**SAANYS Mentor Coach Services**

**Mentor Coach Job Description**  March 25, 2019

SAANYS Mentor Coach Services are designed to support and strengthen the capacity of new, early, mid, and veteran school leaders professional school leader practices. Experienced, highly- skilled, and trained mentor coaches grow mentee school leadership practices by aligning them with the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL). Likewise, mentor coaches grow their ability to meet specific competencies. SAANYS endorses the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) National Mentor Competencies:

*Competency One*: An effective mentor sets high expectations for self-development in high quality professional growth opportunities. Strategies: Continues adult learning practices and seeks ongoing professional development. Practices professional reflection and networking.

*Competency Two*: An effective mentor has knowledge of and utilizes mentoring and coaching best practices. Strategies: Utilizes effective oral and written communication skills. Applies effective listening skills and provides constructive feedback. Possesses the ability to communicate a clear vision. Understands and practices adult learning theory.

*Competency Three*: An effective mentor is active in instructional leadership. Strategies: Keeps current on educational and leadership issues. Participates in professional organizations and local, state, and national events, i.e. conferences, workshops, seminars, etc. Takes a leadership role in the development and study of professional practice.

*Competency Four:* An effective mentor respects confidentiality and a code of ethics in the mentor protégé relationship. Strategies: Initiates routine discussions pertaining to confidentiality. Exhibits trustworthy behavior. Encourages open and reflective conversations initiated by the protégé.

*Competency Five:* An effective mentor contributes to the body of knowledge as it pertains to principal and administrative mentoring. Strategies: Conducts action research in collaboration with protégé. Utilizes assessment information to adjust the mentoring process as needed. Maintains reflection portfolio for self and encourages the protégé to do the same.

*Competency Six:* An effective mentor fosters a culture that promotes formal and informal mentoring relationships. Strategies: Engages in professional outreach activities that include the use of technology and networking. Acknowledges the need for mentoring and coaching throughout the career continuum.

*Mentor Coach Eligibility*

* Eligible Mentor Coaches are school leaders, either currently employed as a school leader or a retired school leader, who have at least five (5) years of experience in NYS public schools as a school administrator.
* Mentor Coaches are expected to make an initial commitment of two years to the SAANYS Mentor Coach Services. When this commitment is finalized, potential mentor coaches are invited to participate in monthly online virtual mentor coach sessions. There is no compensation or requirement to attend these sessions, although attendance is highly encouraged. However, once a mentor coach is under an active contract, participation in the monthly sessions is required, as compensation is covered as part of a paid contract.

*Mentor Training*

* All Mentor Coaches are required to participate in a formal training sponsored by SAANYS and attend ongoing training while they are under a paid *SAANYS Mentor Coach Services Contract.*
* Training will either be face–to-face, online, or blended. A minimum of successful completion of a 12-hour training course is required to serve as a SAANYS Mentor Coach. Mentor Coaches who facilitate groups participate in a one-day, face-to-face training session and a three-hour online refresher course.
* Assignments are not guaranteed following training.

*Mentor Expectations*

* Prospective mentor coaches engage in an application process and an interview, which may include peer nomination.
* Mentor Coaches must:

Demonstrate active learning skills

Have the ability to help others engage in the art of reflection

Exhibit strong interpersonal skills

Have a history of successful leadership experiences

Demonstrate a professional demeanor

Have a clear understanding of best practices in education and leadership

Have knowledge of resources

Meet commitments as outlined in this document

Be open to new ideas

* Participate in Zoom (or other online platform) training sessions; if unable to attend,

contact the SAANYS Mentor Program Coordinator prior to the session.

Recordings of online platform sessions will be made.

* Maintain strict confidentiality
* Document contact time with mentee (email, in person, phone, and visitations)
* Complete confidential written reflections regarding the mentor coach experience
* Provide continual feedback in a trusting and supportive relationship that focuses

on growing the mentee to be ready for the challenges of their school leader position.

* Mentor Coaches who work 1:1 meet with their mentee a minimum of 35 contact hours over the course of 40 weeks as described in the *Mentor Coach 1:1 Contract*. Mentor Coaches who facilitate groups meet with their mentees according to the number of participants as described in the *Group Mentor Contract.* This contract is agreed to prior to the start of services.
* Participate in one-on-one sessions, on-site visitations and observations, e-

mail, telephone contact, and peer support group meetings as may be requested

by the mentee or SAANYS.

*Mentor Coach Payment*

* Mentor Coaches are paid by SAANYS Educational Learning Center (ELC); SAANYS bills the districts. Mentees may also contract individually for services. Mentees do not have to be members of SAANYS.
* Mentor Coaches who complete all required responsibilities will receive the pre-agreed upon amount of compensation as specified in the *Mentor Coach 1:1 Contract Agreement* or the *Group Mentor Coach Contract Agreement*, as appropriate.

*Mentor Coach/Mentee Pairing*

* The SAANYS Office of Professional Development is responsible for matching mentor coaches with mentees.

*Mentor Selection*

* The SAANYS Office of Professional Development regularly reviews mentor coach applications and resumes.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Best Practices**

*Who is ‘in charge’ of the sessions, the mentee or the mentor coach?*

The mentor coach is responsible for ensuring that mentor coach sessions are regularly scheduled and held. The mentee brings problems of practice to the conversation. The mentor coach supports the mentee in thinking through the issues in such a way that the mentee’s strengths are maximized and professional practice grows. This collaborative process allows the mentee to lead the conversation and the mentor coach to be an active thinking partner.

*Should I ever share my own experiences?*

The Guiding Principle: mentor coaches share their leadership experiences only when it is in service of the mentee. Growing the mentee’s leadership practice by engaging the use of his/her strengths is the goal, rather than sharing past mentor coach experiences and stories. Mentor Coaches make appropriate referrals to a supervisor and/or agency only when a career ending or criminal act is about to take place or has taken place by the mentee.

*What should I do if I need some counsel on a situation?*

Call the SAANYS Office of Professional Development at 518-782-0600 and ask for Karen Bronson, Director of Professional Development, or Bonnie Tryon, Mentor Program Coordinator. Our goal is to support you in your mentor coaching practice.

*What should my future relationship be with my mentee?*

Most mentor coaches give an invitation to their mentees to stay in contact. Some mentees take the invitation and others do not. Likely mentor coaches will be asked to write a letter of recommendation for the mentee. This practice is encouraged.

*How should I start and end each session?*

Start the mentor coach conversation by sharing your background and experiences. Doing so is important in establishing credibility on the part of the mentor coach and to model the need for the mentee to similarly share their background on the *Needs Assessment Form*.

**Training**

*Will I be expected to participant in ongoing in-service for mentor coaches?*

Yes, monthly online sessions, lasting about one hour each, are required for all mentor coaches under active contract. Mentor Coaches, from tome to time, may also be asked to participate and or lead additional training sessions, as they become available.

*Do I need to complete training before I serve as a SAANYS mentor coach?*

Yes. Mentor Coaches are required to complete training. Currently mentor coaches complete a 12-hour training program. Mentor Coaches who facilitate groups participate in a one-day training session and then a three-hour refresher course.

*How is the mentor coach evaluated?*

Mentor Coaches are evaluated through completion of end-of-session confidential questionnaires that are sent directly to the SAANYS Office of Professional Development. Mentor Coaches who work with groups also engage participants in an end-of-session evaluation discussion. Notes from this discussion are sent to the SAANYS Office of Professional Development.

*Is the design of the Mentor Coach Service just for new school leaders?*

No, both the 1:1 mentor coaching and group mentoring are designed for school leaders at any stage of their career.

*Should assistant principals be mentored through SAANYS or is that better left to their principals to do?*

Best practice is clear that supervisors are better positioned to evaluate their subordinates and mentor coaches are better positioned to mentor coach school leaders. Evaluating, mentoring and coaching are different processes and produce different outcomes. In-district supervisors and/or in-district mentors serve the vital role of orienting and training their colleagues on district policy and procedures. However, mentees regularly tell their SAANYS mentor coaches they are more open, and thus grow their school leadership practice more, with them than they are with in-district supervisors.

**Mentor Coach Requirements?**

*Should I develop regularly scheduled sessions with the mentee?*

Yes, regularly scheduled sessions should be set up at the start as doing so creates a habit of regular reflection and consistent work toward agreed upon goals as set forth in the mentee’s *Learning Plan*. The busy life of a school leader demands flexibility, however, embracing the commitment of securing a convenient time and location for mentor coaching to occur up front leads to better results and less time spent rescheduling sessions.

Mentor Coach sessions can take place in district, at a nearby school, BOCES, or an off-campus coffee shop, and the like.

*Am I required to keep a Mentee Contact Log?*

Yes. Completion of a weekly updated *Mentee Contact Log* when working 1:1 is required before payment to the mentor coach can be made. Generic notes from group mentoring sessions and an *Attendance Log* that includes mentee sign-ins are required for mentor coaches working with groups.

*Do the sessions have to be in person?*

When distance is not an issue, face-to-face sessions are preferred. Building trusting relationships are best made when done face-to-face.

However, after the initial sessions, a combination of face-to-face and virtual sessions, using Zoom or similar on-line platforms, is recommended. (Mentor Coaches will be trained in the use of Zoom, or similar online platforms). Phone and email contact are also encouraged. Be sure to establish which platforms will be used when and who makes the initial contact.

**Compensation**

*How will I be paid?*

Mentor Coaches will be paid according to a signed contract between SAANYS and the Mentor Coach that is agreed upon prior to the commencement of Mentor Coach Services. The Contract lays out terms of the agreement, compensation, and contact information. See attached sample *1:1 Mentor Coach Services Contract* and *Group Mentor Services Contract*.

*When will I be paid?*

Mentor Coaches who work 1:1 will be paid once the *Mentor Coach Questionnaire, Contact Log*, and *SAANYS/ELC Voucher* have been submitted to the SAANYS Office of Professional Development. Mentor Coaches who work in groups will be paid when session notes, the *Attendance Log*, and *SAANYS/ELC Voucher* have been submitted.

*If the relationship ends before the contracted amount of time is the pay prorated?*

Yes. Submission of the *Contact Log* for 1:1 services or the session notes and *Attendance Log* for group services will determine the appropriate compensation.

*What should I do if a superintendent wants a mentor coach but cannot or will not pay for the services?*

Indicate that services will be provided once the district signs the formal *SAANYS/ELC Contract Agreement.* SAANYS trained mentor coaches work through the Association and are not available to provide service pro bono.

*I am thinking of assuming an interim position. How does mentor coaching fit in?*

Mentor Coaches are encouraged to stay current in the field. Taking on an interim position is one way to do so. The demands of a working administrator are many but can pair well with mentor coach sessions.

**Mentees**

*How and when would I be assigned a mentee? Can I get one on my own?*

Assignment of mentees takes place any time during the calendar year, although generally over the summer months when new administrators first come in to position, change districts, or move from one position in-district to another. Mentor Coaches are highly encouraged to recruit mentees and districts, however, assignment of a mentee remains the responsibility of the SAANYS Office of Professional Development.

*Should I provide books, gifts, dinner, etc.?*

There is no expectation or requirement for mentor coaches to provide books, dinner, gifts and the like. SAANYS provides each mentee with a copy of the book *Strengths Based Leadership,* by Rath and Conchie.

*What should I do if it the relationship is not working?*

Contact the SAANYS Office of Professional Development. We can provide additional strategies and interventions. As a rule of thumb, if the mentee does not keep regularly scheduled appointments for more than three times, call SAANYS.

**Evaluation**

*What should I do if the superintendent asks me how my mentee is doing or for a written progress report so it can become part of an APPR?*

Indicate that you are under contract with SAANYS and that SAANYS does not allow you to share mentee progress with in-district supervisors. However, the mentee can share any of the work done in session with their supervisor. Mentees may request a meeting with the mentor coach and their supervisor at any time to check in, update goals, or other reasons as determined by the mentee.

**The Mentor Coach Commitment**

The Mentor Coach agrees to:

* Cultivate professional growth in accordance with professional standards
* Grow and strengthen the leadership practice of the mentee
* Maintain strict confidentiality
* Build trust
* Provide support and encouragement
* Respond in a timely manner to mentee needs and SAANYS submission requirements
* Uses mentoring skills to guide and coaching skills to extend thinking
* Provide resources as needed
* Visit the worksite of the mentee when invited and in accordance with the *Partnership Agreement*
* Provide professional contacts and build networks for the mentee
* Encourage reflection by posing thoughtful and provoking questions that have growth- oriented impact on the mentee
* Regularly reflect upon growth as a mentor coach
* Communicate regularly with the SAANYS Office of Professional Development
* Use materials and opportunities provided by the SAANYS Office of Professional Development
* Make the necessary time commitment
* Offer candid assessment of the Mentor Coach Services and its program coordination
* Build competence and confidence

**The Mentee Commitment**

The Mentee agrees to:

* Cultivate professional growth in accordance with professional standards
* Articulate professional goals and challenges in a forthright manner
* Take the *Strengthsfinder Survey*, or one similar in design, and share results with the mentor coach
* Complete a *Needs Assessment* using a job specific rubric
* Regularly reflect upon professional progress
* Build trust
* Understand and respect confidential boundaries
* Communicate regularly
* Work collaboratively with mentor coach to build capacity for growth
* Use materials and opportunities offered by the SAANYS Mentor Coach Service
* Make the necessary time commitment
* Actively participate in mentor coach sessions
* Notify the mentor coach in a timely manner if a session needs to be rescheduled
* Offers a candid assessment of the Mentor Coach Service and the Mentor Coach
* Builds competence and confidence