

RCCSD Novice Educator Development
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April/May 2018
Volume 1, Issue 6



RCCSD Novice Teacher Education

YEAR END MENTORING

The end of the year is approaching. It is likely that your novice educators are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel. The end of the year is a time for reflecting and celebrating accomplishments. As a mentor, it is a time for you to help your novice educator to acknowledge successes and set goals for the next school year.

The following list of tips has been adapted from *21st Century Mentor's Handbook: Creating a Culture for Learning* by Paula Rutherford:

- Support your novice educator through the frenzy and stress of testing including SBAC and other end of the year assessments.
- Remind your mentee that attitude is everything! If they act nervous or speak disparagingly about testing, their students will pick up on those emotions and comments.
- Encourage mentees to be positive and vocal about how well they predict their students will do on testing. Reminding students that they have worked hard to get to this point and that their teacher has faith in them can go a long way!
- Encourage your mentee to attend end-of-the-year staff social events.
- Make sure your mentee is aware of summer professional development opportunities.
- Provide strategies for staying focused and curriculum driven through the end of the school year. May and June are just as important months for learning as the rest of the school year.
- Use student work and classroom assessment results to help the novice educators plan engaging and focused end-of-the-year learning experiences.
- Assist new teachers in identifying materials they will need for next year. Help them make plans for obtaining or creating them.
- Coach your mentees in strategies for organizing and packing up their classrooms so that they can quickly and easily set them back up in the fall.
- Go over end of the year procedures for student and teacher check out.
- Should any new teachers not be rehired for the following year, respond professionally and privately. Do not discuss such matters with other staff members. Offer support to anyone being dismissed so that they can maintain their dignity and finish the school year providing as strong an instructional program as possible.

Rutherford, P. (2005). *21st Century Mentor's Handbook: Creating a Culture for Learning*. Alexandria, VA: Just Ask Publications.



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Memorial Day—May 28th
- Last Student Day—June 8th
- Last Teacher Day—June 18th (buyback day)





NOVICE TEACHER SPOTLIGHT: SAMINA MILES, YEAR THREE TEACHER, SHORTLIDGE ACADEMY

What were you like as a student?

As a student, I thoroughly enjoyed everything that school had to offer. It was essentially a safe haven that provided me with a measure of excitement. Thumbing through old report cards afforded some insight on how teachers described me. Characteristics such as “mild-mannered”, “always ready to help others”, and “a pleasure to have in class” were amongst the few. I loved reading and writing the most in school.

Who or what inspired you to be a teacher?

My love for teaching began as a child. I had acquired an old Hooked on Phonics kit and instantly fell in love. My younger sister became my first pupil, eagerly awaiting each new lesson. Writing on the chalkboard and reviewing papers held much allure. Watching one’s mind gain a better understanding of a skill is the most exhilarating thing.

“Watching one’s mind gain a better understanding of a skill is the most exhilarating thing.”

WHY DIDN'T I LEARN THIS IN COLLEGE?

PRESENTED BY RCCSD AND JUST ASK PUBLICATIONS

Join us for an end of the year celebration and professional development opportunity for teachers in RCCSD’s Mentoring Program. This workshop will focus on the following focus questions :

- What is a learning-centered environment and what do I do to create such an environment?
- How do I translate "beginning with the end in mind" into planning and pacing for the year, the unit, and the lesson?
- What are systems, procedures, and routines for organizing my professional and instructional materials, the learners, and the classroom learning environment?

Participants may count this toward three district mentoring PD requirements for the upcoming year or may choose to be paid EPER. Books and light snacks will also be provided. Registration is limited to 40 participants.

June 18th, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Where: RCCSD District Office Board Room

Register in DSC—Course #68842

What have you found to be the most rewarding part of being a teacher?

The most rewarding part of being a teacher is being able to impress upon each and every child the benefits of learning and who plays the biggest role in their learning ...themselves.

What has been the most challenging part of teaching?

The most challenging part of teaching today’s youth is derailing negative behaviors in the classroom while continuing the learning process for students who are engaged.

What makes Shortlidge Academy such a special school?

Shortlidge Academy holds a special place in my heart because it’s essentially where seasoned colleagues have assisted in molding me to my fullest potential. I was also afforded an opportunity to mold eager students in a community that mirrors my own.

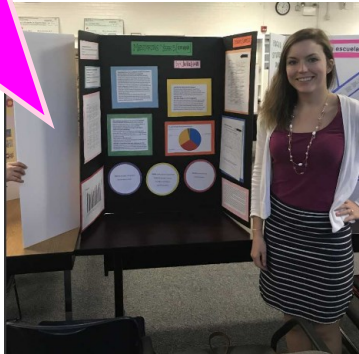
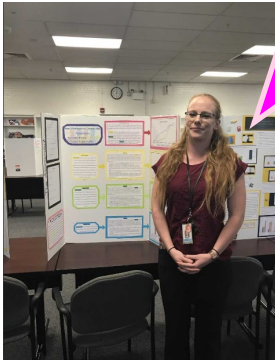
What have you gained from the mentoring program?

The mentoring program provided opportunities to really reflect on my style of teaching, and reach out to colleagues within my building.

What is one piece of advice that you would share with a new teacher?

One piece of advice I would share with a new teacher is to be vocal about any questions/concerns. Often, new teachers have the misconception that they are to bridle their classrooms and concerns alone. Recognize that you are amongst a team that has experienced, or is experiencing, something similar.





PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PRESENTATIONS: YEAR THREE

On April 30th, our Year Three mentees, presented their professional growth plans as the culminating activity for their three-year mentoring journey. The purpose of the professional growth plan is to improve the quality of instruction for the students in the RCCSD. Each plan is unique to the individual educator or specialist, and each plan is based on individual self-assessment and on feedback from administrators, supervisors, mentors, and lead mentors. The intent of this plan is to support novice educators' professional growth through identification of the goals, actions, strategies, resources, support and intended results that are of value to a growing professional. Our Year Three mentees are now eligible to move from initial licenses to continuing licenses.

Congratulations to our Year Three mentees and their mentors!

LEAD MENTORS: IMPROVING OUR PRACTICE

Lead mentors, Sara Corcoran and Patricia Dallas represented Red Clay at the Mentoring in the 21st Century workshop that was held in Alexandria, Virginia on April 18-20. During the multiple day workshop, the ladies participated in activities and discussions focused on the following questions:

- What do we need to know and be able to do to help new teachers meet district performance standards in a way that promotes student learning?
- What are the conditions we need to create to promote retention of novice teachers?



The areas of focus for the three-day institute included:

- Best practices in mentoring
- Roles and responsibilities in induction programs
- Stages of new teacher development
- Working with adult learners
- Information processing styles
- Generational differences
- Peer observation and feedback options
- Best practice in standards-based teaching and learning



Over the past two years, four Red Clay lead mentors have attended the institute. Patricia and Sara are now part of a team of lead mentors who can share their knowledge with the mentoring team as we continue to grow and improve the program. This learning opportunity was funded by the Comprehensive Induction Program grant that Red Clay received from the State of Delaware for the 2017-2018 school year.



RETIREMENT

The Office of Novice Educator Development would like to wish a very happy retirement to Mote's Lead Mentor, Richelle Pryor. We thank you for your years of service to Red Clay's novice educators and students. You will be missed!



NOVICE TEACHER SPOTLIGHT: KIM DE JONGH, FOREST OAK ELEMENTARY

Kim de Jongh, a Year Three teacher at Forest Oak Elementary, served as the coach for Forest Oak's Science Olympiad team. Mrs. de Jongh worked along side assistant coach, Ken Bardales, helping twelve students in grades four and five stretch the boundaries of STEM-related activities. The team met every Tuesday after school from December until the April 14th competition. The Forest Oak team competed against twenty other elementary teams. Mrs. de Jongh states, "It's been a pleasure to watch the students gain their "ah-ha" moments and plow through obstacles that would frustrate most adults."

The Forest Oak team had a very successful day of competing and won in several categories:

- Chopper Challenge: 1st place
- Starry Night: 2nd place
- Popsicle Catapult: 5th place
- Anatomy : 8th place
- Rock Hound: 8th place

Way to go Panthers!!



OH, BABY!

This spring, the mentoring program saw a small baby boom! Two lead mentors, Julia Morsberger, teacher at HB DuPont, and Evonne Fintzel-Whiteside, teacher at Baltz Elementary, both welcomed sons. Year Three mentee, Jennifer Tran, welcomed a daughter. All moms and babies are doing very well. Welcome to the Red Clay family, little ones!



Julia's son, Mack

Evonne's son, Ethan



Jennifer's daughter,
Sophia Linh

NOVICE TEACHER SPOTLIGHT: VALERIE BARNES, YEAR TWO TEACHER, SHORTLIDGE ACADEMY

What were you like as student?

As a student I was always very eager to learn new things. I would spend a lot of time at the library reading as many books as I could. My favorite subject was always reading, but I loved math and science too.

Who or what inspired you to be a teacher?

I actually discovered how much I loved teaching when I was in college as psychology major. I was working in a research lab that focused on how children learn. I always enjoyed working with the students in our studies and loved to watch them learn and grow over time. I realized how much I loved working in these schools and working with these students everyday and I never looked back. I switched my focus to education during graduate school and I have never been happier.

What have you found to be the most rewarding part of being a teacher?

I love watching how much my students grow throughout the school year, not only academically but emotionally too. It's so exciting to see how proud they are of each of their accomplishments and how they are always ready to learn more.

“The mentoring program was a great tool to help me learn how to reflect on myself as a teacher as well as receive feedback and guidance from a more experienced educator.”



What has been the most challenging part of teaching?

The most challenging part has been figuring out which strategies would work best for me in my own classroom. Finding the best teaching style for myself was challenging at first and I am still working to create a well-functioning classroom for my students and myself. I am always willing to try new strategies and I am becoming more familiar with what will work well for my teaching style.

What makes Shortlidge Academy such a special school?

Every single teacher at Shortlidge loves this school and loves their students. The staff and administration work so hard to make this school a safe and welcoming environment for each student. We all work together to help make this school a better place and to teach our students how to be wonderful scholars and citizens.

What have you gained from the mentoring program?

The mentoring program was a great tool to help me learn how to reflect on myself as a teacher as well as receive feedback and guidance from a more experienced educator. I have learned so many things from my mentor and other teachers in my building and I have become a better teacher because of them.

What is one piece of advise that you would share with a new teacher?

As teachers, we always need to learn and try new things: do research, go to professional developments, take courses in the summer and talk to experienced teachers. There is always something new to learn that might help you become a better teacher. Just like our students, we need to be excited to learn and always willing to try new strategies and ideas.

