

Definitions

The definitions below are a starting point for schools or districts to discuss the development of their mentor program. These definitions were referred to throughout the development of the mentor program templates.

Mentoring:

Mentoring is a process through which an experienced teacher guides a protégé to proficiency. Mentoring will:

- Focus on student achievement;
- Create intentional/purposeful reflection of practice;
- Establish a trust relationship;
- Include documented contacts of the mentor/protégé; and
- Assist and retain new teachers in the profession.

Mentoring Program:

An effective mentor program for Montana schools consists of purposeful mentor/protégé relationships established within a program that includes:

- Qualified mentors;
- Intentional structure;
- Training of mentors, ongoing training preferred; and
- Demonstrated districtwide support.

This leads to teacher retention and accelerated teacher effectiveness to improve student achievement.

Mentor:

A mentor is an experienced teacher who is recognized as an outstanding classroom teacher by administrators, other teachers and parents. A mentor has deep knowledge of the subject that they teach and a repertoire of effective classroom management strategies and instructional techniques. Ideally, a mentor is a curious person who is interested in learning from the protégé and from reflection on his/her own practice. A mentor willingly accepts the responsibility of mentoring a protégé throughout at least one school year.

Protégé:

Depending on the structure of a school or district mentor program a protégé, sometimes called a mentee, can be:

- a new educator who has recently completed preservice training and who has little or no previous paid experience as an educator;
- an educator with more than one year of paid professional education experience, but who is newly hired; or
- a veteran educator within the district who is new to the building and/or subject area.

Mentoring Program Coordinator:

Some schools or districts choose to have a Mentor Program Coordinator. This person can act as the liaison between the administration and mentoring committee responsible for communication, program promotion and paperwork. He/she monitors the mentor/protégé relationships and serves as a resource for mentors.

Mentoring Program Committee:

The mentoring program committee is comprised of building teachers and administrators with the responsibility to:

- Design district-specific program and implementation;
- Develop training for mentors and protégés;
- Recruit mentors;
- Problem solve issues that arise;
- Promote the program; and
- Monitor and evaluate program.