



*A Community of Learners*

## **Informational Memo: August New Teacher Orientation, Mentoring**

**TO:** School Board  
Superintendent Kocanda

**FROM:** Daniel P. Ryan, *Assistant Superintendent Professional Learning and Human Resources*

September 19, 2017

In keeping with the tradition of supporting new faculty for success in our District, we hosted a New Teacher Orientation Session over the course of 2 ½ days this August. These sessions are intended to support the integration of new teachers into our District, to establish the mentor/mentee relationship, and set the stage for a successful two-year mentoring program. This year we welcomed 20 new certified faculty to the Winnetka Teaching Community.

We typically host the New Teacher Orientation sessions immediately ahead of the August Teacher Institute Days. This year we decided to hold our sessions in mid-August so as not to conflict with our homegrown Teacher's College Workshops, which we wanted to make available for both mentors and new faculty. Hosting the New Teacher Orientation on August 15, 16, 17 was received very well by all. It was clear that both the new teachers and the mentors were more relaxed than in past years, knowing they had time to get into their classrooms ahead of the start of school. Everyone seemed more available for processing a tremendous amount of information.

The New Teacher Orientation Program is jointly organized with a committee of teachers, led by the Office of Human Resources and Gywn Duthie, Mentoring Coordinator. Gywn's position is a stipend position, newly established this year to build capacity teacher leadership within the District. The New Teacher Orientation Committee is composed of faculty representatives from each building who volunteer their time in the

summer, both preparing for and attending the sessions.

The schedule for the two and a half day sessions is below:

**Tuesday, August 15, 2017**

***Mentors & New Teachers***

***Begin at The Skokie School, 520 Glendale Ave - Resource Center***

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|---------------|--|
| 12:00 – 12:45 | Lunch  |
| 12:45 – 1:00  | Welcome to New Teachers and their Mentors<br><i>Superintendent Trisha Kocanda, Assistant Superintendent, Daniel Ryan</i> |
| 1:15 – 1:30   | Mentor Relationship  |
| 1:30 – 1:45   | Break  |
| 1:45 - 2:30   | Getting to Know You Activities   |
| 2:30 – 3:00   | Brad Goldstein, CFO  |
| 3:00 – 3:30   | Special Education in D 36 - <i>Director of Student Services, Beth Martin</i>   |
| 4:00 – 6:30   | Trolley Tour followed by District sponsored social, Happ Inn   |

**Tuesday, August 15, 2017**

***Mentors & New Teachers***

***Begin at Greeley Elementary School, 275 Fairview Ave - Resource Center, 2nd Floor***

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|---------------|--|
| 8:30 – 9:00   | Coffee & Bagels                                      |
| 9:00 – 10:00  | Mentor Workshop (Mentors Only)                       |
| 9:00 – 10:00  | Technology Orientation (New Teachers Only)           |
| 10:00 – 10:15 | Break  |
| 10:15 – 11:15 | Parent Panel - featuring current District 36 parents |
| 11:15 – 11:30 | Travel to Hubbard Woods Elementary School            |

***Mentors & New Teachers***

***Hubbard Woods Elementary School***

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|---------------|---|
| 11:30 – 12:30 | Lunch and Discussion of WEA Association Structure   |
| 12:30 – 1:00  | History of Winnetka, Progressive Education & Winnetka University  |
| 1:15 – 1:45   | “What Makes Winnetka Unique?” <i>Director of ITL, Barry Rodgers</i><br>Discussion: “What makes you unique?” |
| 1:45 – 3:00   | Mentor & Mentee Planning Time   |

**Thursday, August 17, 2017**

***New Teachers Only, Mentors Join for Lunch***

***Carleton Washburne School, - Resource Center, 2nd Floor***

8:30 – 9:00      Coffee & Bagels  
9:00 – 9:15      “I Wish I Had Known” video  
9:15 – 9:45      New Teacher Panel with returning 2nd year District 36 teachers  
9:45 - 10:00      Break  
10:00 - 10:30      Letter Writing Activity  
10:30 - 11:15      Wrap Up with Q&A  
11:15 - 11:45      Evaluations (bring laptop)

*Mentors & New Teachers*

*Carleton Washburne Middle School, 515 Hibbard Road - Resource Center, 2nd Floor*

12:00 - 1:30      Welcome Lunch - by Winnetka Public Schools Board of Education

Not only was the early scheduling of the program new this year, we also included other voices on the agenda - Beth Martin, Director of Student Services, and Brad Goldstein, Chief Financial Officer. Both of their presentations were well received as valued components of what is necessary for new teachers to understand as they enter the Winnetka Public Schools.

We have also decided to shift the focus of our mentoring program away from mentors being the primary source of knowledge to a shared celebration of what both the mentor and mentee bring to Winnetka. We are highlighting the unique experiences and perspectives our new teachers bring to the District, including ideas around technology, 21st century learning, and curriculum. Also new this year will be plans to meet with each new teacher at a 30, 60, 90-day point during the upcoming school year. The purpose of these meetings will be to check in on their progress and the effectiveness of our support systems. We will eventually ask for names of potential candidates.. Other high-performing districts have used this practice effectively to recruit and retain excellent faculty.

Overall, the New Teacher Orientation Program serves as an integral component of securing excellent teachers and nurturing their growth during their critical early years in Winnetka. Often when we interview prospective candidates for positions in Winnetka, the question is asked about professional learning and mentoring. Candidates are always pleased by the level of support we offer new faculty as they join our teaching community and this becomes an advantageous recruitment tool for bringing in excellent faculty to our District.

*Mentor Program*

As an extension of our New Teacher Orientation Program, we provide mentoring to all first and second year faculty. Current faculty members are selected by building

principals to serve as mentors to new faculty. Usually the mentor is selected because of their subject area knowledge and/or building specific experiences. During the course of the year the mentor and mentee meet on a regular basis to attend to a shared set of goals that are established in August/September. In addition they are asked to visit classrooms in the District as well as schools outside of Winnetka.

Below is a schedule for the first and second year mentor programs:

#### **First Year Mentoring Program Events**

New Teacher Orientation Days	August 15 - 17, 2017
Teacher Evaluation Informational Meeting	September 19, 2017 3:45 - 5:00, Crow Island School
In-District Observation Day (choose a day)	October-November
1st Observation Debrief Meeting	December 5, 2017 Lunch and Afternoon Location TBD
Out of District Observation Day (choose a day)	February - April, 2018
2nd Observation Debrief Meeting	April 17, 2018 3:45 - 5:00, Skokie School
End of Year Summative Meeting/Social/Lunch	May 8, 2018 Breakfast and Morning Location TBD

#### **Second Year Mentoring Program Events**

Teacher Evaluation Meeting (optional)	September 19, 2017
2nd Year Mentor/Mentee Initial Meeting	October 3, 2017 3:45 - 5:00, Skokie School
Second Year Social Hour	January 25, 2018 4:00 - 5:30, Location TBD
Observation Day (choose a day)	February - April, 2018
Observation Debrief Meeting	May 2, 2018 3:45 - 5:00, Skokie School

We seek feedback each year from our mentors and new teachers so that we can adjust our program to best meet our faculty needs. For example, this year we are adding a second year mentor gathering in January as a result of feedback last May indicating that a mid-

year check in was needed. We are also allowing for greater flexibility in arranging for outside of school site visits. It was noted that many special education teachers have an intense IEP load near the end of the year, making it hard to leave the building for a site visit. Therefore we are inviting such teachers to conduct outside of school site visits ahead of the busy spring IEP season.

While some program shifts occur each year, the mentoring program overall, has long been a solid fixture of support for new teachers and an avenue for our experienced teachers to share their knowledge.