First Year Principal Mentoring Program 2016-2017

Support for new principals to the profession is being provided by the ND LEAD Center, with assistance from the Department of Public Instruction, NDAESP, and others.

The program is designed for principals new to the profession, with no experience.

Program Description and Expectations

1. The ND LEAD Center has selected and trained a group of recently retired school leaders as mentors.

2. The expectation is that the mentor will complete two school visits. One visit will be to meet the new principal and get a sense of the school and agree on how and when they will meet for the remainder of the year. A second visit will happen later in the school year.

3. The mentor will meet almost weekly (other than vacation weeks and will be arranged between the mentor and principal) with the new principal over the phone or computer for 30-45 minutes. (The length of time may be shorter based on the needs of the new principal.) They will talk about hot topics from the week or goals that the principal is working on. Topics might include such things as:
   - Dealing with difficult staff, students, or parents
   - Teacher evaluation and observation
   - Time management issues
   - Leading meetings effectively
   - Communication skills
   - Something came up, and what do I do?
   - This didn’t go well, how might you have handled it?

4. Mentors are not meant to replace superintendents, but rather to provide additional support. Mentors will remind new principals about the importance of communication and collaboration with their superintendents.

5. Superintendents can contact mentors, but mentors will maintain a confidence between the principal and mentor, so therefore, won’t contact superintendents.

6. There will be no additional work for the new principal, other than sharing their background, goals, and plans with their mentor.

7. The program will run from August, 2016 to May, 2017.

8. A 360 Principal Survey will be provided for feedback to the new principal near the end of the first year at no cost.

9. A list of timelines for reports to state-level agencies is being developed to assist new principals.

10. The program for the most part is not funded by any outside sources, so each school district will need to pay for the mentorship. The cost is $2,500 for the school year. This will cover the mentor payments for meetings and mentor travel to the site.

11. NDAESP and NASSP have generously offered to provide support to reduce the cost of the program, and if other sources of funding are secured, they will be used also to reduce the cost of the program to school districts. Therefore, based on the total number of new principals, the cost will be less than the $2,500.

12. Payment will go to the ND LEAD Center, and LEAD will pay the mentors.

13. Schools can sign up for the principal mentoring program by contacting Jim Stenehjem at 701-258-3022 or jim.stenehjem@ndlead.org

14. For questions contact Jim Stenehjem.
Leadership & Educational Administration Development

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