



District Mentoring Plan

2023-2024

**The Somerset Hills School District
Mentoring Plan
2023-2024**

District Profile Sheet

The district profile sheet reflects the mentoring data from the **2023-24** school year.

Name of District: **The Somerset Hills School District**

District Code: **4815** County Code: **35**

District Address: **25 Olcott Avenue
Bernardsville, NJ 07924**

Chief School Administrator: **Dr. Brian Brotschol**
Mentoring Program Contact: **Dr. Coleen Butler**

Mentoring Program Contact's Phone: **908-630-3014**

Mentoring Program Contact's E-mail: **cbutler@shsd.org**

Type of District: **K-12**

The Somerset Hills School District Mentoring Plan

Name of District: **The Somerset Hills School District** Code: **4815**

County: **Somerset** Code: **35**

School Improvement Panel Members (SciPs)

Bedwell Elementary School
Jazmyn Allen– Principal
Chris Keri- Assistant Principal
Megan Dooley-Counselor
Maureen Ziolkowski-Teacher
Kate Walden-Parent

Bernardsville Middle School
Lisa Garofalo - Principal
Keith Koellhoffer- Assistant Principal
Marcy Craver-Counselor
Liz St. Ours-Teacher
Sheela Lee-Parent

Bernards High School
Scott Neigel- Principal
Mike Corbett- Assistant Principal
Joseph Young - Teacher
Ashley Teets - Teacher
Jaclyn Pasqua - Teacher
Ayesha Failey - Parent

The Somerset Hills School District Mentoring Plan

Needs Assessment

A. Current Assessment of the Mentoring for Quality Induction Program

The Somerset Hills School District makes an ongoing effort to match mentors and novice teachers by grade level and/or subject area. Whenever possible, common planning periods are also assigned. Mentors and novice teachers meet at mutually convenient times to discuss topics such as classroom management, parent/guardian communication, conferencing, district regulations and policies, school procedures, student safety drills, curriculum, instructional strategies, student classroom and standardized assessment, lesson plans, and New Jersey Standards.

School administrators meet periodically with both the mentors and novice teachers to assess the program. Each year, novice teachers attend a two-three day new teacher orientation program. At this orientation, novice teachers learn more about the district, receive technology training, attend a building orientation, and meet with representatives from the personnel office and the business office.

New teachers attend a training institute at their school each year and monthly bi-meetings are planned. Topics for discussion at these meetings may include: observations and evaluations, instructional practices, overviews of district curriculum, school safety, expectations and procedures, student records and confidentiality, affirmative action/harassment, parent/guardian communication and conferencing. Additionally, based on a needs assessment sent to all teachers, The district offers after-school courses geared to novice teachers on a variety of topics as part of The Somerset Hills Professional Development Institute.

B. Current Needs of District Mentoring Plan

- To continue to increase the number of qualified mentors so that an adequate number of mentors are available to meet the mentoring needs at each school.
- To continue to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, that mentors and novice teachers are matched by grade level and/or subject area, district administrators should consider the need for mentoring when developing the master schedule in each school.

- To provide additional time for novice teachers to observe classes taught by their mentors, classes of teachers who demonstrate an identified area of expertise, and/or teachers who are considered master teachers.
- To develop a common planning time for mentors to meet with novice teachers.
- To ensure that all staff members in each school support novice teachers.
- To provide additional professional development courses and/or in-service programs to ensure that both mentors and novice teachers are provided opportunities to meet the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers. Topics may include the following: subject matter knowledge, human growth and development, diverse learners, instructional planning and strategies, assessment, learning environment, special needs, communication, collaboration and partnership, and professional development.
- To provide additional opportunities for novice teachers to utilize and incorporate district technology into their preparation, lessons, and communications.
- To provide novice teachers with additional information on district policies and procedures.

The Somerset Hills School District Mentoring Plan

Vision and Goals

A. Mentoring Program Vision

The Somerset Hills School District strives to hire the best qualified teachers and will provide them with a variety of opportunities for professional growth. Furthermore, the district will motivate all novice teachers in an effort for them to develop a passion for teaching by providing imaginative educational experiences within a challenging, supportive environment that prepares them to become master teachers. All novice teachers (those holding a Certificate of Eligibility, Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing, or a Standard Teacher of the Handicapped Certificate) are assigned a mentor at the beginning of the provisional year. The length of this one year mentoring program will be 30 weeks for traditional route and 34 weeks for alternate route novice teachers. These experiences include work with their mentors, colleagues and administrators. These experiences will include, graduate study (in the current collective bargaining agreement, tuition reimbursement for graduate study occurs for 12 credits per year at the Rutgers University tuition rate), attendance at conferences and workshops, participation in The Somerset Hills New Teacher Institute, participation in The Somerset Hills Professional Development Institute, and mentoring by an experienced teacher who is held in high regard by peers and administration.

B. Mentoring Program Goals

The goals of The Somerset Hills School District's Mentoring Program are as follows:

- To assist novice teachers in the performance of their duties and responsibilities.
- To provide novice teachers with the opportunity to excel by offering them opportunities for professional growth.
- To give novice teachers opportunities to gain insights into "best practices" in the field of education.
- To facilitate the transition of novice teachers into the school district and the community.

- To assist novice teachers in enhancing communication skills with students, parents/guardians, colleagues, administrators, and the community.
- To enable novice teachers to expand their knowledge of subject matter and in teaching strategies/techniques.
- To encourage novice teachers to develop an excellent rapport with all members of the school and community.
- To assist novice teachers in the development of lesson plans to maximize instructional effectiveness.
- To help novice teachers understand the New Jersey Standards and to ensure that these standards are incorporated into their lesson plans.
- To provide novice teachers with opportunities to learn more about differentiated instruction, learning styles, and multiple intelligences to meet the varied students needs in the classroom.
- To assist novice teachers in the development and implementation of effective classroom management strategies.
- To enhance novice teachers' understanding of school and district policies and procedures.

The Somerset Hills School District Mentoring Plan

Mentor Selection

A. Guidelines for Selection of Mentors

- All certificated staff members will receive information from the personnel department explaining the district's mentoring program along with who to contact to get on the mentoring list, if the staff member is interested in becoming a mentor for a novice teacher.
- The central office administration and the principals will review the applications and provide additional input. The best mentor for a novice teacher will have an understanding and connection to the novice teacher's assignment. Personnel will reach out to other teachers if additional mentors are needed.
- During the school year, if a need arises for additional mentors or whenever training sessions are offered, the list of mentor applicants may be revised.
- Each mentor will agree to attend mentor training sessions organized by the office of curriculum.

C. Criteria for Selection of Mentors

- The mentor teacher will possess a valid and current New Jersey teaching certificate.
- The mentor teacher will be a tenured teacher or will be recommended for tenure. In extenuating circumstances, a teacher with at least three years experience in another district may be approved as a mentor.
- The mentor teacher will agree to participate in sustained, ongoing mentor training.
- The mentor teacher will make a commitment to work with a novice teacher for at least one year.
- The mentor teacher will agree to maintain confidentiality for all mentor-novice teacher discussions and activities.
- The mentor teacher will agree to ongoing program evaluation and will remain committed to the goals of the district's mentoring plan.
- The mentor teacher will be well versed in "best practices" dealing with teaching strategies and techniques.
- The mentor teacher will be certified in the subject area or will have experience in teaching at the same grade level as the novice teacher whenever possible.
- The mentor teacher will be knowledgeable about the social and workplace norms of the district, board of education, and the community in general.
- The mentor teacher will possess strong interpersonal skills.
- The mentor teacher will be held in the highest regard by peers and administrators.
- The mentor teacher will be knowledgeable about the available resources and opportunities in the district and will act as a referral source for the novice teacher.
- The mentor teacher will have demonstrated exemplary command of content area knowledge and of pedagogy.

**The Somerset Hills School District
Mentoring Plan**

Roles and Responsibilities

A. Mentors

- The mentor will participate in ongoing sustained mentor training.
- The mentor will meet twice a week with the novice teacher to answer any questions, to provide ongoing support, to plan and reflect on classroom practices aligned with the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers and the New Jersey Core Standards.
- The mentor will provide opportunities for the novice teacher to observe both the mentor and other highly experienced and qualified teachers.
- The mentor will observe the novice teacher and conduct a meeting to discuss the lesson.
- The mentor will provide the novice teacher with information regarding conferences and workshops that may be valuable to the novice teacher's professional growth.
- The mentor will encourage the novice teacher to enroll in the district's professional development institute and/or in a graduate program.
- The mentor will document all mentoring activities.
- The mentor will maintain confidentiality regarding all mentor-novice teacher discussions and activities.
- The mentor teacher will review the district's observation and evaluation practices with the novice teacher.
- The mentor will assist the novice teacher in understanding all district and school policies and procedures.
- The mentor will share his/her expertise in teaching strategies and techniques with the novice teacher.

- The mentor will advise the novice teacher on ways to develop an excellent rapport with students, staff, parents/guardians, administration, and the community.
- The mentor will evaluate the district's mentoring program and make suggestions for revision or improvement.
- The mentor will establish regular conferencing times twice a week with the novice teacher to discuss needs, provide ongoing support, and plan and reflect on classroom practices aligned with the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers and the New Jersey Standards.
- The mentor will agree to the no fault exit process, which is the agreement that either participant has the option to discontinue the mentor-novice teacher relationship for any reason, expressed or not. Either participant may choose to notify the other of the desire to discontinue or to consult with the assistant superintendent to determine other options before suggesting discontinuation. There will be no blame attached to either partner in the no fault exit process.

B. Novice Teacher

- The novice teacher will be enrolled by the district in the mandated New Jersey Department of Education Provisional Teacher Program.
- The novice teacher will agree to meet with his/her mentor twice each week.
- The novice teacher will strive to grow professionally by attending conferences, workshops, and courses.
- The novice teacher will maintain confidentiality for all mentor-novice teacher activities.
- The novice teacher will document all mentoring activities.
- The novice teacher will observe other teachers and allow his/her mentor to observe his/her classes.
- The novice teacher will attend the district's new teacher institute sessions on a regular basis.

- The novice teacher will enroll in classes in the district's professional development institute.
- The novice teacher will evaluate the mentoring program and make suggestions for revision or improvement.
- The novice teacher will reflect on his/her experience as a novice teacher and offer suggestions for improvement in the mentoring program.
- The novice teacher will agree to the no fault exit process, which is the agreement that either participant has the option to discontinue the mentor-novice teacher relationship for any reason, expressed or not. Either participant may choose to notify the other of the desire to discontinue or to consult with the assistant superintendent to determine other options before suggesting discontinuation. There will be no blame attached to either partner in the no fault exit process.

The Somerset Hills School District Mentoring Plan

Professional Learning Components for Mentors

Mandated:

- Complete training prior to beginning mentoring.
- Attend meetings with the office of curriculum and other school leaders to discuss the successful mentoring of novice teachers.
- Participate in district professional learning days.
- Attend after school professional meetings that are permitted by the collective bargaining agreement.
- Meet twice each week with novice teacher.

Suggested:

- Enroll in graduate courses with the tuition reimbursement according to the collective bargaining agreement (currently up to 12 credits per year at the Rutgers University rate).
- Request to attend conferences and workshops.
- Attend professional development courses offered by the district as part of its professional development institute.
- Observe lessons taught by colleagues and novice teacher.
- Access professional journals, on-line resources, books, videos, etc.
- Serve on school and/or district committees.
- Participate in additional activities based on the individual mentor's professional needs.

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Professional Learning Components for Novice Teachers

Mandated:

- Attend the district's new teacher orientation, which is held prior to the start of the school year.
- Participate in district professional learning days.
- Enroll in graduate courses with the tuition reimbursement according to the collective bargaining agreement (currently up to 12 credits per year at the Rutgers University rate).
- Attend after school professional meetings that are permitted by the collective bargaining agreement.
- Meet twice a week with mentor teacher.
- Attend New Teacher Institute meetings.

Suggested:

- Request to attend conferences and workshops.
- Attend professional development courses offered by the district as part of its professional development institute.
- Observe lessons taught by colleagues and mentor teacher.
- Access professional journals, on-line resources, books, videos, etc.
- Serve on school and/or district committees.
- Participate in additional activities based on individual novice teacher's needs.

The Somerset Hills School District
Mentoring Plan
Mentoring Action Plan

Activity	Staff Involved	Person Responsible	Timeframe	Evaluation	Topics
Mentor Training	Mentors	Assistant Superintendent	September	Feedback by mentors	Mentoring process, best practices in mentoring, how to be a successful mentor
New Teacher Orientation	Novice Teachers	Assistant Superintendent	Late August	Evaluation form completed by attendees	District technology, benefits and payroll, building orientation
Mentor/Novice Teacher Meetings	Mentors and Novice Teachers	Mentor to arrange meetings	Meet twice weekly in September	Feedback on yearly evaluation forms	School and community, subject content, lesson plans, grading, substitute plans, New Jersey Student Learning Standards, district curriculum, classroom management, special needs and diverse student populations, student expectations, emergency plans, policies and procedures, classroom environment, safety, general questions and concerns
Mentor/Novice Teacher Meetings	Mentors and Novice Teachers	Mentor to arrange meetings	Meet twice weekly in October	Feedback on yearly evaluation forms	Large group instruction, small group instruction, one-to-one instruction, professional development, best practices in subject area, general questions and concerns
Mentor/Novice Teacher Meetings	Mentors and Novice Teachers	Mentor to arrange meetings	Meet twice weekly in November	Feedback on yearly evaluation forms	Teaching styles, observations of colleagues, student assessment, report cards, parent conference and communication, general questions and concerns
Mentor/Novice Teacher Meetings	Mentors and Novice Teachers	Mentor to arrange meetings	Meet twice weekly in December	Feedback on yearly evaluation forms	Special events, time management, general collaboration and partnership, general questions and concerns
Mentor/Novice Teacher Meetings	Mentors and Novice Teachers	Mentor to arrange meetings	Meet twice weekly in January	Feedback on yearly evaluation forms	Cultural awareness, differentiation of instruction, general questions and concerns
Mentor/Novice Teacher Meetings	Mentors and Novice Teachers	Mentor to arrange meetings	Meet twice weekly in February	Feedback on yearly evaluation forms	Multiple intelligences, learning styles, general questions and concerns
Mentor/Novice Teacher Meetings	Mentors and Novice Teachers	Mentor to arrange meetings	Meet twice weekly in March	Feedback on yearly evaluation forms	Field trips, human growth and development, standardized testing procedures, general questions and concerns

Activity	Staff Involved	Person Responsible	Timeframe	Evaluation	Topics
Mentor/Novice Teacher Meetings	Mentors and Novice Teachers	Mentor to arrange meetings	Meet twice weekly in April	Feedback on yearly evaluation forms	Ordering instructional materials, budgeting, active participation techniques, general questions and concerns.
Mentor/Novice Teacher Meetings	Mentors and Novice Teachers	Mentor to arrange meetings	Meet twice weekly in May	Feedback on yearly evaluation forms	End of school year procedures, final grades, general questions and concerns
Mentor/Novice Teacher Meetings	Mentors and Novice Teachers	Mentor to arrange meetings	Meet twice weekly in June	Feedback on yearly evaluation forms	Evaluation of mentoring program, year-end responsibilities, general questions and concerns
District Professional Learning Days	All Certified Staff	Asst Superintendent	Four days during the school year & 6 partial days	Evaluation forms after each day	Topics vary based on staff needs: content related, ELL students, evaluation and assessment, technology, special needs students, etc.
New Teacher Institute	All New Teachers	Asst Superintendent/Principals/ScIPs	Bi-Monthly during the school year	Feedback from new teachers	Possible topics: policies and procedures, affirmative action/harassment, bullying, instructional strategies and techniques, parent conferences, Middle States Accreditation, observations and evaluations
Conferences and Workshops	All Certified and Non-Certified Staff	Administrators	On-going during the school year	Feedback from staff	Various education related topics
District Professional Development Institute	All Certified Staff	Curriculum Office	Courses offered during the school year and summer	Course evaluation forms	Topics vary according to information provided on staff surveys
Graduate Level College Courses	All Certified Staff	Staff submits request to Principals and Assistant Superintendent	Varies by course	Grades on transcripts	Various education related topics
Classroom Observations	Mentors and Novice Teachers	Mentors to arrange observations/ScIPs	At least three times during the year	Observer's assessment of lesson	Subject matter, strategies and techniques, best practices, innovative ideas

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Resource Options

The following resources are available for the district's mentors and novice teachers:

- Morris Union Jointure Commission Lending Library
- The Somerset Hills Community Libraries
- The Somerset Hills School District Libraries
- Internet resources
- Colleges and universities
- Partnerships with other districts
- Conferences and workshops
- Municipal Alliance
- Somerset County resources
- Professional organizations, such as NJEA, NJTEA, AMTNJ, etc.
- Experts and consultants from colleges and universities

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Funding Resources

The following resources may provide support for the district's mentoring program:

- The Somerset Hills School District Budget
- Somerset Hills Education Foundation (SHEF) Grants (if available)
- Home School Associations
- NCLB – Title IIA
- NJEA Programs

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Program Evaluation

School Improvement Panels will give feedback on the effectiveness of the program. Mentors and novice teachers will be given the opportunity to evaluate the mentoring program. The evaluation instruments that will be used can be located in the appendix. Questionnaires will be distributed to mentors and novice teachers to ascertain their feelings and beliefs about the success of the district's mentoring program. The superintendent and the assistant superintendent will meet with district administrators to discuss the benefits of the mentoring program, as well as ways in which it can be amended for it to be improved.

Appendix

The Somerset Hills School District

Mentor Teacher Application Form

I am interested in being considered for the position of mentor teacher in the district's mentoring for quality induction program. I understand that the mentor's role is critical to the success of a novice teacher and ultimately a key factor in student performance.

Name: _____

School: _____

Please check any that apply:

____ I have been a mentor teacher.

____ I have been a cooperating teacher (for student teacher).

____ I have received mentor training from a formal course or workshop.

1. What specific personal and professional qualities would you bring to mentoring a novice teacher?

2. How are you keeping current with your own professional development? What steps are you taking to remain up to date on issues of curriculum and assessment?

3. What do you hope to gain by becoming a mentor?

Signature: _____ Date: _____

The Somerset Hills School District End of Year Questionnaire for Novice Teachers

In an effort to improve our mentoring program, we would like to gather some information from you. The responses received from both novice teachers and mentors will be shared with you in the form of aggregated data.

Please read each question carefully and respond by writing your answer in the space provided. **Return your completed questionnaire to the Assistant Superintendent's Office.** Thank you, in advance, for your candid responses!

1. If you were going to mentor a novice teacher, what would you do to build a trusting, professional relationship with him or her?

2. How did you and your mentor manage finding time to meet?

3. In a typical week, how many times did you meet with your mentor? _____ times
4. Did you meet (please check all that apply): _____ at a specified time _____ as needed _____ other (please specify):
5. How many times did you observe in your mentor's classroom during the year? _____ times
6. How many times did you observe other faculty members teaching during the year? _____ times
7. How many times did your mentor observe you teaching during the year? _____ times
8. Did you discuss these observations? If yes, were those discussions meaningful?

Open-ended Questions (Please use the reverse, if needed)

1. The biggest challenge that I faced this year was...
2. During this first year, I wish I had known...
3. One problem that I could not handle was...
4. One benefit of having a mentor was...
5. The most important thing I learned from my mentor was...
6. If I were a mentor working with a novice teacher, I would be sure to...
7. If I were to design a mentor training program, I would emphasize...

Source: Adapted from *Mentoring: A Resource and Training Guide for Educators* (4-29--4-33), by A. Newton, K. Bergstrom, N. Brennan, K. Dunne, C. Gilbert, N. Ibarguen, M. Perez-Selles, & E. Thomas, 1994, Andover, MA: The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement. Used with permission.

The Somerset Hills School District End of Year Questionnaire for Mentors

In an effort to improve our mentoring program, we would like to gather some information from you. The responses received from both novice teachers and mentors will be shared with you in the form of aggregated data.

Please read each question carefully and respond by writing your answer in the space provided. **Return your completed questionnaire to the Assistant Superintendent's Office.** Thank you, in advance, for your candid responses!

My Role as a Mentor and the Support Received from Others

1. How many years have you been a mentor? ____ years

2. What individuals, activities, or readings were most helpful in enabling you to understand your role as a mentor?
 - Individuals:

 - Activities:

 - Readings:

3. What kinds of administrative support were most valuable in helping you to fulfill your role?

4. Which types of administrative support were not as valuable?

5. How many times did you observe in your novice teacher's classroom during the year? ____ times

6. How many times did your novice teacher observe you teaching during the year? ____ times

7. To your knowledge, how many times did your novice teacher observe other faculty members teaching during the year? ____ times

8. What other resources did you guide your novice teacher to use?

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End of Year Questionnaire for Mentors**

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9. Please describe any strategies you employed to find time to meet with your novice teacher.
10. Please describe any strategies you believe the district should employ to facilitate providing time to meet with your novice teacher.
11. Please describe any strategies you used that were effective in building a collegial relationship with your novice teacher.

Open-ended Questions (Please use the reverse, if needed)

12. One real benefit of being a mentor was...
13. The biggest challenge that I had this year as a mentor was...
14. As a mentor, I wish I had known...
15. If I were to give advice to a new mentor, it would be...
16. The most important thing I learned from my novice teacher was...
17. One problem that my novice teacher had that I could not handle was...
18. If I were to design a mentor training program, I would emphasize...

Please return the completed form to the Assistant Superintendent's Office. Thank you for your assistance.

*Source: Adapted from *Mentoring: A Resource and Training Guide for Educators* (4-29--4-33), by A. Newton, K. Bergstrom, N. Brennan, K. Dunne, C. Gilbert, N. Ibarguen, M. Perez-Selles, & E. Thomas, 1994, Andover, MA: The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement. Used with permission.*

