



TEACHERS AS MENTORS MANUAL 2020-2021



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From Superintendent Wayne Tucker

In many schools, teachers need only point to the path for students to follow. Those who stray from that path become acceptable losses, part of the detritus of a public education system designed to serve the greatest number as efficiently as possible. The mission under which PTHS' charter was written does not include the notion of acceptable losses; we exist to serve those students whom the traditional public schools have failed to serve. As such, our teachers must do more than point the way; we must accompany our students on the journey.

In *Democracy and Education*, Dewey writes:

Except in dealing with commonplaces and catch phrases, one has to assimilate imaginatively something of another's experience in order to tell him intelligently of one's own experience. All communication is like art.

That observation lay at the heart of the teacher-as-mentor role. Our students often bring baggage that includes years of perceived inadequacy in scholastic aptitude; they lack experience in successful practices and are afflicted with a poverty of vision for themselves in an adult world. They can acquire the tools to succeed through a strong relationship with an adult who can share the benefit of experience and establish a safe and supportive space in which to develop them. But, to effect this, the mentor must share the student's experience. The mentor has to know what is happening in the student's world and we can only do that by making ourselves open and accessible. Our schools are alternative schools, so our students, by definition, differ from those students who thrive in traditional schools. To serve them, we must each become a different kind of teacher.

Seven Things to Remember:

- 1. We are here to serve these young people, to help them develop into capable, thoughtful adults.**
- 2. You are the adult in the room.**
- 3. You may be the only caring adult in your student's life.**
- 4. Your students should feel like you know them.**
- 5. Your life made you who you are and it differs from the lives of your students; examine your preconceptions.**
- 6. It's not about the answer; encourage students to estimate, experiment, express and to fail with style.**
- 7. Adapt**

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is giving your time, attention, insights, and advice. Mentoring is about helping a mentee develop social capital within an environment where they have the resources and support to develop technical and intellectual capital. Simply providing resources for a mentee to accomplish a research project (i.e. develop technical/intellectual capital) is not mentoring. That is the minimum requirement to setup an appropriate learning environment. Mentoring takes place in the personal interactions with the mentee. - WWW.pathwaystoscience.org

“To me, this is key to the revolution in all of education, especially in high school. To think of ourselves as coaches and mentors, not teachers; that we are hired to help students do their work, not to teach them what we know only.” – Grant Wiggins

Mentorship in middle and high school has the power to impact the course of students' academic and personal life trajectories. Human connection built on trust is the glue that binds students' academic and personal lives and helps them make sense of their futures; it's also the reason that most teachers enter education in the first place. - Lauren Faggella, Content Marketing Manager for Summit Public Schools



“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” - Maya Angelou

Qualities of a Teacher/Mentor

Qualities of a Great Teacher, According to:
2015 State Teachers of the Year



SCHOLASTIC

Qualities of a Good Mentor

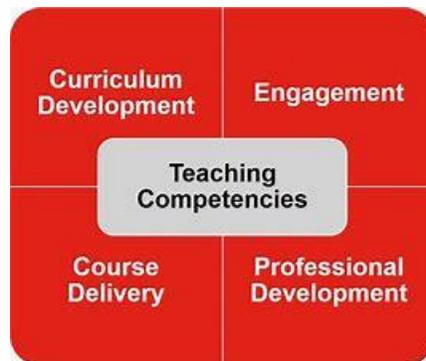
- * Integrity
- * Patience
- * Flexibility/Adaptability
- * Professionalism
- * Organizational skills
- * Enthusiasm
- * Empathy
- * Openness
- * Confidence
- * Problem-solving skills

Do you see any difference between the teacher qualities and mentor qualities? They are basically the same!

Teachers as Mentors Program

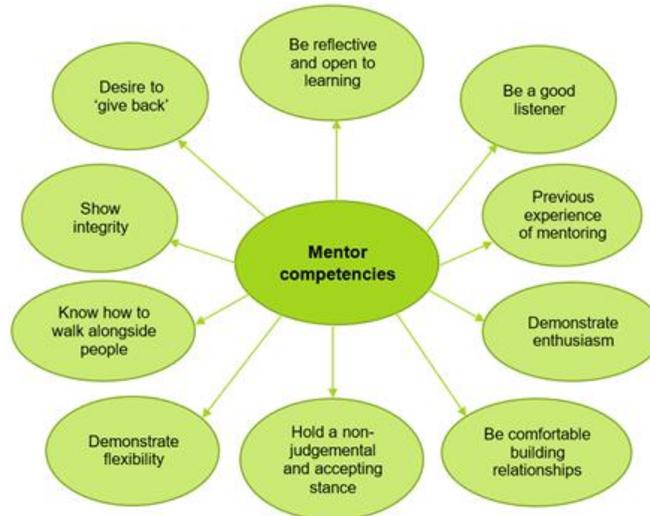
PPEP Tec has initiated The Teacher as Mentor program in every Learning Center in the district. It is all about teachers engaging the students by being good listeners, exhibiting enthusiasm, building positive student-teacher relationships, and providing a safe place for student to learn and grow socially. The program offers a structured, consistent time and space for teachers to get to know the whole student, apart from a whole-class or even small group setting. Through mentorship, teachers have a unique opportunity to help open doors to future academic and career possibilities and cultivate a student’s sense of purpose. The program is supported by training in social-emotional learning and trauma-based awareness. It is designed to engage students both virtually and in person.

Teacher Competencies



Combined with:

Mentor Competencies, Equals Student Success



MENTORING STRATEGIES THAT WORK

1) The Greeting



and eventually



Start with greeting. Greeting each student when he/she enters the classroom can increase a sense of belonging. Greeting students virtually can also have the same affect.

- Greeting students at the door or virtually is another way to build a positive school culture.
- The act also helps build relationships between students and teachers.
- Students who may not always feel welcome in their home environments need to be able to feel that school is a safe refuge for them.

2) Be strategic in classroom and virtual setup.



and eventually



Set up work areas and virtual areas where you can meet with students individually.

3) Balance the personal with business.



Start mentoring session with personal questions and then leave about ten minutes for academic guidance.

4) Learn student behavioral patterns.



When the student breaks pattern of behavior they have exhibited over a period of time, inquire as to why. For example, if a student smiles and greets every time he/she sees you and then one day they walk right by you as if you did not exist, there is something going on! Check into it. If a student all of a sudden loses their cool, instead of immediately going into punishment mode, inquire as to why the student is losing it. Seek solutions and let the student know they have a voice and action will be taken.

5) Be consistent. Be on time.



Meet regularly and continuously follow up on student progress. Consistency can build a strong student teacher relationship. The one thing that is consistent in these student's lives is they come from a place of little consistency.

6) Accountability



It's about creating student accountability by building on their assets. The student is accountable for completing assignments, attending class (in school and virtually), and exhibiting positive self-regulation. Holding the student accountable for not following through is not just about setting consequences, it's also about creating teaching moments that will build on the assets that the student already has. This entails knowing the student and being creative. It's basically a restorative process.

How to Be a Great Virtual Mentor (MENTORING COMPLETE BY ENGAGEDLY, INC.)

Touch-base frequently

Generally, the more comfortable your student is with you, the more fruitful the relationship will be. However, building trust with your student can take some time. Frequent check-ins can help increase trust and rapport.

Use a variety of ways to stay connected

The key is not to limit you and your student to just one. For example, perhaps you can stay connected via text in between biweekly Zoom meetings.

Give your student your undivided attention

If you are distracted during your sessions with your student, it sends a message that they aren't important to you and that you don't value the relationship. Do your best to quiet all distractions, prevent or ignore interruptions, and focus your energy and attention on your student during your time together.

Get creative when working with your mentor

Not all of your time with your mentor needs to be a one-on-one conversation; there can be many other ways to support your student's development. Can they practice an upcoming presentation for you while you provide feedback? Can you introduce them to a person who is successful in employment in which the student has an interest? Perhaps you can attend a virtual conference or webinar together and discuss afterwards. How about engaging the student in Project Based Learning.

Get comfortable with the technology

If you haven't used Zoom, Slack, or other technology, take some time to familiarize yourself with the platform. Seek out training and reference material in your mentoring software, watch the tutorial videos or practice with a colleague if necessary.

Take advantage of the benefits of virtual over face-to-face mentoring

The most obvious advantage for online mentoring is the flexibility and convenience. For example, with virtual mentoring, you can be available to your student at times that it wouldn't be possible to meet face-to-face. Think about how you can leverage these possibilities to support your student's growth.

Teacher as Mentor Checklist:

The following checklist will help you ensure that you are utilizing the Teacher/Mentor techniques throughout the school year.

As I develop the curriculum for the school year, I will be sure to include the following:

- How I greet my students on a daily basis. Virtually, How I touch-base frequently.
- Virtually, How I use a variety of ways to stay connected to the students.
- How I set individual sessions with my students and give them my undivided attention.
- How I am creative when working with my student utilizing Project Based Learning.
- How I conduct engaging interviews with my students.
- How I identify and address student behavioral patterns.
- How I will be consistent and on time when dealing with my students.
- How I utilize “teaching moments” to help students self-regulate.
- How I take time to familiarize myself with the various platforms use to communicate with the students.

Teacher as Mentor Checklist

The following is a checklist of the qualities and competencies of a Teacher/Mentor. This can help remind you of what Teacher/Mentor is all about.

Throughout the school year, I will present the following Qualities and Competencies:

Qualities:

- Compassion
- Enthusiasm
- Flexibility
- Empathy
- Patience
- Professionalism
- Commitment
- Creative

Competencies:

- Good listener
- Relationship building
- Student engagement
- Non-judgmental
- Establishing Culture of Learning
- Student management/self-regulation
- Use of discussion techniques
- Ability to build trust

ADDENDUM

Resources and Additional Instructional Information

The Mission of PPEP Tec:

The mission of PPEP TEC High School (PTHS) is to provide quality educational services to students, ages 14 through 21 and grades 9 through 12, who are at risk of becoming permanent dropouts of our public educational systems. Fulfilling this mission will also provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to obtain employment or continue their education in post-secondary institutions.

The mission revolves around the phrase: "...provide quality educational services to students," What does quality education mean? Are staff all on the same page concerning the meaning? It is important that staff have a common definition of what it means in order to be consistent in providing quality education. According to the PPEP Tec desk manual, providing quality educational services means the following:

- Compassionate student engagement
- Effective lesson plans
- Safe and supportive school environment
- Student focused success plans (Vision)
- Balanced accountability and asset building plan

Any of the above points involves some level of mentoring.

OUR FOCUS AND OUR CHALLENGE:

The students in the PPEP TEC system often exhibit emotional or behavioral problems such as, truancy, low academic performance and a lack of interest in academics. Many are involved in illicit drug use, promiscuity, gang activities, domestic violence, and shoplifting and are proficient at confronting teachers in an inappropriate way and disrupting classrooms.

Shedding some light on why the students are this way can assist staff in developing effective ways to provide quality education. To start with, identifying risk and protective factors can give staff some understating. A **risk factor** is anything that a person experiences while growing up that increases the probability that they will suffer harm now and into the future. A **protective factor** is something that a person experiences while growing up that decreases the potential harmful effect of a risk factor now and into the future.

Risk Factors:

Individual Risk Factors

- History of violent victimization
- Attention deficits, hyperactivity, or learning disorders
- History of early aggressive behavior
- Involvement with drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
- Low IQ
- Poor behavioral control
- Deficits in social cognitive or information-processing abilities
- High emotional distress
- History of treatment for emotional problems
- Antisocial beliefs and attitudes
- Exposure to violence and conflict in the family

Family Risk Factors

- Authoritarian childrearing attitudes
- Harsh, lax, or inconsistent disciplinary practices
- Low parental involvement
- Low emotional attachment to parents or caregivers
- Low parental education and income
- Parental substance abuse or criminality
- Poor family functioning
- Poor monitoring and supervision of children

Peer and Social Risk Factors

- Association with delinquent peers
- Involvement in gangs
- Social rejection by peers
- Lack of involvement in conventional activities
- Poor academic performance
- Low commitment to school and school failure

Community Risk Factors

- Diminished economic opportunities
- High concentrations of poor residents
- High level of transiency
- High level of family disruption
- Low levels of community participation
- Socially disorganized neighborhoods

Protective Factors:

Individual Protective Factors

- Intolerant attitude toward deviance

- High IQ
- High grade point average (as an indicator of high academic achievement)
- High educational aspirations
- Positive social orientation
- Popularity acknowledged by peers
- Highly developed social skills/competencies
- Highly developed skills for realistic planning
- Religious beliefs

Family Protective Factors

- Connectedness to family or adults outside the family
- Ability to discuss problems with parents
- Perceived parental expectations about school performance are high
- Frequent shared activities with parents
- Consistent presence of parent during at least one of the following: when awakening, when arriving home from school, at evening mealtime, or when going to bed
- Involvement in social activities
- Parental/family use of constructive strategies for coping with problems (provision of models of constructive coping)

Peer and Social Protective Factors

- Possession of affective relationships with those at school that are strong, close, and prosocially oriented
- Commitment to school (an investment in school and in doing well at school)
- Close relationships with non-deviant peers
- The presence of a positive adult (ally) in the family to mentor and be supportive.
- Membership in peer groups that do not condone antisocial behavior
- Involvement in prosocial activities
- Exposure to school climates with the following characteristics:
 - Intensive supervision
 - Clear behavior rules
 - Firm disciplinary methods
 - Engagement of parents and teachers

Many students have experienced several risk factors. They now exhibit behaviors that are contrary to developing a successful lifestyle. They have been programmed to live by a fixed mindset of:

- Hating school
- Avoiding challenges
- Giving up easily
- Seeing effort as fruitless or worse
- Ignoring useful constructive feedback
- Feeling threatened by the success of others
- Having little trust of other people especially the leadership

- Oppositional behavior

It is important that staff work to reprogram the mindset of these students. This can be a very difficult challenge which involves taking the time, having the patience and commitment to mentor the students!

PPEP TEC Charter Schools can provide protective factors to help students change the behaviors created in part by the risk factors. To do this, staff must first clearly identify why they have taken on the challenge of changing the lives of at risk youth. It's more than just the students graduating academically. It's also about the students graduating socially into a healthy lifestyle! What good is it to graduate and still be unable to hold down a job or sustain good strong relationships?

“There's a difference between interest and commitment. When you're interested in doing something, you do it only when it's convenient. When you're committed to something, you accept no excuses - only results.” - Ken Blanchard

One powerful protective factor is the presence of a positive adult (ally) in the family to mentor and be supportive. This protective factor can be imbedded in PPEP Tec school learning environment. Many of the students do not have a strong positive adult ally in the family or in the neighborhood. The school can provide this by each teacher becoming a mentor.

Benefits of Mentoring

The following excerpt is from an article entitled: “Why Every Student Should Have a Mentor and Every Teacher Should Be One.” November 22, 2017

Three Benefits of Mentorship for Students

1. Individualized Goal Setting:

Meeting students where they are as developing individuals is where personalized learning begins. Each week, students meet with their mentors to assess their academic progress and to set individual short- and long-term goals, develop an action plan, and learn time management and planning strategies. This intentional, weekly interaction helps students develop a universal set of skills—goal setting, adaptability, and reflection—that are necessary for success in college, career, and life.

2. Relationships Built on Trust:

The reliable routine of mentorship allows students to build a relationship with their teachers built on honesty and trust over time. Dr. **Pamela Cantor**, founder of **Turnaround for Children**, reiterated the importance of these relationships of trust in a recent interview on the **Summit Sparks podcast**.

“Can you imagine trying to build self-regulation or executive function in an environment where

children did not feel physically and emotionally safe?” Cantor asked. “Children need to have that overall sense of safety in the environment and they need to have strong relationships with adults and peers to set the stage for the kind of learning that we want them to do.”

Mentors serve as a thought partner for students on their academic journey and help empower students to become autonomous learners and agents of their own change. They express understanding of students’ aspirations and fears, and support their success by acting as an advocate for students’ best interests.

Jacqueline Castro, a former 8th grade student at **R.H. Lee Elementary** in Chicago, described her mentor relationship: “Now that I have my mentor, it helps me a lot; if I ever have something on my mind and I can’t do my work, I just go to her and let it out and she’s there.” Building relationships with students includes alignment with home life, achieved through regular communication and periodic mentor-student meetings with parents and guardians.

3. Developing Self-Awareness and Fostering Passions:

An essential component of one-to-one mentoring sessions are weekly self-reflections, which give students the chance to build awareness around their ability to set and follow through on appropriate academic and social goals. Students who practice individual goal-setting and reflection over time are better able to accurately assess their strengths, as well as recognize and act on areas for self-improvement. Exploring personal interests goes hand-in-hand with identifying strengths, and students are encouraged by their mentors to explore ways in and out of schools — through clubs or community programs and projects — that will help build and expand these personal interests and passions.

Three Benefits of Mentorship for Teachers

1. Reaching All Students:

Mentorship offers a structured, consistent time and space for teachers to get to know the whole student, apart from a whole-class or even small-group setting.

“That is the dream of every teacher — to be able to reach every single pair of eyes that are looking up at you, and give them the best education possible,” said Catherine Birch, a teacher with PISD.

Sustained knowledge of what’s happening with students on a social and emotional level, alongside performance in the classroom, sets teachers up for success when making informed decisions on best interventions for students who may be struggling.

In addition to the personal connections made during one-to-one meetings, mentors have access to content assessment data for each of their mentees and can collaborate with other grade-level teachers to better set learning goals across subjects for students.

Kathleen Bourret, an English teacher at Lee Elementary School in Chicago and Castro’s former

mentor, described the benefits of acting as a coach in the classroom: “Students have somebody to say ‘What is your goal today? What are you going to work on? What’s your focus?’ [Someone] to be a thought partner in their curriculum.”

2. Opening Doors to Possibilities:

Through mentorship, educators have a unique opportunity to help open doors to future academic and career possibilities and cultivate a student’s Sense of Purpose. Regardless of their academic achievements, all students have an authentic sense of curiosity to understand the world. Knowing each student’s interests, strengths, and goals allows mentors to encourage students to engage in school- or community-based activities that help build skills toward a known passion, or to try new activities and expand a student’s self-awareness and sense of self-efficacy.

3. A More Rewarding Teaching Experience: A significant part of mentorship is helping students develop **Habits of Success**, the dispositions, mindsets, and behaviors that students need to make a successful transition from high school to college and careers. Just as students are more likely to succeed in school when they’ve had opportunities to develop life skills such as self-directed learning and a growth mindset, educators who explicitly help students develop these habits are more likely to be successful in impacting every student.

Birch says that through mentoring, she can now “reach every single pair of eyes” in her classroom like she dreamed of.

“It not only challenges them, but it challenges me,” Birch says. “I have grown more as a person in these last three years being a personalized learning teacher... I will never go back to the traditional classroom.”

Roles of a Mentor

A mentor can take on several different roles in the course of a mentoring relationship, depending on the requirements of the learner.

Learning Consultant

There are two parts of this: supporting the mentoring process and the content of learning. This role includes helping the learner to clarify their goals, or their learning style.

The mentor may also help the learner to reflect on their experience and draw out learning. They may also be able to provide the learner with theoretical models to support their learning, such as Myers-Briggs Type Indicators and the Ladder of Inference.

Coach

Coaching requires a belief that the learner holds the key to their own problems, and a willingness to help them explore the issue including supporting thinking and experimenting with new ways of working.

Counselor

The mentor may use counselling skills such as **active listening**, **reflecting** and **clarifying** to help the learner to gain insight into their own processes. The mentor may also take on a counselor role if it becomes clear that the learner is struggling with an internal block to their thinking.

However, there are limits to how far this role should be taken. It should not be taken as therapeutic intervention. Mentors are not therapists.

Adviser or Information Resource

This is a role that is often used when someone is new to an organization, during an induction period for example. The mentor helps the learner to develop their understanding quickly, or to support their ongoing career development.

In this case, the mentor becomes a valuable source of information, and not just a sounding board. The mentor may also share his or her experience to help the learner to understand a particular work situation.

Role Model

This role, interestingly, is the one that requires least effort from the mentor, because it is usually about how they behave naturally.

The learner may have been attracted to them as a mentor because of the way that they handle certain situations. The learner will therefore learn from watching how the mentor behaves, both in the mentoring relationship and beyond.

Critical “Friend”

The role of critical friend is one of the most important, though most difficult, mentoring roles to successfully undertake.

It requires the mentor to listen, encourage, draw out, reflect back and challenge assumptions, and, if necessary, provide critical feedback on ideas or plans under discussion.

The role requires **giving constructive feedback**, and strong **emotional intelligence** and awareness of feelings.

RESOURCES:

The Importance of Student Engagement:

Motivating students and encouraging engagement is not an easy feat for teachers. While much of the motivation is intrinsic to the student, teachers play a vital role and can be proactive in cultivating student engagement. Increased student engagement and motivation is key to academic and behavioral success. Tammy L. Stephens, Ph.D.

Student engagement, described as the tendency to be behaviorally, emotionally, and cognitively involved in academic activities, is a key construct in motivation research (Thijs & Verkuyten, 2009). Consequently, compared to less engaged peers, engaged students demonstrate more effort, experience more positive emotions and pay more attention in the classroom (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). Further, engagement has also been associated with positive student outcomes, including higher grades and decreased dropouts (Connell, Spencer, & Aber, 1994).

Teachers play a vital role in their students' engagement and motivation (Hill & Rowe, 1996). Although much is intrinsic to the student, research has found that teacher's play a vital role on their students' motivation and engagement. Specifically, Martin (2006) found that a teacher's enjoyment and confidence in teaching, pedagogical efficacy, and affective orientations in the classroom have a positive impact on student engagement and motivation.

The Greeting

Positive greetings at the door of classroom increased students' academic engagement by 20% and decreased disruptive classroom behavior by 9%, according to a study published in the **Journal of Positive Behavior** earlier this year, and potentially adds an extra hour of learning per day, [Edutopia reports](#).

The study suggests that teachers should greet students individually by name, as well as use a non-verbal greeting, and make positive and pre-corrective statements encouraging good behavior or suggesting how the student should begin the day.

The approach promotes a sense of belonging in the classroom, builds a sense of community, and reduces students' and teachers' stress levels as they begin the day.

Five Ways to Greet Students

1. **Use their name**

A person's name is quite possibly one of their most important possessions. Whether you use their given name or a nickname they prefer, [calling someone by name](#) creates a connection.

2. **Ask a question**

A simple “how are you today?” is a good start. As you learn more about your students, you can [vary your questions](#) depending on their activities and interests.

3. **Make a request**

Give your students a sense of purpose right from the beginning by [giving them a task](#) as they enter the room. This can be a whole-class activity such as preparing their desks for the day. Or, select a few students each day for helping roles, and give everyone an opportunity to be your class assistants as the year progresses.

4. **Offer up virtual a high five, pat on the back, or another appropriate touch-based greeting**

5. **Use nonverbal cues such as a head nod or thumbs up**

Not everyone likes attention focused on them. Often a simple gesture, coupled with eye contact, lets a reluctant scholar know that you see them and value them. Sometimes directing a small, simple gesture toward a student can help you to see if they have something on their mind.

Do and Don'ts of Greeting Students

Greeting students at the door helps you to build [relationships](#), which translates into a more productive classroom. However, your actions need to be delivered with a sincere and light intention. When students know that they are truly welcome in your classroom, they will respond in ways that may surprise you.

Do:

- Position yourself at or just inside your door
- Make it known that you are happy that they are there
- Provide positive direction/guidance for the class period
- Tell students what your expectations are for the day
- Give them a sense that this is a new day

Don't:

- Lose sight of what's happening in the hallway
- Bring up past transgressions
- Take student behavior personally
- Bring your personal concerns to class
- Be a drill sergeant

Building community starts at the classroom door and students who know what to expect in your classroom are more likely to be engaged learners.

TEACHER AS MENTOR ROLES SUMMIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Summit Model

“We know that strong relationships with teachers have a positive impact on students. Students meet one-on-one with a dedicated mentor who knows them deeply and supports them in setting and achieving their goals. Because each mentor stays with a student for all four years, parents have a single point of contact to help advocate for their child and provide guidance on achieving personal goals.”

The Teacher’s Role

“Teachers are at the heart of every Summit classroom serving as content experts, mentors, and leaders. They ensure that students have the right supports to meet and exceed grade-level expectations; help students practice self-direction, an invaluable skill that students will use in all parts of their lives; and provide mentoring and coaching to help students reach their goals.”

The Student’s Role

“Students are empowered to become self-directed learners — they set goals for their learning, reflect on their progress, and build habits and mindsets to help them succeed in college, career, and life. They discover their passions and interests, and make plans to achieve their personal goals. Through support from a dedicated mentor, each student has a personalized learning experience that meets their individual needs.”

The Family’s Role

“Families have unparalleled access to their student’s school experience and a direct window into what their students are working on daily through their dedicated mentor. Because each mentor stays with a student for all four years, families have a single point of contact to help advocate for their child and provide guidance to help their student reach their goals.”

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