

Characteristics of a Quality Mentor Teacher

The qualities of effective mentors – as identified by participants in mentoring programs nationwide – may be organized into four general categories: attitude and character; professional competence and experience; communication skills; and interpersonal skills. Together with a willingness to serve and a vote of confidence by colleagues, these characteristics comprise guidelines for selecting mentors.

Attitude and Character

- Willing to be a role model for other teachers
- Exhibits strong commitment to the teaching profession
- Believes mentoring improves instructional practice
- Willing to advocate on behalf of colleagues
- Willing to receive training to improve mentoring skills
- Demonstrates a commitment to lifelong learning
- Is reflective and able to learn from mistakes
- Is eager to share information and ideas with colleagues
- Is resilient, flexible, persistent, and open-minded
- Exhibits good humor and resourcefulness
- Enjoys new challenges and solving problems

Communication Skills

- Is able to articulate effective instructional strategies
- Listens attentively
- Asks questions that prompt reflection and understanding
- Offers critiques in positive and productive ways
- Uses email effectively
- Is efficient in use of time
- Conveys enthusiasm, passion for teaching
- Is discreet and maintains confidentiality

Professional Competence and Experience

- Is regarded by colleagues as an outstanding teacher
- Has excellent knowledge of pedagogy and subject matter
- Has confidence in his/her own instructional skills
- Demonstrates excellent classroom management skills

- Feels comfortable being observed by other teachers
- Maintains a network of professional contacts
- Understands the policies and procedures of the school district, and teacher's association
- Is a meticulous observer of classroom practice
- Collaborates well with other teachers and administrators
- Is willing to learn teaching strategies from protégés

Interpersonal Skills

- Is able to maintain a trusting professional relationship
- Knows how to express care for a protégé's emotional and professional needs
- Is attentive to sensitive political issues
- Works well with individuals from different cultures
- Is approachable; easily establishes rapport with others
- Is patient

Compiled from NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education

Recommended Teacher	Subject/s	Level	School
