

SAANYS

MentorCoach Service

THE ROOTS OF SUCCESS



The Roots of Success

Executive Summary



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Goals

The goal of the MentorCoach Service is to retain high-quality school leaders who are experiencing the challenges of administration for the first time, changing administrative levels, and/or are seeking support throughout their probationary period and beyond.

MentorCoaches and mentees can expect to build a quality relationship that supports the mentees' ability to "enter [their] school confident in their ability to foster a strong learning community and be sensitive to the culture they are joining" (Villani, 2006, p. 5). This work may be accomplished by fine-tuning their organizational skills and understanding the need for professional development practices for both themselves and their staff.

History

SAANYS has a highly successful multifaceted Professional Development program that supports its members' professional growth and development. From this work, it became apparent that not all members had access to mentoring programs in their districts. Across the state, only some BOCES and large schools provided formal, research-based programs for their school leaders. As such, a gap existed. In addition, oftentimes school leaders found themselves working with teacher mentors without having experienced the benefits of having a MentorCoach themselves. Hence, in 2008 the SAANYS Board of Directors established the Mentoring Committee and charged it with developing a service that would support school leaders.

As the Mentoring Committee met to discuss the literature and research on effective mentoring practices, it became clear that action research in the form of visitations to established mentoring services was necessary. As a result, several Mentoring Committee members were charged with visiting the Maine Principals' Association's Great Beginnings program and the Ontario Principals' Council's world-renowned mentoring program. Information from the research, collaborative committee meetings, and these visitations form the basis of the SAANYS five pillar mentor program. The SAANYS MentorCoach Service Roots of Success, is one of the five pillars. Now, more than ever, it is essential that our school leaders are provided high-quality services if they are to do the difficult, challenging, and exciting work of being a school instructional leader. The MentorCoach Service is just that – a program grounded in research, developed by practitioners, and organized by an association whose goal is to support excellence in school leadership practices.

State Mandates

Currently there are no well-defined state mandates or regulations regarding mentoring for new school leaders, and particularly not in regard to principals. This is not the case in some other states. Formal mentor programs exist in New Jersey, Maine, Massachusetts, Texas, Washington State, Arkansas, Indiana, Mississippi, Connecticut, Illinois, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, California, Missouri, and more. Simply put, New York State has not been as active in supporting its school leaders as other states have been. SAANYS plans to rectify this by providing a research-based and proven model for its members to participate in.

SAANYS believes that it can no longer leave its members without such a service. In light of the research about the importance of the principalship and the impact school leaders have on student achievement, it is imperative, as Susan Villani (2006) says, “that new principals have appropriate support through comprehensive induction and mentoring programs so that they can enter schools confident in their ability to foster a strong learning community and be sensitive to the culture” (p. 5).

The National Staff Development Council echoes this by calling for national, state, and district professional development efforts that are standards focused, sustained, and intellectually rigorous and embedded in the principal’s workday. We applaud the supports that teachers have in these areas and recognize the long-standing lack of supports for our members in these areas.

Furthermore, school leaders newly certified are required to accrue 175 professional development hours every five years in order to maintain proficiency in the field and to maintain certification. Without access to a program such as Root for Success, many of our members are left with inconsistent, and sometimes nonexistent, support opportunities. With the new principal evaluation legislation, more than ever we must ensure that our members understand and have access to professional development that gives them every opportunity to meet proficiency standards.

Service Design

Mentoring Committee members designed the service to provide one-on-one interaction between the mentee and the MentorCoach. With the hope that as many sessions as possible be face-to-face, the service requires 25 percent of sessions be face-to-face. Sessions may also be conducted via telephone, e-mail, or written communication given scheduling or geographical constraints. Knowing that research on teacher growth (Killian and Harrison, 2006) speaks to multiple stages of development (year one survival stage, year two consolidation stage, year three renewal stage, year four maturity stage and beyond), we realize that school leaders are entering the service at varying stages of development. Therefore, the MentorCoach Service runs for a minimum of 40 consecutive weeks and can be expanded to 50 weeks, as well as to a second year and beyond, should the mentee, MentorCoach, and supervisor agree. In some instances, there may be opportunities for school leaders to purchase MentorCoaching services directly from SAANYS, and in such cases the mentee will determine the level of supervisor involvement.

Getting Started

- All interested mentees or school districts should contact SAANYS to request service details – Karen Bronson, (518) 782-0600 x133.
- If interest in the service continues, the district should contact SAANYS to request an initial appointment of a MentorCoach.
- The appointed MentorCoach will contact the mentee to set up an introductory meeting to discuss the service goals and expectations.
- Providing the mentee and/or district is still interested, a meeting between the mentee, MentorCoach, and the mentee’s supervisor will be established to discuss the service expectations and goals and sign a contract formalizing the service delivery.
- Following the signing of a formal contract, the mentee and MentorCoach will develop a Learning Plan that outlines their work together. This confidential plan will serve as the foundation for weekly sessions.

Service Administration

The program is administered by the SAANYS Mentoring Committee, the SAANYS professional development staff and board of directors, the Magellan Foundation, and the SAANYS executive director.

At least annually, a program evaluation report will be presented to the SAANYS and Magellan boards of directors.

What is expected of MentorCoaches and how are they trained and supported?

Expectations:

- Must be active or not retired for more than five years
- Must complete training and complete an application to be a MentorCoach
- Attend follow-up training as needed.
- Expected to attend quarterly support group sessions
- Complete all reporting forms which will include monthly contact log forms, pre-assessment tools, questionnaires, and the like.
- Participate in beginning and end-of-the-year meeting with the supervisor and the mentee.

MentorCoach Training

- Formal training will be provided by SAANYS with the goal of ensuring that MentorCoaches meet the NAESP school leadership mentor standards and the OPC MentorCoach design standards. MentorCoaches may be asked to provide evidence that they meet or are working to meet these standards.
- Large districts may designate their own MentorCoaches. SAANYS will provide ongoing training and support for programs for the in-district MentorCoaches.
- Annual update sessions, provided by SAANYS, will be required for all MentorCoaches. Electronic communications in between face-to-face meetings will be developed, following the NAESP and other national models.
- Quarterly support group meetings for MentorCoaches will be conducted.

What is expected of the mentee who participates in the program?

- Mentees are expected to interact with their MentorCoach one hour per week, attend the “points of connection” support group sessions. They are encouraged to participate in leadership academies, networks, and other SAANYS professional development opportunities.
- Complete the individual pre- and post-assessments and program evaluation pieces.
- Keep a reflective journal.
- Ideally, a mentee will participate in the New Principals’ Institute or a similar program designed to meet the orientation needs of new school leaders.
- Contact SAANYS staff first with any program concerns.

What is the role of the mentee's in-district supervisor?

- Participate in an orientation session that takes place during the first month with the mentee and the MentorCoach. The purpose of the session is to review the program and to understand one another's role.
- Participate in a follow-up session to determine year two participation levels and program satisfaction.

Program Evaluation

- An annual program evaluation report will be developed which is intended to be the basis for program improvement. It will be completed on an annual basis and given to the Mentor Advisory Board. The report will link the MentorCoach pillar with the other four pillars.
- Quarterly meeting for reflection and discussion will be held.
- On-line or paper questionnaires will be completed by all currently practicing MentorCoaches and mentees.
- Monthly logs will be compiled.
- SAANYS staff will conduct a phone survey of all mentees who have completed a year of MentorCoaching to determine their levels of satisfaction with the program and potential needs as they move forward.
- Within the first year of full implementation, formal research will be conducted to determine whether the program constructs grew mentees' practice.

Funding and Costs

Contact Karen Bronson, SAANYS Director of Professional Development –
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For more information, contact—

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