

Drop Out Prevention Initiative 09-10  
Mentor Description

Overview of the position –

- In general terms, the mentor will promote student engagement as measured by the following areas of student functioning:
  1. Academic – time on task, credits earned toward graduation, homework completion with accuracy
  2. Behavioral – attendance, suspensions, voluntary classroom participation, extracurricular participation
  3. Cognitive – self regulation of behavior toward goals, perceived relevance of schoolwork to future endeavors, value of learning, personal goals, and autonomy.
  4. Affective – feelings of identification and belonging, and relationships
- The mentor is described by the Check & Connect model as a combination of the roles of coach, case manager, and advocate.
- He or she will maintain daily awareness and documentation of the levels of engagement for each student on their caseload, while developing and maintaining positive working relationships with all constituents including but not limited to: the student, the guardian(s), the district, external providers and service organizations. The mentor will interact and monitor the student at school, at home, and in the community.

Education/Background –

- The Check & Connect model recommends Bachelor's level mentors.
- It would be beneficial if the candidate would also have prior work experience providing services both in the home and school settings.
- The candidate needs to demonstrate agreement that student engagement is a multi-dimensional construct that requires an understanding of:
  1. Psychological connections within the academic environment (positive adult-student relationships, peer relationships)
  2. Student behavior (attendance, participation, effort, pro-social behavior)
- The mentor should be knowledgeable of services available in the local community in order to link, monitor, and coordinate external services that will be helpful in student wellness. The mentor needs to be knowledgeable of graduation requirements, credit accumulation process, etc.

Personal Qualities of a Mentor –

- The candidate must be skilled in building relationships, be solution-focused in their problem solving approach, persistent in motivation, possess good assessment skills, be highly mobile and flexible, and possess solid professional boundaries.
- The individual should be actively involved and visible at school-related activities and events in the community to demonstrate support of students. Philosophy and/or approach needs to be strength-based, family-centered, collaborative, and based on resiliency.
- Organization skills will be crucial to the mentor's ability to follow established program guidelines in order to maintain the integrity of the empirically based model.