Recognition of and respect for individual differences pertains to teachers as well as students, as reflected in Downsville’s mentor/mentee program.

Downsville Central School
Mentor/Mentee Staff Program

Program Overview

The immediate goal of Downsville Central School District Mentor/Mentee Staff Program is to ensure high quality teaching by mentee staff through the guidance, modeling and support that results from the collegial relationship of a mentor and a mentee. The long range goal for the program is excellence in the education of Downsville students. To this purpose, all mentees are placed in the program for the first year in a given tenure track. During this year, the mentees will be placed in a one-on-one situation with a peer mentor. Utilization of a mentor during the non-tenured staff member’s second and third year is optional. The District and or the mentee may choose to continue having a mentee paired with a mentor.

Mentors and mentees will share many things: successes, problems, ideas, experiences, opinions, teaching strategies, students’ successes, and discussion of district/building curriculum and policies.

All mentee and mentor pairs as well as any other non-tenured staff members will be required to attend the Non-Tenured Teacher Academy Meetings held throughout the school year. Regardless of whether the mentors are choosing to do this as their APPR or a stipend, they must attend these meetings with their mentees.

As the mentor demonstrates and models, the mentees learn new strategies, engage in self-assessment and modify techniques. The mentor gives positive feedback, guides the mentee in providing opportunities for student success, and encourages problem solving.

The mentee has a resource in the mentor to help with planning and organization, as well as a confidante to turn to when problems arise. The support and encouragement of the mentor can smooth the potentially rough first years of
teaching. The mentor, in turn, gains new perspectives, different teaching
techniques, fresh ideas and exposure to a newcomer’s enthusiasm.

Confidentiality is a critical component of mentor/mentee partnership because
trust is fragile. Trust comes from the security of knowing that your actions and
words will not be public knowledge. Therefore, all shared confidences should be
kept between the mentor and mentee. Mentors never create evaluative reports.

Just as students have individual learning styles, teachers have individual teaching
styles. It is important that both mentor and mentee recognize and respect those
differences. The purpose of the programs is to help new staff members reach
their full potential utilizing their own unique characteristics.