

AATF Connecticut Mentoring Program: Flexible Guidelines

This mentoring program is meant to be **flexible** and support beginning teachers, NOT to add more work for anyone. Rather than prescribe specific expectations or requirements, below is a list of suggestions meant to guide you throughout the year.

Timeline: It is entirely up to you and your partner how often to meet. Suggested frequency is at least once per quarter (four total meetings), but you could set monthly meetings or agree to reach out to each other informally when help is needed.

The mentor's responsibility is to determine how best to support the mentee. Mentors should be good listeners and provide support with the mentee's competing priorities.

The mentee's responsibility is to communicate how much time they can commit to the relationship and what they need most. While the meeting style (Zoom or in person) should be coordinated with the mentor, the mentee's availability should drive the frequency of the meetings.

Get to know each other: set up an initial conversation via Zoom:

It is of utmost importance to build a relationship so that the mentee feels comfortable: what the mentee shares is confidential and should be treated as such. Unless specifically requested, mentors and mentees will not be placed with professionals in the same school.

Below is a list of possible questions to guide you during your first meeting:

<p><u>Questions to ask mentee:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Would you like to speak in French or English?- What requirements has your school laid out for you?- Do you have questions about your school's evaluation process?- What is your main concern about teaching?- What are your strengths and weaknesses and how can I provide support?	<p><u>Questions to ask mentor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- What do you consider to be your domain of expertise?- What is your background with French?- Why did you become a teacher?- How long have you been teaching?- Can I text you or email you if I have a question that needs immediate attention?- Can you help me navigate the evaluation process to accomplish the goals required by my administration?*
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(*For additional questions about the evaluation process, you can also reach out to the program coordinator Heidi Edel).

To Do list during initial meeting:

- Get to know each other (see suggestions above)
- Determine how to meet (via Zoom, in person, or a combination of both)
- Determine how often to meet (this can change!)
- Discuss how much structure the mentee would like (see below)

Structure:

Regardless of how much structure you would like, you can set a goal at the beginning of the year. You can choose the amount of structure you need:

Suggestions for a less structured approach:

- Mentees, think about what you would like to accomplish and write it down before the next meeting, or keep a running list of questions, possibly in a shared document. Your overarching goal could be as simple as establishing a relationship with an experienced teacher who can provide advice or with whom you can speak French.
- Mentors, be good listeners: perhaps you are the only neutral outlet for a beginning teacher to talk about relationships with students and teachers at their school. Have a back up plan ready such as information about the mentee's expressed interests, or share a tried and true lesson plan. You can create reflection questions to ask either orally or in writing. Consider inviting the mentee to observe you.

Suggestions for a more structured approach (see template at end of document):

- During your introductory meeting, decide what your area of focus will be and create a shared document that you can use to agree on a Smart Goal that you would like to accomplish. Use SMART goal format:

Specific: what do you want to achieve?

Measurable: how will you know you achieved your goal?

Attainable: how can you reach your goal in the given time frame?

Relevant: why is this goal important for you now?

Timely: how can you and your mentor break it into manageable chunks?

Create a calendar with objectives that follow a timeline and include checkpoints. Your goal is up to you!

Resources:

If you need additional resources (mentor or mentee), reach out to the program coordinator Heidi Edel (edel.heidi@newfairfieldschools.org), who can use the AATF-CT network to make resources available to you. If either the mentor or mentee does not stay connected (i.e., one of them drops out without communicating), please reach out to Heidi as well. See the next page for a simple SMART goal template.

Sign up form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1iVhCMMDSxam2I_RTACwXXcqPrcwtW442uYJ7Hk3bFc0/edit

Structured Approach Template:

This template is intended to help you think about what you would like to accomplish. Your goals will be a reflection of how much structure you would like to have. For a less structured approach, see the suggestions above. Even if things don't go as planned (do they ever in teaching?), you will still learn! Reach out to Heidi Edel if you need more resources or help crafting goals.

S	<u>Specific Goal: what do you want to achieve?</u> (What outcome are you looking for in terms of student achievement?)
M	Measurable: how will you know you achieved your goal? (Will you collect data in the form of student work or through an observation?)
A	Attainable: how can you reach your goal in the given time frame? (What actions will you take to attain it?)
R	Relevant: why is this goal important for you now? (How is it connected to your teaching? How will your mentor help you?)
I	Timely: how can you and your mentor break it into manageable chunks? (What is your time frame?)

Suggested Calendar for monthly meetings:

- September/October: First meeting, establish & define goal.
- November/December: track progress & discuss with your mentor. Do you need to tweak any of the measurement instruments?
- January/February: write a reflection on how it is going. Should you continue as planned or make adjustments? Share your reflection with your mentor & discuss.
- March/April: continue to evaluate your progress.
- May/June: Meet with your mentor for a final reflection. Complete program evaluation.