
11. **What keystone texts do we use/offer as we induct new teachers?**

The 21st Century Mentor's Handbook: Creating a Culture of Learning and/or The Skillful Teacher: Building your Teaching Skills will be used at keystone texts and offered by the district to participating teachers.

PHASES OF FIRST YEAR TEACHING

(Adapted from the Office of College and Career Readiness Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)

The school year has ups and downs! In looking at the Phases of First Year Teaching, you can better understand what may be happening at various times throughout the school year. It may offer some insight as to why new teachers may be feeling the way they are. The following chart shows the phases as they occur during the year followed by a description of each phase. It is interesting to talk about these phases and how they change for a more experienced teacher (Lipton & Wellman, 2003).



Source: Lipton & Wellman (2003)

Anticipation: New teacher begins to anticipate the happenings of the first year of work. When entering the classroom, the teacher holds a commitment to make a difference. This is a very large goal, and teachers often are vague and rather idealistic about how they will accomplish this goal.

Survival: Around the middle of September and October, realities are setting in. New teachers are faced with many different problems for the first time and have no past experience to help solve them. Most teachers feel they are running to stay up with things and don't have time to reflect on their work and continue to prepare.

Disillusionment: This happens around the middle of October and runs into January. This is the "hit-the-wall" time after working nonstop since the beginning of school. This stage will vary in intensity and length. Novice teachers begin to second-guess their abilities, commitment, and worth in the teaching field. Teachers may get sick during this time because of fatigue. Many events are occurring during this time such as back-to-school night, their evaluation with their administrator, and meeting parents through conferences, etc. This phase is usually the toughest challenge to overcome.

The mentor can share materials and offer tips for managing this phase. Support the mentee in examining what has been accomplished and what can be given up as unnecessary or ineffective routines. Acknowledge the mentee's feelings of inadequacy and do not diminish them by suggesting that these feelings will just go away.

Rejuvenation: A winter break will mark a transition in the pace of the school year. Being with family and friends over the break helps the teacher become grounded again. Many times, there will be a clearer understanding of the realities of the classroom and new teachers will begin to sense their accomplishments thus far. This phase will last into spring. There will be a sense of urgency as the year is coming to the end, that things must be accomplished.

Reflection: The last weeks of the first year are good for reflecting and taking stock in their work. Mentors are essential in helping new teachers remember how far they have come and what they have learned, what they would modify and what would be set aside.

MENTOR HANDBOOK

Rye City School District
Teacher Mentor Application

Name:
Position:
Supervisor:
Program/Grade Level:
School / Location:
Number of years of classroom teaching experience:
Permanent Certification - YES / NO (circle one)
Certification area(s)
Major undergraduate subject area:
Major graduate school subject area:

Why do you want to become a mentor?

List any professional development activities in which you have participated in the past 3 years. (Include coursework, workshops, conferences, special training, etc.)

What special skills and/or interests do you have that would be beneficial to your mentee or to the mentor/mentee process?

(Continued)

Self-Assessment

There is no single 'ideal profile', but staff members who possess some of the qualities below are likely to be excellent mentors. Please reflect on the following questions and answer honestly. Circle the answer that best applies to you.

1. I am a good listener and respect my colleagues.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. I am sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. I am confident and secure in my knowledge of the field and make an effort to remain up-to-date.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. I want to contribute to the professional development of others and to share what I have learned.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. I am able to support and help without smothering, parenting or taking charge.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. I set high standards for myself and my students.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. I use a variety of teaching methods and try to match them to students' needs.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

8. Others look to me for information about my subject matter or educational strategies.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Please include one letter of recommendation from a supervisor or colleague that speaks about why you'd be a great mentor (an e-mail to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment will also suffice).

SAMPLE LETTER TO MENTORS
Rye City School District
Rye, New York 10580

Date

Name
Address

Dear _____,

Thank you for your willingness to serve as a mentor in the Rye City School District New Teacher Academy / Mentor Program for the 2024-2025 school year. Your position as a mentor is very important to the newly hired faculty of the Rye City Schools. I hope you will find the experience professionally stimulating and rewarding. The Mentor Handbook will be mailed to you in several weeks.

You will be required to meet with the Mentor Program Coordinator and district staff for 3 hours in late August during a Mentor Training Workshop. You will also be required to meet with your mentee for approximately one hour per week during the school year, as well as observe and be observed during informal teacher visits throughout the year. Furthermore, you will be required to keep a log of your time and submit that log to the Mentor Coordinator by June 15th, 2026.

Recognizing that a positive mentorship experience assists in the overall success of the new employee, the district values the time, effort and professionalism put forth by the mentor. A stipend of $1,500 will be afforded to district appointed mentors. While there is no "exact" time commitment, the general expectation is that the experience will average approximately 30-40 hours of contact time in weekly mentor meetings, teacher visits and mentor training.

The Mentor Training workshop will be held on _____. Following that training, we will hold the New Teacher Welcome Luncheon and you are welcome to attend. Please bring your mentor handbook to this meeting.

We look forward to working with you during the coming months. Enjoy the remainder of the summer!

Sincerely,
Name

Mentor Coordinator
Mentee: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

MENTORING
What It Takes

Achieving the goals of the mentoring program requires that the mentor perform a variety of functions. These functions range from serving as a role model in the full scope of daily professional activities to developing specific skills such as classroom observation. The following diagram portrays the range of mentor functions.

Mentor Functions

Informal Contact
Assist with Professional Development Plan
Role Modeling
MENTOR
Observation & Feedback
Direct Assistance
Demonstration

The Mentor Role

Responsibilities:

As a mentor you will agree to:

- Participate in mentor training and follow up mentor institutes (at least one 3-hour session in late August and another session in September or October).
- Have weekly contact with your mentee, both formally and informally.
- Arrange for your mentee to visit different teachers' classes.
- Demonstrate lessons for your mentee.
- Observe your mentee's teaching and provide feedback.
- Be a role model in all aspects of professionalism.
- Develop your skills as a mentor as well as a teacher.
- Support and counsel your mentee, providing perspective when needed.
- Model and encourage reflection after lessons.
- Complete and sign a mentor log, confidentiality agreement, and other documentation as necessary.
- Submit an evaluation form of the mentor program to the Mentor Coordinator by June 15.
- Read and utilize the Mentor handbook as needed.

Qualifications:

It takes a special person to be a good mentor. Maturity, self-assurance, patience, and confidence in your knowledge and ability are prerequisites for this important undertaking. More specifically, a good mentor is a teacher who:

- Is a skillful teacher
- Is able to transmit effective teaching strategies
- Has a thorough command of the curriculum being taught
- Is a good listener
- Can communicate openly with the beginning teacher
- Is sensitive to the needs of the beginning teacher
- Understands that teachers may be effective using a variety of styles and is careful not to be overly judgmental

Mentor Selection

Experienced teachers that have demonstrated success in the classroom, who are open to continued training and who have a positive attitude toward the district and mentoring will be recruited as mentor teachers. Ideally, a mentor would be a faculty member with certification and experience in the same area as the beginning teacher or one who teaches at the same grade level as the beginning teacher.

Mentors will be chosen by a mentor committee consisting of the building principal, assistant principal and the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. They are responsible for choosing qualified mentor teachers.

In certain cases, it may be advisable to reassign mentor teachers. Major personality differences or disagreements between a new teacher and mentor warrant reassignment. In such cases, the mentor committee will work together with the teachers involved to protect the dignity of those involved.

GUIDELINES FOR MENTOR SELECTION			
Criteria	Meets Standard	Above Standard	Exemplary
Involvement in professional development	Meets district requirements	Continually current on educational issues	Continually current on education issues and shares knowledge with others
Proximity to new teacher	Same district	Same building	Same building, common planning time
Attitude toward teaching	Positive	Positive leader in building and/or district	Positive attitude toward learning, teaching students and guiding a new teacher in a caring, supportive way
Commitment to mentoring role	Available only during school hours	Available as needed	Willing to commit as much time and effort as needed
Compatibility with new teacher	Close to same grade level/subject area	Same grade level/subject area	Same grade level/subject area, along with shared beliefs and philosophies of teaching
Participation in the education profession	Serves on local committees	Serves on local, state, and/or national committees	Active participant in local, state and/or national committees

MIMINUM Mentor Selection Criteria:

- Must be a tenured teacher in the Rye City Schools.
- Must complete an application including a letter of recommendation.
- Must be willing to adhere to program guidelines and attend mentor institutes.

Characteristics of Effective Mentors

- Committed and willing to serve as a mentor
- Approachable
- Discrete, **confidential**, and astute in what is said and not said
- Dedicated, enthusiastic, experienced, effective, and reflective
- Able to anticipate problems and prepare solutions in advance
- Sensitive to the evolving developmental needs, feelings, and skills of others
- Honest, positive, patient, encouraging, and helpful toward educators new to the Rye City Schools
- Committed to the success of his or her mentee
- Nurturing, caring, and accepting of the mentee's individuality
- Excellent role model as a professional educator
- Emotionally stable, trustworthy, reliable, and self-confident
- Continual learner, open to the views and feedback of others
- Team-oriented, views diversity as a strength
- Adept at achieving balance between maintaining relationships and accomplishing tasks
- Knowledgeable about the district and its culture, mission, and values
- Have a good sense of humor
- Flexible and non-judgmental
- Communicates optimism and understanding

Adapted from: Sweeny, B. (2001).*Leading Teacher Induction and Mentoring Program.* p. 38.

Arlington Heights, IL: Skylight Training and Publishing.

Expectations of the Mentor Teacher

- Adhere to the requirements and expectations of the Board adopted and State approved Mentor Program
- Create a context in which the mentee has the opportunity to succeed
- Provide the mentee with timely help and support for curricular, instructional and classroom related issues
- Provide the mentee with on-going support and assistance throughout the mentee's first year, but be available even beyond that
- Serve as a guide, supporter, friend, advocate, and role model for the mentee
- Develop trust with the mentee
- Communicate expectations and objectives for the mentee at the start of the mentoring relationship
- Allow the mentee to develop his or her own teaching style
- Review the district's policies and procedures with the mentee
- Arrange for release time to observe the mentee two to three times a year
- Arrange for introductions to other staff members and school personnel
- **Maintain confidentiality**
- Include the mentee in social interactions
- Encourage the mentee to implement a variety of curricular, teaching, and assessment strategies
- Model instruction that is differentiated for students with varying needs
- Create a schedule that ensures weekly communication with the mentee
- Model effective interpersonal communication skills (in parent conferences, with administration and other faculty, and with students)
- Be aware of what is going on in the mentee's classroom
- Provide helpful feedback to the mentee on their classroom interactions and teaching strategies, following an observation of each lesson
- Offer suggestions in areas requested by the mentee or refer them to others who can
- Share curricular materials, resources, etc.
- Serve as an advocate when issues or concerns become problematic

- Provide information about district assessments, as well as state and national standardized testing
- Provide assistance in entering data and interventions highlighting what can and cannot be entered if the student has an IEP or is identified as a special education student
- Keep a journal of meetings with mentees, the items discussed, and the length of each meeting
- Provide mentee with expectations for open house and other special activities and school functions
- Assist mentee in providing meaningful alternatives for students who display learning/emotional difficulties
- Encourage the mentee to become actively involved in district/school professional activities and committees
- Review all emergency drill procedures

Signed: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

MENTORS OBSERVE, BUT DO NOT FORMALLY EVALUATE NEW TEACHERS! CONFIDENTIALITY IS CRITICAL TO THE PROGRAM.

The mentor's feedback to the mentee is always in strict confidence. The mentor is not part of the district's system of teacher evaluation, nor may the mentor discuss the performance of the beginning teacher with other staff. No administrator may ask for, or demand, any of your confidential verbal or written correspondence.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read the confidentiality agreement above and agree to adhere to it.

Signed: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Mentor Training

Why is it that a teacher can be comfortable teaching students but not peers? The key is having the necessary skills, defining the role and knowing the expectations. The mentor training framework areas are the key to successful implementation and practice. Evaluation and support are essential for high-quality, ongoing staff development training.

Thorough and consistent development of mentor teachers is important to the success of the program.

- ✔ The roles and responsibilities of the new teachers' professional development team: the new teacher, the mentor teacher, the supervisor (typically the building principal), and if applicable, the higher education representative
- ✔ Coaching and counseling techniques
- ✔ The format and content of the professional development plan
- ✔ Teacher evaluation, content, and process
- ✔ Problem-solving strategies
- ✔ Listening and inquiry skills
- ✔ Resources available to beginning teachers at the district, higher education, regional, and state levels
- ✔ Peer coaching
- ✔ Current theories and models of instruction and classroom management

Mentor Rules and Responsibilities

Imagine this scenario: Feeling isolated, a new teacher risks sharing his fears with a mentor. Later, the new teacher overhears his problem being discussed by colleagues. He loses faith in his peers, and his isolation and fear increase.

Giving time to students is a constant throughout a teacher's day. Mentors also must be willing to give time to new teachers. Taking time to listen and understand a new teacher's experiences and problems builds professional respect and leads to the sort of dialogue needed for professional growth. Many mentors say that they aren't sure when a new teacher needs help. The solution lies in establishing open lines of communication.

The mentor's role and responsibilities include:

- ✔ Helping new teacher prepare for the start of school by providing curriculum guides, previous teacher's files, materials, and human resources
- ✔ Regular initiation of contact with the new teacher to discuss specific topics that have been discussed
- ✔ Available to listen and answer questions
- ✔ Develop strong professional relationship with new teacher, based on mutual respect and trust
- ✔ Maintain confidentiality at all times and reinforce trust
- ✔ Assist in developing, reviewing, and revising professional development plan, encouraging growth and career advancement
- ✔ Continually discuss policies, rules, and cultural norms

Mentor Logs

Mentor Logs

The Mentor's Log, a written record of assistance received, is a necessary tool for keeping a record of interactions and growth.

The log should include:

- ✔ The date of each interaction. Mentors should make weekly entries summarizing informal interactions, using their own judgment to decide if an interaction is significant enough to warrant a separate entry.
- ✔ Identify the activity. (Informal Conference, Formal Conference, Demonstration Lesson /Modeling Lesson, Informal Observation, Other)
- ✔ Briefly describe what transpired. Note suggestions offered and the subject of dialogue or discussion. Be discreet—do not include confidential information.

Mentor / Mentee Contact Log

Date	Brief Description of Activity or Discussion	Outcome / Learning / Growth	Length of Meeting

Suggested Calendar for Mentor/ Beginning Teacher Activities

August

___ 1. Attend the building principal's meeting for new teachers
___ 2. Introduce new teacher to faculty and staff
___ 3. Review building policies, procedures, handbook, and discipline policies
___ 4. Identify professional organizations
___ 5. Look over a lesson plan
___ 6. Discuss preparation for a substitute
___ 7. Discuss parent/teacher communication
___ 8. Discuss faculty meetings and other meeting requirements
___ 9. Discuss obtaining supplies and materials
___ 10. Discuss school policies regarding holiday events and activities
___ 11. Provide instruction for any office copiers, etc.
___ 12. Discuss Parent/Teacher Open House
___ 13. Other _____

September

___ 1. Discuss how to set up Gradebook / access teacher hard drives / Google Accounts
___ 2. Discuss extra-curricular activities and supervision policies
___ 3. Discuss grading policies, deficiency notices, and quarterly grades
___ 4. Discuss procedures for school closings (bad weather)
___ 5. Review safety drills
___ 6. Prepare Pre-Tests
___ 7. Review student handbook
___ 8. Other _____

October

___ 1. End of first quarter grading period procedures
___ 2. Prepare for Parent-Teacher Conferences
___ 3. Discuss Maintaining Discipline
___ 4. Mentor/New Teacher Observations
___ 5. Classroom Management
___ 6. Other _____

November

___ 1. Keeping records
___ 2. Professional development opportunities and procedures
___ 3. Curriculum/lesson plan review
___ 4. Building events/activities
___ 5. Observe a teacher other than mentor
___ 6. Mid-term grade reports
___ 7. Other _____

December

___ 1. School holiday activities
___ 2. End of first semester—review report card procedure and comments
___ 3. Review Response to Intervention procedures
___ 4. Student assistance procedures
___ 5. Other _____

January

___ 1. Review snow day policies
___ 2. Continue documenting PD hours for certification requirements
___ 3. Other _____

February

___ 1. Curriculum review, planning for next year
___ 2. Building events
___ 3. Mid-term grade reports
___ 4. Preparing for State tests
___ 5. Other _____

March

___ 1. Teacher observations
___ 2. Preparing for State tests
___ 3. Parent/Teacher Conferences
___ 4. Contract information
___ 5. Other _____

April

___ 1. Review TESTING POLICIES
___ 2. State test procedures
___ 3. Start to prepare for post tests
___ 4. Other _____

May

___ 1.State Tests
___ 2.Post Tests
___ 3.Inputting data into Gradebook
___ 4.Placement for next year
___ 5.Other _____

June

___ 1. Classroom inventory
___ 2. End of year procedures and activities
___ 3. Check-out procedure
___ 4. Review year
___ 5. Questions/Concerns

Was this mentoring calendar helpful ? Yes No (circle one)

Did it meet your needs? Yes No (circle one)

What was the most beneficial?

Do you have suggestions for improvement?

We certify that we discussed the above topics within a timely manner and to the best of our ability.

_____ _____
New Teacher Signature Mentor Signature

Deadly Sins of Mentoring

Neglect

"For the relationship to work, you have to commit the time."

Leaks

"Nothing kills the trust in a mentoring relationship faster than a breach of confidence."

PC [politically correct] Faux Pas

"You need to pick up on cultural and gender differences. If you're paired with someone who differs from you in either race or gender, or both, be sensitive to these differences."

--Sandy Sarvis, Fannie Mae

Informal Contact

The mentor should often meet informally with the beginning teacher to discuss such day-to-day concerns as:

- Taking attendance
- Understanding school discipline policies
- Acquiring supplies and materials
- Understanding contracts and benefits
- Planning classroom instruction
- Coping with daily problems

Role Modeling

The mentor teacher becomes a role model:

- In relations with colleagues, students, parents, and others
- By demonstrating a commitment to student growth and development
- By demonstrating exemplary skills in the classroom
- In collaborative endeavors with other professionals
- In work habits
- By modeling a professional growth commitment; having a personal and professional development plan
- By active involvement in professional activities and professional organizations
- By seeking knowledge of trends in education, including materials, research, and methodology
- By expressing a positive set of values and beliefs concerning teaching as a career
- By being a facilitator of change and improvement

Direct Assistance

Mentors can directly assist their mentee by:

- Helping the mentee organize, manage materials, and maintain a record keeping system
- Helping the mentee to understand the written and unwritten rules and norms in the school and community
- Helping the mentee develop a classroom management system
- Modeling and/or suggesting techniques for conferencing with parents
- Acting as a confidant for the mentee to express personal/professional concerns
- Modeling effective teaching strategies
- Helping the mentee diagnose students' learning styles and modify teaching strategies to meet all students' needs
- Bringing and sharing new methods, materials, and resources to the attention of the mentee and providing assistance in their implementation
- Conferring with the mentee regarding effective ways of meeting student learning objectives and district instructional goals
- Facilitate professional growth through observation, feedback and provide notification of quality workshops
- Assist the mentee in understanding and implementing the district's curriculum

Informal Teacher Visits / Observation

Recommended Procedure

When scheduling teacher visits, the following procedure is recommended:

1. Pre-Conference The mentor and mentee determine the goal of the demonstration observation and what the mentee/mentor should observe and record.

2. Demonstration/Observation The mentor/mentee demonstrates the pre-established lesson at the scheduled time, while the other observes.

3. Post-Conference The mentor and mentee reflect and analyze what was accomplished by the demonstration and make plans for (a) the mentee to practice the observed skill(s), and/or (b) additional observations in the mentor teacher's classroom.

Teacher visits and observations should be aligned, as much as possible, with the Danielson Framework that is used in Rye. Both teachers should review the Danielson Framework and use the district's standards/expectations as a guideline. It is useful to review the framework and think about how each standard might look in the classroom.

Teacher visits are to be held a minimum of three times. The schedule should be:

September-October	**Mentee observes mentor**
Nov/Dec	**Mentee observes mentor**
January	**Mentor observes mentee**

Further observations can/should occur as needed.

*If a substitute is desired, please contact your building principal.

Suggested Mentor Activities

Building Tour:

<u>School layout & important places</u>

- Washrooms
- Lounge
- Office
- Supply room
- Custodian
- Learning Resource Center & AV equipment
- Teacher parking
- Room location for specialists: nurse, social worker, psychologist, gifted coordinator, resource, ESL, and music/art/P.E.

Location of important places outside of school:

- The Rye Free Reading Room
- Central Administration, Milton, Osborn, Midland Elementary Schools, and RMS/RHS
- Downtown Rye / Coffee Shops / Good Lunch Spots
- Rye Nature Center

Building Procedures:

- Hours for teachers, building use other times
- Extra duties, bus, clubs, activities, chaperoning
- Attendance – AESOP
- Mylearningplan.com & IEP DIRECT

- Movement of children, entry/exit from building, washroom, lunch
- Student and teacher “dress code”
- Problem Solving process/referral
- Fire-disaster drills
- Lunch supervision, eating arrangements
- Homework, testing policies
- Student accidents, emergencies
- Pullout programs and the need for flexibility
- Sunshine club (if one exists)

Access to Resources:

- District e-mail and teacher webpages
- Classroom and teaching supply requisitions, budget process
- Equipment requests
- Computer access for teacher use, for student use / Google Calendar
- Shared equipment and materials
- Weekly grade level team planning

Student Discipline:

- Student Code of Conduct
- Behavior expectations for hallway, lunch, washroom, playground
- Establishing and enforcing classroom behavior expectations & routines
- Share strategies that have been successful with students
- Consequences for extreme behavior problems; working with the parents; and referrals to the School Problem Solving Teams
- Expected staff supervision outside of classroom

Rye Teacher’s Association

- Sick days / contractual days off
- Contract
- Dues/fair-share
- Building representatives
- General meetings

- Association functions

Special Education

- IEPs / 504 plans
- Child study teams (CST)

(Optional) INFORMAL Observation Notes Form (for Mentors)

(To be used for discussion purposes only)

Beginning the Lesson:

	I saw	I heard	I think
Gain Attention State Objective – (What the student will know or be able to do after the lesson) Establish Purpose of the Lesson			

Other Comments:

Middle of the Lesson:

	I saw	I heard	I think
Input: Demonstrates the ability to present the content through a variety of instructional strategies such as lecture, discussion, group work, etc; demonstrates the ability to sequence the content logically			
Modeling: Demonstrates the ability to model classroom behaviors, for example, using technically correct written and			

oral language, courtesy, listening skills, and acceptance	
Checking for Understanding: Demonstrates the ability to monitor student understanding by seeking a variety of responses from different students	

Other Comments:

End the Lesson:

	I saw	I heard	I think
Closure: Make sure students understand the concepts taught			
Independent Practice			
Follow-up Assignments/ Homework			

Other Comments:

PLEASE REMEMBER TO REFRAIN FROM PASSING JUDGMENT…

THESE DOCUMENTS *MAY* BE DESTROYED AFTER THE POST CONFERENCE, OR THEY CAN BE TURNED OVER TO THE MENTEE.

Questions for Mentor to Reflect on While Observing a Mentee's Lesson

General Atmosphere

- Do students seem relaxed and free from stress?
- Is the classroom a beautiful place – warm, inviting, and organized?
- Is there adequate space for active students to explore, create and move around freely?
- Is the group predominantly passive or active?
- Do students seem free to approach the teacher?

Instructional Program

- Is the classroom organized to allow for individual differences in pace, learning style, and range of learning?
- Are students learning from one another – by observing, imitating, and teaching one another?
- Are many opportunities provided for learning through the senses – feeling, hearing, tasting, smelling and seeing?
- Are a variety of experiences available in the creative, intellectual, artistic and physical areas across all content areas?
- How do you see students planning and evaluating their activities?
- Are individual and small group activities encouraged?
- If appropriate, are there a variety of learning centers? What are they? What materials are in them? How are they used?

Materials and Equipment

- Is there a wide variety of materials, supplies, and equipment for students to work with which accommodates different ages, abilities, and interests?
- Are students encouraged to interact with or act upon their environment using many open-ended and self-corrective materials?
- Can students supply some of their own materials so that their interests are appreciated and incorporated into the program?
- Are students allowed to use the equipment by themselves and do they know how to properly care for it?
- Are materials organized and do they have a definite place so that students know right where to find them and can also put them away immediately after use in the appropriate place?
- Are there materials that are concrete and sensory? Especially at the primary level, can they be counted, arranged, and rearranged? Are there things that can be taken apart and put together again?

Teacher-Student

- Does the teacher circulate among the students – encouraging them, asking them individual questions, and giving each student individual attention every day?
- Did you notice students enjoying themselves as an outgrowth of success and achievement?
- Do the students understand their responsibilities and are they encouraged to be independent?
- Are suggestions made in a positive, sincere manner?
- Are the students secure in what they know and not frightened by what they do not do?
- Does the teacher provide additional time/ adequate guidance/ alternative instructional strategies to facilitate success in what is being taught?

Mentor – Mentee Post Conference Guide

Following an Observed Lesson

- Share what you heard and observed – **<u>avoid passing judgment</u>**
- Address only one or two areas of concern – not all concerns at once
- Ask guiding questions (see suggested post-conference questions along with the reflection questions) to review the Mentee's analysis of written responses to the reflection questions
- Use "I" messages (not "you" messages)
- Focus on the positive
- Review student assessment results and discuss/plans for follow-up learning activities for student(s) who did not meet the learning objective(s)
- Offer resources that will be helpful

Adapted from: Pitton, D. (2000). *Mentoring Novice Teachers.* p.43-44. Arlington Heights, IL: Skylight Training and Publishing.

Suggested Post-Conference Questions

for Guiding the Mentor's Observation of the Mentee

- What were the strengths of your lesson?
- What would you change and do differently if you were to teach the lesson again?
- Did the instructional strategies that you used accomplish the objectives?
- Did this/these instructional strategies meet the learning needs of all your students, including special education, bilingual, ESL and at-risk students?
- What challenges within the lesson did you anticipate for particular students in your class?
- I wonder what would happen if you tried _____(insert suggestion)?
- How does this (insert mentee's action) relate to (insert students' behavior)?
- How might _____ (insert mentee's action) affect _____ (insert students' behavior)?
- What can I help you with?
- What specifically would you like me to focus on when I come in next time?

Other Questions

Adapted from: Pitton, D. (2000). *Mentoring Novice Teachers.* p. 49.
Arlington Heights, IL: Skylight Training and Publishing.

Mentor's Feedback to Mentee on Classroom Management
Areas for Consideration

	Strategies observed	I heard	I wonder
Communicates clear expectations about behavior and demonstrates follow-through			
Distributes materials efficiently and demonstrates good organization skills			
Avoids unnecessary delays, interruptions, and digressions			
Manages efficient transitions			
Provides clear directions			
Clearly displays and demonstrates classroom / life rules			
Promotes on-task student behavior			
Monitors behavior throughout the room			

Establishes clear personal boundaries with students	
Intervenes appropriately when students are off-task or disruptive to the learning of others	
When appropriate, encourages the "3-Before Me" rule: 1. Ask yourself 2. Ask a learning buddy 3. Ask another learning buddy	
Establishes a supportive and non-threatening learning atmosphere	
Varies intonation when speaking with students	
Demonstrates respect toward the students when communicating with them	

MENTEE HANDBOOK

Requirements of the Mentee Program

The New Teacher Academy / Mentor Program is designed to assist new faculty (both tenure track teachers and leave replacement teachers) in learning the culture, traditions, and expectations of the Rye City Schools. It also provides a support system whereby new staff members learn to set goals that are in keeping with the Mission Statement of the Rye City Schools and the priorities of the Superintendent and district.

The required program for new faculty includes:

- A 2-3 day New Teacher Academy orientation and welcome workshop prior to the opening of school.
- 5 district wide new teacher seminars over the course of the year.
- Weekly meetings with an assigned mentor
- Conferences with the mentor coordinator when appropriate

Expectations of the Mentee

- Show your **enthusiasm**, a love for learning, and a genuine liking for young people
- Be open to developing a **trusting relationship** with the mentor
- Be open to developing a strong collaborative relationship with the grade level team members
- **Communicate** with your mentor
- **Be willing** to try new ideas and suggestions offered by your mentor and team members
- Bring to the experience a willingness to work hard
- **Get to know** the facilities, personnel, environment, and political structure of the school
- Be willing to create an interactive classroom via discussion groups, cooperative learning lessons, and by engaging students in higher-order questions, projects, and activities
- Bring to the lesson a solid knowledge base of the content
- Develop lesson plans that reflect varying formats
    - Develop flexible lesson plans that can change when schedules and student needs dictate
    - Implement a variety of assessment strategies
    - Plan lessons that engage students of varying degrees of ability
- **Provide a completed lesson plan and give it to the mentor prior to each classroom observation**
- Develop and articulate a classroom management plan
- Be aware of your own learning /teaching styles and plan for the varying learning styles of students

- Exhibit a strong presence in the classroom to capture and hold student interest
- Move about the room to facilitate learning and classroom management
- Show respect and be sensitive to various cultures within the classroom and throughout the school
- Initiate **positive** contact with student's parent/guardian via phone, e-mail or a positive letter/note about the student
- **Document all contacts** with parents/guardians
- Exhibit professionalism by volunteering and attending school functions
- Read and be clear about the information in the school and district handbooks
- Read and be clear about the procedures to follow in the event of a crisis (see the Emergency Management Handbook)
- Be supportive of the parent organization within your school
- Complete and submit appropriate discipline forms
- All written communication should be proofread by a colleague before it is sent home or out of the school
- All written communication must be approved by the school administrator prior to it going out
- Communicate regularly with all student support personnel who work with your students.

Signed: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Needs Assessment for First Year Teachers - FALL

Please choose the response for each statement that most nearly indicates your level of need for assistance in that area. Share this with your mentor at the beginning of the school year.

Possible Responses:

A. Little or no need for assistance

B. Moderate need for assistance

C. High need for assistance

D. Very high need for assistance

_____Finding out what is expected of me as an educator
_____Communicating with the principal
_____Communicating with parents
_____Organizing and managing my classroom
_____Maintaining student discipline
_____Obtaining instructional resources/materials
_____Planning for instruction
_____Managing my time
_____Diagnosing student needs
_____Evaluating student progress
_____Motivating students
_____Assisting students with special needs
_____Dealing with individual differences among students
_____Understanding the curriculum
_____Completing administrative paperwork
_____Using a variety of teaching methods
_____Facilitating group discussions
_____Grouping for instruction
_____Administering standardized tests
_____Understanding the school system's teacher-evaluation process
_____Understanding my legal rights and responsibilities
_____Dealing with stress
_____Dealing with union-related issues
_____Becoming aware of special services provided by the school district
_____Team building
_____OTHER _____

Adapted from: Gordon, S. (1991).*How to Help Beginning Teacher Succeed*. p.43.
Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Needs Assessment for First Year Teachers - SPRING

Please choose the response for each statement that most nearly indicates your level of need for assistance in that area. Share this with your mentor at the beginning of the school year.

Possible Responses:

A. Little or no need for assistance

B. Moderate need for assistance

C. High need for assistance

D. Very high need for assistance

_____Finding out what is expected of me as an educator
_____Communicating with the principal
_____Communicating with parents
_____Organizing and managing my classroom
_____Maintaining student discipline
_____Obtaining instructional resources/materials
_____Planning for instruction
_____Managing my time
_____Diagnosing student needs
_____Evaluating student progress
_____Motivating students
_____Assisting students with special needs
_____Dealing with individual differences among students
_____Understanding the curriculum
_____Completing administrative paperwork
_____Using a variety of teaching methods
_____Facilitating group discussions
_____Grouping for instruction
_____Administering standardized tests
_____Understanding the school system's teacher-evaluation process
_____Understanding my legal rights and responsibilities
_____Dealing with stress
_____Dealing with union-related issues
_____Becoming aware of special services provided by the school district
_____Team building

_____OTHER _____

Adapted from: Gordon, S. (1991).*How to Help Beginning Teacher Succeed*. p.43.
Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Getting Started

Before the Start of School

Instructional Planning

- Review district curriculum objectives
- Review the first theme/unit in the major content areas, especially math and reading at the elementary level
- Obtain teacher's edition of textbooks
- Become familiar with the district's lesson plan design (see pages 10 & 11 of this handbook)
- Write down questions you would like answered when you meet with your mentor/grade level team members
- Become familiar with district, state, and national assessment at your given grade level

First Weeks of School

Instructional Planning

- Plan and prepare instructional lessons, activities, projects, learning centers, etc. that are aligned to the district and state standards
- Prepare daily lesson plans – know your instructional objective for each lesson
- Assess if objectives of the lesson were met; identify students that did not meet the objective and plan follow-up lesson(s)
- Plan for flexible student groupings (whole group, small group, individual, one-on-one) to meet the students' instructional needs

- Be aware of the frustration level of the students during the lessons and adjust the instructional strategies if necessary
- Have resources and materials for the lessons readily available

- Develop methods for assessing and evaluating students by:
  - recording daily grades
  - observing students and recording notes on their progress and areas of challenge
  - varying the types of assessments used
  - reviewing the results of the District Assessments (reading, math and language arts) from the previous spring to determine students' strengths and weaknesses
- Develop ways to get student work home and homework returned to school; follow the grade level procedure

Managing Individual Differences

- Identify student needs and interests:
  - As a class
  - As individuals
- Develop differentiated instructional lessons and strategies for special needs students in collaboration with the special education teacher/bilingual/ESL teacher
- Develop challenging activities to meet all levels of student performance

Classroom Organization

- Plan how to handle/record daily routines and student interactions – talk with team members for specifics
- Plan management of student behavior with grade level team members

Social and Emotional Well-being of Students

- Plan management of student behavior with grade level team members
- Routinely teach, demonstrate, and encourage positive social skills
- Provide effective and engaging instruction
- Model expectations for a given assignment, social skill, etc.
- Know how to handle outside personal/family issues that students bring to the classroom or seek guidance from the social worker/building administrator
- Listen with a "protective ear" to students' conversations for issues that may raise a red flag regarding a situation at school or out-of-school
    - Remember that teachers are mandated reporters of child abuse and bullying according to NYS law.
- Observe behavioral changes such as mood and appearance in students and share concerns with building administrator(s) or social worker

Implementing Classroom Management Plan

- Review IEPs/504 Plans, etc. for supportive services for students
- Establish rules and procedures
- Reinforce positive behavior routinely
- Enforce rules and procedures consistently

School to Home Communications

- Parent Visitation – Back to School Night / Open House – follow grade level procedures
- Develop personal communication skills:
    - Oral Expression

        Be aware of your voice tone and modulation

        Use correct grammar and mechanics

        Provide clear directions

- Written Expression

    Use correct grammar and mechanics in all communications to students, parents, and colleagues

    Write in a clear and concise manner

    Use a professional yet inviting tone

    Have colleague proofread letters/notes prior to administrative approval or before sending them home with students

    Receive administrative approval on all correspondence to parents/guardians before sending it home

- Develop a descriptive rather than a judgmental communication style when communicating with students, parents, and peers
- Prepare report cards/evaluations for students – follow grade level procedures
- Work with grade level team members in preparing for parent-teacher conferences
- Maintain on-going communications with parents (phone calls, email, letters, notes, etc.) in addition to report cards
- Be certain to provide duplicate copies of school communications – especially report cards, conference progress reports, individual conferences, etc. – <u>to both parents</u> if they are divorced and it has been requested by either parent

Develop substitute teacher plans:

- <u>Ensure that lesson plans are available for substitute teachers</u>

    - you may email them, or upload them to AESOP, or call a team member and let him/her know what to leave for the substitute

- Be certain that lesson plans are detailed and complete
- Include the daily schedule for each class
- Write out special medical needs/information about any student in your class

- Be certain all materials are duplicated, ready for distribution, and easily found in your room
- Note where classroom rules and procedures are posted in the classroom; include a copy of the rules in substitute teacher folder
- Include procedures in the event of :
    - fire drills
    - evacuations
    - lockdowns
- Note where a copy of the Emergency Crisis Plan/ folder can be located
- Provide a list of your grade level team members and their room numbers
- ***Leave school completely ready for the next day in case a substitute unexpectedly would be needed***

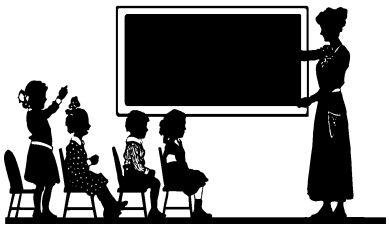
Good Classroom Management Strategies

- Be consistent
- Be fair and establish routines
- Provide clear directions
- Post procedures and rules where all can see and read

- Encourage students to assume responsibility for themselves
- Routinely teach, demonstrate, and encourage positive social skills
- Know how to handle outside baggage that students bring to the classroom
- Provide effective and engaging instruction
- Model expectations for a given assignment, social skills, etc.

Guidelines for Establishing School and Classroom Rules

- Review school-wide rules and discipline procedures
- Establish **clear** and **consistent** classroom rules within the first week of school
- Include students' input in developing the classroom rules to provide student ownership
- State classroom rules positively
- Establish rules that are developmentally appropriate for the age level you are teaching
- Post classroom rules where everybody can see and read them
- Encourage students to assume responsibility for their own actions
- Define logical and fair consequences



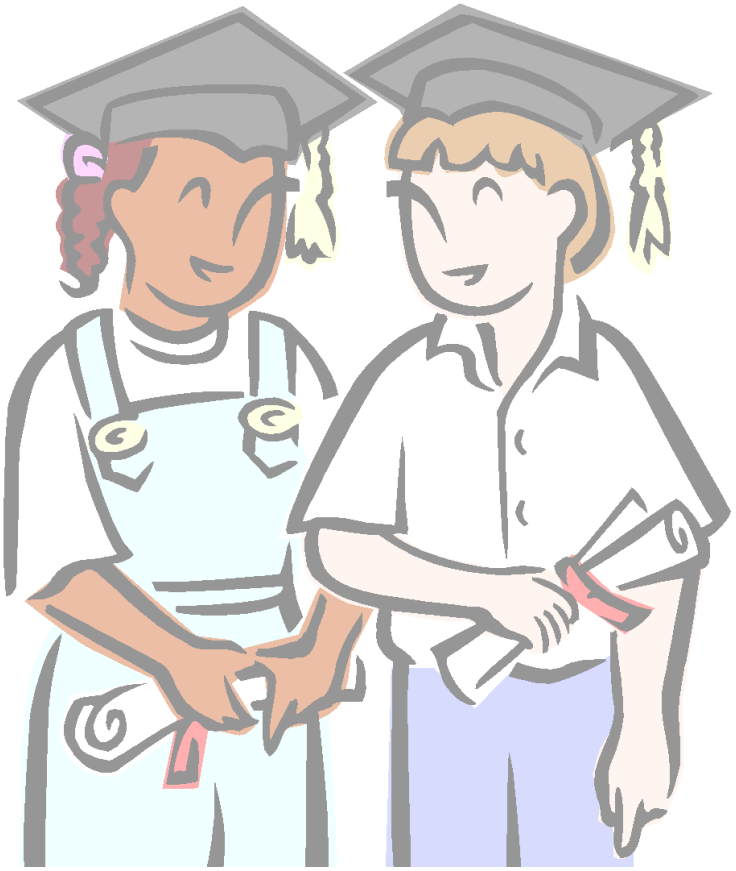
- Keep the consequences simple and appropriate for the age of your students
- Follow through with the established consequences
- Show that you are keeping track of the students' behavior and have data to back you up
- Model expected behaviors

Children Learn What They Live

If a child lives with criticism,
he/she learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility,
he/she learns to fight.

If a child lives with ridicule
criticism, he/she learns to be
shy.



If a child lives with shame,
he/she learns to feel guilty.

If a child lives with tolerance,
he/she learns to be patient.

If a child lives with
encouragement,
he/she learns confidence.

If a child lives with praise, he/she learns to appreciate.

If a child lives with fairness, he/she learns justice.

If a child lives with security, he/she learns to have faith.

If a child lives with approval, he/she learns to like him/herself.

If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, he/she learns to find love in the world.

Author Unknown