

Sample Focused Mentoring Activity

Focus Area(s): Communication with Parents/ Preparing and planning for parent-teacher conferences

Date:

OBJECTIVES/ GOALS OF THE MEETING:

Resident educators will prepare and rehearse parent teacher conference strategies

Plan content in a positive and organized way, take notes about the conversation for future reference.

ALIGNMENT TO STANDARDS

Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession:

1, 5

RE Mentor Standards:

1, 4, 5

Other:

Introduction:

Model a parent teacher conference. To introduce, have a teacher role play a conference situation in which the teacher is not organized or prepared to share data. Contrast with a role play of a teacher who prepared and organized. This teacher has compiled formative and summative data and has pertinent information to share.

Common Language/ Terms/ Acronyms:

Data, example: DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment), MAP testing (or other predictive assessments), performance data, grades, assessment portfolio, intervention, learning goals

Resources:

20 Questions to ask at parent-teacher conferences (great for planning role play):
<https://www.care.com/c/stories/3264/20-questions-to-ask-during-a-parent-teacher-c/>
 Video: <http://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/parent-teacher-conference-tips>

Activity Description/ Conversation Questions/ Content

Make sure that parents know that you know their child's learning needs. Start the conference with social information about how the child interacts with peers and how they appear to feel about being at school. Parents are interested in their child's happiness as well as their ability to make friends and work out problems productively.

Discuss the child's academic milestones by sharing assessment data that you have collected up to this point during the year. Document the ideas of the parent so that you can follow up with information that took place during the conference. Ask the child to select the work of which he or she is most proud and ask them to share it with their parents during the conference. Have the student share his or her portfolio (collection of work). Ask the parent and child to do a reflection, goal setting and a comment page for the portfolio to give the parent a voice in reflecting on the student's work. Set some academic goals with a specified plan about achieving these goals.

Leave time for questions and answers. Take careful notes. If you promise to check in with a parent in a week, month etc. put it on the calendar and make sure to communicate in the manner and with the information that you have promised. Make sure that parents have your phone number and an email where you can be reached for follow-up.

If a parent is upset or angry about something, listen first. Try to react calmly and diffuse the emotions. Give the parent as much information as you can. If the parent persists in being angry, aggressive or even abusive, end the conference with a statement like, "I can see that you are very upset. It is hard to resolve issues when emotions are running so high. I would be happy to call you in a day or two so that we might both be able to reflect on the situation and find a resolution that will serve in the best interest of your child."

Thank the parent for coming. Give them a copy of the notes if you have them available. Most conferences are routine and pleasant experiences. Allow time for role play and discussion.

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Consider taking notes to use in future professional dialogues

Reflection and/or evidence of learning:

Discuss with the resident educator the response to the professional conversations. Meet beforehand to discuss notes to be shared during parent-teacher conferences. Have a reflective conversation about concerns, difficult conference situations and plan for a positive experience.

Remember:

- Start with a positive
- Discuss progress or lack of progress
- Set goals
- Involve parents in the process

Reflection Questions:

To what extent do you feel ready for conferences?

Do you have data to share with parents?

Have you practiced enough to feel confident?

Would you like to meet to plan a conference that might be challenging?

Follow up:

Together with the resident educator, plan a conference that may be challenging. Offer additional practice and resources. After the conferences have concluded, discuss the parts that went well, any concerns and any changes for next time.

Notes:

Reference:

NEA Parent-Teacher Conferences: Preparing for and Conducting Parent-Teacher Conferences

<http://www.nea.org/tools/parent-teacher-conferences.html>

Retrieved September 7, 2017