

SAANYS

Mentor Coach Service Plan Document

Executive Summary

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Introduction: The catalyst for the development of mentor coach services is SAANYS’ ongoing commitment to the success of each and every school leader. Presently many new administrators lack a support system for success. Current research shows that mentoring models that are nonsupervisory, and are based on trust, mutual respect, and confidentiality, provide an effective support system for newly appointed administrators.

The SAANYS Mentor Coach Service Plan Document explains to members, mentees, mentor coaches, and the State Education Department (SED) how the association’s approach to mentor coaching is aligned to key national, state, and researched materials. This Executive Summary provides the essence of that Plan Document.

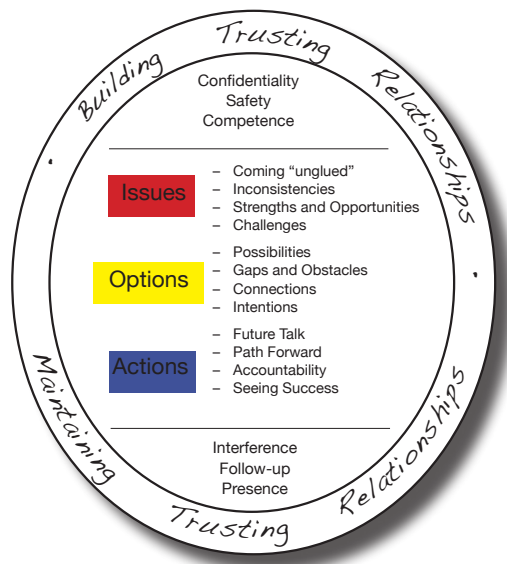
What is the program for? Traditionally mentor coaching programs are for newly appointed school leaders such as principals, assistant principals, directors, supervisors, and other certificated personnel. However, our program also supports those who are moving from one level or position to another or who are interested in the benefits of mentoring and coaching in a blended approach. The SAANYS Mentor Coach Program is also for essential school leaders serving in civil service leadership roles such as director of transportation, instructional technology, food services, business officials, and the like. BOCES leaders who often have unique titles such as director of communications, school attorney, supervisor of adult education services, principal for health careers and services, and more are also encouraged to participate.

What is mentor coaching? Mentoring is a collaborative effort that involves a reciprocal learning relationship between the mentor and the mentee that can manifest itself in group or individual settings. It is designed to foster the development of leadership skills, abilities, and knowledge in emergent and current leaders. Mentoring is an ongoing process to ensure success. Through a process of reflection and dialogue, partnered with internal and external assessments, school leaders can better target areas for their own individual growth and development over time. Mentoring lays the foundation for coaching, which is a key component of the SAANYS mentoring model. It takes place in the form of inspiring, teaching, supporting, modeling, and challenging to bring about growth. Coaching is strategic, timely, and responsive to the needs of the mentee. Collaborative goal setting developed between experienced and emerging school leaders transfers into quality effective practices that ultimately enhance student learning.

Philosophy: Much has been learned from the literature over the years on how the mentor and coaching continuum supports school leaders at all career stages and helps foster a mentoring and coaching culture in the schools led by those who have experienced the benefits of this process. The SAANYS philosophical approach to mentoring and coaching is that of a blended continuum as is illustrated in the chart below.

SUPERVISING	MENTORING	COACHING
Giving Answers; Giving Advice Asking “Loaded Questions”	Teaching Offering Options	Creating Awareness Designing Actions Planning and Goal Setting Monitoring Progress Celebrating Success

Unlike traditional forms of staff development that build awareness and tend to be episodic, fragmented, and weakly connected to practice, mentor coaching requires participants to be active in the learning process. It supports leaders in the context of their work environment and develops their feelings of efficacy. SAANYS uses a proven Mentor Coach Conversation Model for Leadership Development, where the person, not the problem, is coached.



Mentor Coach Conversation Model for Leadership Development

History: Mentoring has been around since the days of Socrates, when his followers sought guidance and wisdom from this senior sage. From these roots and more modern research on effective professional development models as espoused at the national level by such organizations as Learning Forward, states' professional associations have begun to focus on how they can provide school leaders with a proven successful mentor coach model.

From this premise, in 2008 the SAANYS Board of Directors established a mentoring committee charged with developing a program 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 programs was necessary. As a result, several mentoring committee members visited the Maine Principals' Association's Great Beginnings program and the Ontario Principals' Council's world-renowned mentoring program. The information from the research, collaborative committee meetings, and these visitations formed the basis of the SAANYS Mentor Coach Program. Now, with over a decade of experience with mentor coaching, in both individual and group settings, SAANYS has learned how to best design its own mentor coach model for leadership development, develop training for mentor coaches, and offer its embedded professional development model to school leaders, for both certificated leaders and those who come to leadership positions through business and civil service venues.

Mission: SAANYS believes that mentoring is a key component of a new school leader's induction and their ongoing professional development. Our program is primarily for new school leaders and leaders changing positions; however, the program also serves all those seeking premier professional development and growth throughout their probationary period and beyond. This program is designed to support the mentee and the mentor coach in that it is expected that the practices of both will mutually grow.

Service designs: SAANYS provides two mentor coach modes of delivery. The first is the traditional 1:1 mentor coach model that matches a mentee with a mentor coach for 35 weekly coaching sessions over the span of ten months. The second is a group design where one mentor coach collaborates with three to six mentees in what we refer to as a circle. These circle sessions, in a protected and confidential setting, are places where mentees spend 20 hours in a combination of 1:1 mentor coaching sessions and group settings. Both options are based on the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL), aligned job-embedded rubrics, NYS Professional Learning Standards, NYS Mentoring Standards, NYS Mentor Program Design, National Association of Elementary School Principals Mentor Standards, SED Certification Regulations for school leaders, and a heavy body of research.

To get started, the mentee and mentor coach meet face-to-face with the mentee's supervisor during the first month of the program to determine the expectations/goals for the plan of work. Following this initial meeting, the mentee and the mentor coach develop a Learning Plan that outlines their work together. The Learning Plan includes expectations that the district sets, review of information concerning any tools/instruments required for continued employment of the mentee, results from the Strengthsfinder Survey, and the PSEL-based standards or job alike rubric as applicable. This Plan serves as the foundation for weekly or group sessions.

In addition, SAANYS can customize mentor coach designs to meet the individual needs of districts, BOCES, and regions.

State certification requirements: The NYS Education Department's certification requirements for new school leaders include a "mentoring experience" to be completed during the leader's first year of service. Yet there is currently no comprehensive research-based statewide program that meets state mentor program standards. In addition, June 2019 proposed Commissioner of Education regulations have been under deliberation. These regulations require districts to develop and implement mentor programs for school leaders, just as they do for teachers. Participation in the SAANYS Mentor Coach Program more than fulfills current and anticipated regulatory changes.

Also, school leaders who are newly certified are required to accrue 100 professional development hours for every five years of employment in order to maintain proficiency in the field and to meet their certification requirements (Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2015). Participation in this program more than ensures that leaders have the support and documentation of participation in a mentor coach experience. SAANYS is an approved CTLE provider and as such awards participants with mentor completion certificates and certificates for completion of CTLE hours. In addition, school districts are required to follow education law dealing with annual performance reviews. Participation in this program supports mentees in their preparation to meet these requirements.

Why our program is different: What makes the SAANYS mentor program options different from other professional development opportunities is that each mentee, with the support of their mentor coach, develops and uses an individualized learning plan. This plan is uniquely created around that mentee's strengths, and provides reflection/goal setting that is directly related to a job performance rubric. This one-page learning plan can guide the mentee's work in the district relative to APPR feedback and goal setting.

Mentor coach professional development, whether delivered 1:1 or in a small group setting that we refer to as a circle, is purposely designed to provide engagement over an agreed upon specific amount of time, with predetermined beginnings and closings so as to model the same in participants' leadership practices in the district.

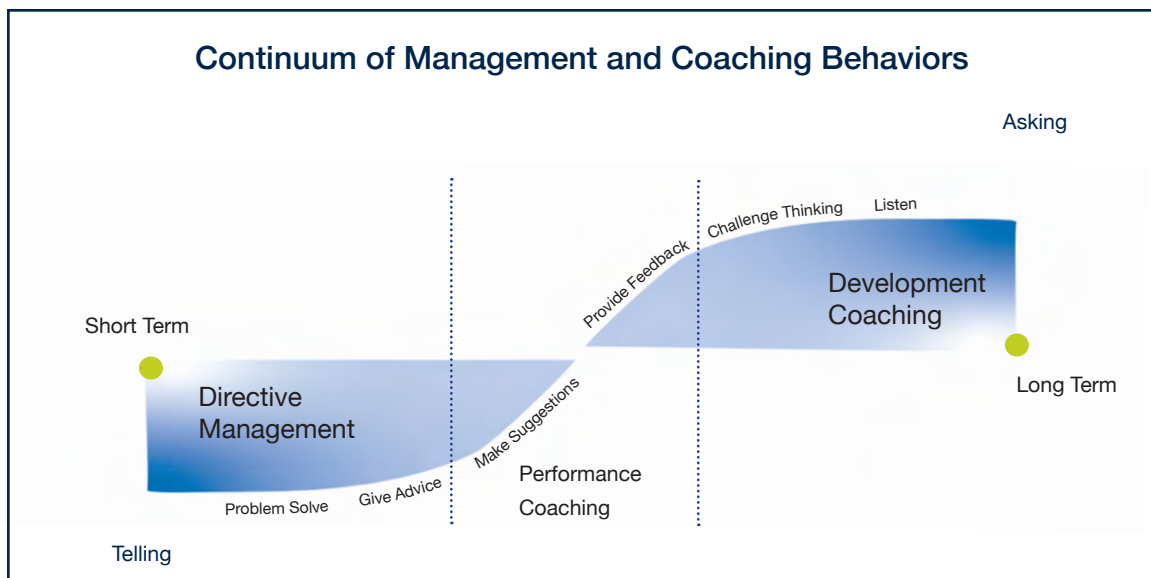
Technology support is built in to the mentor coach service so mentor coaches and their mentees can meet confidentially over virtual platforms. A 360 evaluation of mentor coach services provides mentees, mentor coaches, and SAANYS with important feedback via online, end-of-service surveys. These surveys and other evaluation tools are found in the mentor and mentee handbooks.

SAANYS recognizes the importance of in-house mentors whose roles and responsibilities typically differ from SAANYS mentor coaches as illustrated in the comparison chart on the next page. SAANYS partners with in-district mentors by offering training and collaboration with our service design options.

Comparison Chart

	IN-DISTRICT MENTORS	MENTOR COACHES
Experience	Guide from own experience.	Coach from mentee's experience base.
Training/Accountability	May be trained/may be accountable to district for the mentee's success.	Have formal training that includes ongoing monthly support through SAANYS/accountable to the mentee for success.
Match	May be in a position similar to the mentee's and may compete for similar in-district resources.	May have served in a position similar to the mentee's and are likely to have a broader experience base than the in-district mentor. Do not compete for district resources.
Focus	Share experiences so mentee is comfortable and successful in new role; learning is focused on who's who in the district, district procedures, understanding the district's culture, and more.	Passing judgment and sharing personal experiences/opinions are generally not part of the mentor coach's role unless a career-ending or legal situation may occur. Rather, focus is on the mentee's growth in his/her school leadership practice.
Accountability	May be accountable to other district administrators and/or participate in the mentee's formal evaluation process.	Are not part of the mentee's in-district evaluation process.
Goals	May set goals with or for the mentee.	Goal setting is a requirement in the mentor coaching relationship. Mentor coaches work with the mentee's strengths and a PSEL-based goal setting process to develop a custom-designed individualized learning plan.
Questioning/Reflection Active Listening	May use questioning and active listening.	Use of impactful questioning, active listening, and reflection is part of the training mentor coaches receive, and forms the foundation of the collaborating work done with the mentee.
Options/Choices	May provide options and choices.	Options and choices are a hallmark of the mentor coach's work with the mentee.
Trust/Collegiality	Likely have goals of trust and collegiality.	Mentor coaches must speak and act in a way that builds trust and collegiality.

What is also often different between what in-house mentors focus on and what SAANYS mentor coaches work toward is illustrated in the Continuum of Management and Coaching Behaviors chart on the next page. Generally in-house mentors tend to work on short-term and directive management, whereas SAANYS mentor coaches spend more time on performance and developmental coaching.



Center for Creative Leadership (2018). Notebook: Coaching for Greater Effectiveness, pg. 12.

How are the mentor coaches and mentees recruited and selected? SAANYS advertises the program to all school districts across the state and recruits through its board of directors, regional executive committees and regional representatives, committee structures, and collaborating partners such as University Study Councils and New York State Computer and Technology in Education (NYSCATE), so that the cadre of mentor coaches is made up of active and retired leaders. These leaders come from the ranks of building, district, and essential leaders who represent geographical regions and the content and level specialties that our mentees work in. Emphasis on the importance of collaborating partnerships that build on the geographic and knowledge base of those closest to the schools and districts is a core piece of recruitment efforts.

The selection process for mentor coaches includes the following criteria for candidates:

1. Need for a mentor coach living in specific location(s) in the state.
2. Complete an interview and mentor application.
3. Available to provide mentor coach services as needed and have a flexible schedule, as mentor coaches are expected to accommodate mentees' schedules, within reason.
4. Are willing to sign a confidentiality statement.
5. Are experienced in the specialty area that the mentees serve in, as appropriate.
6. Agree to participate in ongoing support meetings.
7. Actively reflect on and grow mentor coach practice.

What is the role of the Mentoring Advisory Committee? The Advisory Committee is comprised of the deputy executive director, director of professional learning, and the mentor program coordinator, and is responsible for the following duties:

1. Act in an advisory capacity to SAANYS executive director and the SAANYS Board of Directors.
2. Help recruit mentors and mentees...with special emphasis on recruitment of mentor coaches in areas where specific expertise is needed.
3. Receive the Annual Status Report.
4. Work with the SAANYS staff, ensuring that proper use of technology takes place and that necessary documentation of program activities occurs.
5. Promote program and develop new partnerships.
6. Oversee mentor coach and mentee matches.

How are the mentor coach and mentee matches made?

1. SAANYS staff from the Department of Professional Learning meet with mentees and/or gather information from prospective mentees' supervisors. Knowledge about the mentee is essential in helping to make the mentor coach selection.
2. SAANYS staff determine final matches based on this input, expertise of available mentor coaches, and their location. To the extent possible, the mentor coach and mentee(s) meet face-to-face. If distance and other factors prevent in-person meetings, then mentor coach sessions take place virtually.

3. Mismatches — SAANYS believes that mentor coaching should be a mutually beneficial relationship where both parties grow as professionals. When there is not mutual growth, a mismatch may have occurred. If either the mentor coach or the mentee has an issue, he/she contacts SAANYS, as SAANYS, not the mentee's district, coordinates the program. If it is decided that a mutual concern exists, such as a “no-fault divorce” type of situation, both parties discuss the issues with SAANYS staff so a new match can be made, if no other resolution is possible. Since inception over ten years ago, only one mismatch has occurred, as our cadre of highly trained, professional and experienced mentor coaches work diligently to be of service to their mentees.

What are the roles and responsibilities of the mentor coach?

1. Must be active, or not retired for more than five years, when establishing their initial mentor coach relationship.
2. Participates in an initial phone interview, submits a resume, and completes an application.
3. Completes training and applies its protocols in mentor coach sessions. Actively uses skill sets developed as a result of successful completion of the training.
4. If under an active contract, engages in virtual monthly support group sessions with other mentor coaches.
5. Completes all reporting forms, which will include monthly contact log forms, needs assessment tools, questionnaires, surveys, ELC vouchers and the like.
6. Participates in an initial meeting with the supervisor and the mentee.
7. Provides the best quality of service to assigned mentees by being proactive in setting up sessions, using mentor coach skills in the best manner possible, responding to mentees' needs within 24 hours, and supporting other mentor coaches in their practice.
8. Actively helps market SAANYS mentor coach options to the field.

What are the role and responsibilities of the mentee?

1. Interacts with their mentor coach one hour per week for 40 weeks (but not less than 35 weeks) if working in the 1:1 option. If working in the ten-month circle option, mentees are expected to actively participate in four 1:1 sessions (two at the start, one in midsession, and one at the conclusion) and 16 hours in group circle sessions. The circles are either eight two-hour sessions or ten 90-minute sessions. The group model totals 20 hours.
2. Completes the individual needs assessments, the Strengthsfinder Survey, self-reflections, and mentee survey.
3. Keeps a reflective journal, if applicable.
4. Contacts SAANYS staff first with any program concerns.
5. Gives consideration to supporting marketing plans and joining other educational associations as interest and need arise.

What are the roles and responsibilities of the mentee's in-district supervisor? In-district supervisors participate in an orientation session that takes place during the first month of service with the mentee and the mentor coach. The purpose of the session is to review the program, understand one another's roles, and complete the SAANYS contract if not already signed. Participation in a follow-up session to determine year two enrollment and program satisfaction, at the request of the mentee, is suggested.

How is confidentiality maintained? Other than the initial meeting with the supervisor, there is no contact between the mentor coach and the mentee's supervisor unless the mentee requests such. Strict confidentiality will be maintained. Mentor coaches and mentees sign a partnership/confidentiality agreement at the start of their work together.

Is training provided for mentor coaches? Yes. Formal training, based on the latest research and best practice, is provided and required by SAANYS. It is the intent that mentor coaches grow their practice to meet the NAESP School Leadership Mentor Standards. Mentors may be asked to provide evidence that they meet or are working to meet these standards. Attendance at monthly training sessions for active mentor coaches is also required. In addition, mentor coach facilitators from time to time may sit in on a group circle session that they are not facilitating for training purposes only.

How are the mentee and the program evaluated? The program is evaluated using the following methods:

1. During regular monthly support sessions, mentor coaches discuss the components of the program with appropriate SAANYs staff.
2. Surveys are completed by all currently practicing mentor coaches and mentees at the close of an active contract.
3. Mentor coach contact logs are compiled by the director of professional learning.
4. Mentor coaches are asked to individually provide any additional remarks around these two questions, submitting responses directly to the SAANYs director of professional learning.
 - a. Did the mentor coach facilitator support the growth of your mentor coach practice? Please explain.
 - b. What did your mentor coach facilitator do that had the greatest impact on you? Please explain.

A summary of the above is integrated into an annual status report prepared by the SAANYs Mentor Program Coordinator and submitted to the Mentor Advisory Board.

What are the program costs? The program is fee based. Individuals and districts may contract for mentor coach services. Sources of funding may come from Title 1 funds, professional plan funds, and unit contracts. Districts may also contract through their BOCES for the purpose of generating BOCES aid.

How can I get started? Contact the SAANYs Department of Professional Learning at (518) 782-0600.

FAQs

How do we get started?

A school leader may request a mentor coach through the district. The majority of these mentees are successful, reflective young leaders who want to develop their strengths. Many are experienced administrators in new roles. The district then contacts SAANYS on the administrator's behalf.

Alternatively, district leadership might identify a veteran or novice administrator who would benefit from mentor coaching assistance. If the administrator agrees with the recommendation, then district leadership contacts SAANYS.

Potential mentees can also contact SAANYS directly. SAANYS then gets approval from the district and matches the potential mentee with a SAANYS mentor coach. An initial meeting with the mentee, potential mentor coach, and district office representative is scheduled. If all wish to proceed, a contract is completed and the mentorship begins.

When does the program begin?

Both 1:1 and Group Mentor Coaching can begin at any time during the year.

How are SAANYS mentor coaches prepared and trained?

To be eligible for training, potential mentor coaches must be certified school leaders, either currently employed or recently retired, with at least five years of experience. Training is built around the National Mentor Competencies of NAESP as well as those from the Ontario Principals' Council. A minimum of 12 hours of training is required along with continuous development with SAANYS' mentor coordinator.

SAANYS Mentor Coaching Differs from In-district Mentoring

Both kinds of mentoring have value, but they are different and support the mentee in very different ways. SAANYS mentor coaches are not district employees; therefore, there is a high level of comfort with the confidentiality and objectivity that come with an external mentor.

In-district mentors, who are colleagues, can offer a lot of insider history and knowledge of routines, procedures, and district culture. SAANYS mentor coaches, however, are trained to focus on overall professional growth by advancing a mentee's ability to think through challenges and strengthen his or her leadership skills using impactful questioning, active listening, and reflection.

In-District Mentor Training Now Available!

Contact SAANYS about in-district mentor options should your district need to train its current in-district mentors in providing true professional growth mentoring, in addition to traditional district culturalization and orientation.

Set Your Administrative Team on the Path to Success

Contact:

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SAANYS Director of Professional Learning
kbronson@saanys.org
or
Bonnie Tryon, SAANYS Mentor Coordinator
btryon@saanys.org

SAANYS Mentor Coaching Services



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"I was given new strategies that I have already put into practice." - SAANYS Mentee



When school leaders improve their leadership practices and stay in their jobs longer, student learning improves.

[Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010]

Preparing school leaders for success, and sustaining those leaders, is critical to the future of education. Administrator turnover can be expensive and detrimental to a school system, impacting student achievement and overall school success.

Now more than ever, it is essential that our school leaders be provided with high-quality support as they help build a brighter future for New York's students. The SAANYS Mentor Coach program is designed to fill a current gap in school leadership development – the opportunity to grow professionally from a true mentor coaching relationship.

Continuing Education Credit (CTLE)

SAANYS, a certified CTLE provider, offers mentoring options for school leaders in any role, at any stage in their careers.

Districts can choose to use the SAANYS Mentor Coaching options to satisfy mentoring requirements for administrators holding an initial SBL certificate. All participants receive a certificate of mentorship completion and/or CTLE credit.



Option 1

1:1 Mentor Coaching

1:1 Mentor Coaching pairs a trained SAANYS Mentor Coach with an individual school leader. This model offers confidential and individualized support to the mentee over the course of ten months. Based on research and best practices in the field, SAANYS uses the *Mentor Coach Model for Leadership Development*.

1:1 Mentor Coaching features a reciprocal learning relationship. The mentor coach and mentee form a partnership, working collaboratively toward the achievement of mutually defined goals to develop the mentee's skills, abilities, and thinking. Both face-to-face and virtual platforms are used for meetings and contact is available to the mentee as needed between meetings.

1:1 Mentor Coaching lasts for a period of ten months. The cost is \$3,500, which is eligible for state aid if run through a BOCES.

"Through the SAANYS mentorship program I found peace of mind that my principals are connected to the very best professionals and feel supported all the way around. The SAANYS mentorship program makes principals successful. I trust and look to the SAANYS mentor program for all my principals early in their career or even just new to the district."

William Crankshaw, Superintendent, Greater Johnstown SD

Option 2

Group Mentor Coaching

This model features the benefit of the support of colleagues in addition to that of the mentor coach. By sharing successes and challenges with colleagues and a trained mentor coach, mentees build leadership capacity by identifying strengths and delving into concrete day-to-day situations.

Three to six mentees, either from the same district or different districts in a region, can form a coaching circle with the mentor coach acting as facilitator. Circles form for ten months and feature four individual 1:1 sessions with the mentor coach as well as eight 90-minute group sessions. Online support is available if needed between meetings.

This option lasts for a ten-month period. The cost to the district is \$1,750 for each mentee, which is also eligible for state aid if run through a BOCES.

"SAANYS mentoring has changed our administrative team ... Our administrators have valued and cherished the time they have spent with their SAANYS mentor, who skillfully used questioning and scenarios to give them tools to solve their own challenges and build a plan to move forward with confidence and collaboration."

Shelley Rossitto
Executive Director, IT & PD, Monticello Schools

