



Our Students. Our Future.

Gonzales ISD Teacher Mentoring Program

TRADITION.PRIDE.CONNECTION

Gonzales ISD
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Your Service as a Mentor

Teaching is a complex and demanding profession. The first-year teacher needs a support system to make the transition from theory to practice. Successful teaching depends on shared experiences and collegial nurturing under the guidance of experienced professionals. To meet this need, Gonzales ISD is committed to teachers helping teachers through a mentoring program. The teacher mentor will:

- Be a cooperative agent among the various groups of involved educators.
- Facilitate professional and personal growth.
- Be supportive and instructive rather than evaluative.
- Be willing to share what works as well as experienced ideas

Gonzales School District's teachers commit to our motto - "Tradition.Pride.Connection." Since the classroom and classroom teacher are the most important contributors to student achievement, we have an interest and an obligation to see that our new-to-our-district teachers become successful teachers.

GOALS

To ensure a successful mentor program, there must be commonly accepted goals. The Gonzales ISD's goals for a mentor program are:

1. **TO BRIDGE THE GAP of the Shortage of people who want to work in education AND THE TEACHING CAREER,** THERE are too many adjustments to be made from college-based theory classes to actual classroom practices. A significant amount of time can be saved and emotional distress avoided if beginning teachers have someone to introduce them to the intricacies of the school district, their school, and its personnel, as well as the basics of establishing classroom procedures and efficient practices.
2. **TO ENHANCE TEACHING PERFORMANCE** In a study by Huling-Austin and Murphy (1987), during an end-of-year interview, first-year teachers were asked what changes they had made as a result of the assistance received through their induction programs. The researchers commented:

"It is interesting to note that both the number and nature of the changes are mentioned. The list indicates most of the types that directly influence the quality of instruction with students. Management, focused instruction, targeted interventions, and

data-driven decision-making all contribute to better student performance.

3. **TO IMPROVE PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS,** Educational researchers David and Roger Johnson (1987) found that adult cooperation promotes:
 - higher achievement
 - more positive interpersonal relationships
 - Greater social support
 - Higher professional self-esteem
 - Beginning teachers who receive strong foundational support turn into educational leaders for the entire learning community.

4. **TO IMPROVE THE PERSONAL AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF THE BEGINNING TEACHER.** For many teachers, the first year may mean a move away from familiar settings and people to a situation where everything is unfamiliar – the town, the customs, the school, and the students. Mentees may need help adjusting to their surroundings. This could take a variety of forms, from helping to locate community resources to organizing get-togethers that allow mentees to meet coworkers.

5. **TO IMPROVE THE EDUCATIONAL CLIMATE OF THE SCHOOL** When new teachers have emotional as well as instructional support from other educators, they are likely to have more confidence and to experience less stress and anxiety. As a result, a higher level of expertise and greater continuity will be achieved in the classroom and throughout the school.

6. **TO ENHANCE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT** New teachers will be more confident, more competent, less stressed, and have greater support resources. Collaborative experiences will lead beginning teachers to use advanced teaching techniques earlier in their careers, and students will benefit from having stronger, more effective teachers.

7. **TO ENHANCE THE IMAGE OF THE PROFESSION,** Teachers, like doctors and lawyers, need a residency period where they are practicing the profession, yet have support and immediate feedback on their techniques. Mentor programs will align teaching with other occupations, thereby enhancing the profession's image.

THE ULTIMATE GOAL is to begin building long-term professional growth. The three essentials of professional development – autonomy, collaboration, and time must not be overlooked. To foster growth, new teachers must be given both structure and flexibility, and developmental opportunities must be provided beyond the first year of teaching.

The Roles of a Mentor

Leadership

- A leader at the school and/or district level, in professional organizations
- A developer of talents and strengths in adults and children
- A contributor to professional growth activities

Professional Role Model

- An expert in content, curriculum, and instruction
- An expert in communications and relationships
- A model team player

Coach

- An Expert in observing and supervision
- An expert in standards, policies, and politics
- A calculated risk taker
- A lifelong learner personally and professionally

Liaison, Facilitator, Relationship Builder

- Recognized reputation within the school community
- Knowledgeable about the school's traditions, culture, and history
- A Networker with connections to others
- A seeker of opportunities and provider of experiences

Supporter

- An expert is an accepting, empathetic, nonjudgmental listener
- An encourager, promoter, success expecter
- A persistent, committed, and consistent confidant
- A safety net



Strategic Vision 2022-2027

Vision

Gonzales ISD is a destination district committed to growing greatness.

TRADITION.PRIDE.CONNECTION.

Mission

Gonzales Independent School District designs meaningful learning experiences that inspire students to make an impact beyond themselves.

Beliefs

- We believe productive citizens move society forward.
- We believe student success results from meaningful learning experiences.
- We believe in the power of connection and that the active role of family, community, and student and staff relationships generate positive student and staff outcomes. .
- We believe investing in the growth of all staff creates a community of learners and leaders.
- We believe when we are responsive to student needs we increase the likelihood of their success.

Goal Area 1

- Developing Effective Communication Strategies

Goal Area 2

- Focusing on Students and the Work Provided to Students

Goal Area 3

- Recruiting, Inducting, and Retaining High-Quality Staff

Goal Area 4

- Strategic Resource Management

Meeting Dates:

Location: Administration Office in the Cafeteria, 4:20 pm

2025

July 31, 8:00 am Mentor/Mentee
 August 25, Mentee
 September 29 Mentor

November 17, Mentee

December 2 Christmas Party Mentor/Mentee - Cancelled

2026

Jan 26 Mentor
 February 23 Mentor/Mentee
 March 23 Mentor
 May 11 Complete Survey
 and turn in paperwork

[Academic School Calendar](#)

[Resource Mentor Handbook](#)

Campus Mentor Expectations

Principals will assign a mentor to all new professionals in Grades Pre-K through 12 with zero to 2 years of teaching experience. The Mentor will provide assistance and guidance to the new teacher in accordance with the Gonzales ISDS Mentoring and First Year Teacher Academy Handbook.

Qualifications for Mentors

- Has successfully taught for a minimum of 3 years
- Teachers on the same campus as the new teacher, preferably in the duplicate content or grade level
- Holds a clear record of maximizing student achievement
- Has a thorough knowledge of school procedures
- Demonstrates the ability to work with peers collaboratively and fosters continuous good rapport
- Commits to devoting time with the new teacher inside and outside of the school day
- Holds a current, permanent teacher certification Agrees to complete and submit all appropriate paperwork and forms
- Demonstrates solid, ethical and professional conduct

Compensation

A **stipend of \$500.00 per semester** will be paid to any teacher or professional person on campus selected by the principal to mentor a new teacher or 2nd year teacher. The maximum number of teachers supported by one Mentor is two (2), as long as adequate support can be provided to the mentees.

Stipends will be paid to mentors at the end of each semester during the school year. If resigning from Gonzales ISD, it is the responsibility of the campus Principal to notify the Human Resources Department.

Requirements, Roles, and Responsibility

Mentoring is a system of support and development to facilitate the growth of new teachers in Gonzales ISD. Research shows that mentoring aligned with district and campus support dramatically increased their proficiency and self-efficacy while reducing new novice teacher attrition. The mentor will meet with and provide support to the new teacher for an average of an hour a week but more frequently at the beginning of the year.

The mentor must attend the required mentor sessions and one First Year Teacher Academy with their mentee in order to receive their stipend. The mentor will encourage the new teacher to attend all First Year Teacher Academy sessions. The mentor will also inform new teachers of their relevant training, which they believe would be relevant and beneficial.

It is highly encouraged for mentors to check in with their mentees daily during the first two weeks of school and at least twice per month during the third and fourth weeks of school. After the first month of school campus mentors should meet with mentees at least weekly for the rest of the year. Research shows that new teachers who receive at least 20 minutes of quality coaching grow more than the average teacher does in 10 years.

Mentor Orientation and Professional Learning

1. **Complete the 4 required Mentor sessions** provided by District
 - a. July 31, Sept. 29, January 26, and March 23, 2026
2. **Attend two** of the Mentee Teacher Academy sessions with your mentee
3. Meet two times per month with the mentee
4. Complete the forms in the Mentors and Mentee manual and submit to the Google Drive by the deadlines. (complete Mentor Activity Calendar)

Mentor Monthly Meeting with Mentee

- Respond to the mentee's immediate questions, needs, and concerns
- Ensure the mentee is aware of District policies regarding grading, discipline, parental communication, serving various student populations, and other relevant matters.
- Assist the mentee in planning lessons and locating appropriate instructional resources.
- Assist the mentee in utilizing student data to guide instruction
- Support the mentee in developing efficient and effective classroom routines and procedures

Observations

It is recommended that there be a total of four observations for new teachers. The mentee will have at least two opportunities to observe classroom instruction, while the mentor will observe the mentee at least twice per year.

Expectations

Before School Starts:

1. The Mentor will assist mentees in completing the beginning-of-the-year forms.
2. The Mentor will assist mentees in completing initial reports related to the newly implemented teacher evaluation, T-TESS.

During the school year:

1. The Mentor will meet weekly with each mentee to discuss one or more of the following topics:
 - Lesson planning
 - Student performance (Report card grades, Benchmark data, etc.)
 - Classroom management
 - Any other concerns observed by the Mentor and/or mentee
2. The Mentor will maintain a log of all meetings with the mentee.
3. Submit copies of the Mentor Log, Mentee/Mentor Reflection Log, Mentoring 9 Weeks Activity Forms, and Pre & Post Observation forms to the Lead Mentor quarterly. (All documentation will be submitted in the Google Drive)

End of the year:

1. The Mentor will assist the mentee with completing end-of-the-year reports required by the campus administrator and/or department leaders.
2. All documentation will be placed in the district Google Drive. The Mentor will assist the mentee in completing end-of-year reports related to the newly implemented teacher evaluation system, T-TESS.

Mentor/Mentee Monthly Reflection Log

Mentor:

Mentee:

Date:

Year 1 or 2:

Topic Discussion



Questions or Concerns



Topics to Cover for Mentees

August/September

People to Know

- Mentor contact info
- Office staff
- Important staff to know
- Grade-level team members

Info for staff

- Staff manual
- Employee/school calendars
- Staff meeting time & location

Professional Expectations

- Professional development
- Joining school/district committees
- Using leave
- Attending school events
- Getting a substitute
- Emergency sub plans
- Observations
- Dress code

Getting Set Up

- Classroom setup/On-Demand
- Organization for supplies, math manipulatives, etc.
- Setting up the classroom library
- Traditional vs. alternative seating
- Creating a schedule
- Setting up class jobs
- Required bulletin boards
- Displaying student work
- Student computers
- Interactive whiteboard/projector
- Desk tags, name labels, class lists, folders, notebooks, etc.
- "Meet the teacher" and other handouts

The First Day/Week

- First week of school/On-Demand
- Establishing class rules
- Practicing routines
- Developing classroom communities (icebreakers, morning meetings, etc.)
- Misc. administrative duties (i.e., collecting forms)

Planning & Instruction

- Classroom Management/Management On-Demand
- Daily Schedule and Lesson Planning
- Locating & using standards to plan instruction
- Locating print/online resources
- Schoolwide practices (i.e., guided math, Daily 5, etc.)
- Pre-assessing students
- Keeping Documentation (RTI)
- SPED/ESOL accommodations
- Requirements for posting objectives, using word walls, etc.
- Collaborating with other staff (i.e., specialists)

The School Building

- Building basics (open hours, entrances, location of the office, specialists' rooms, clinic, staff lounge, workroom, etc.)
- Safety procedures
- Where to find: Printers, copiers, and laminating machines
- Office supplies
- Student records

School-wide Policies & Procedures

- Attendance/Skyward
- Arrival and dismissal
- Lunch and snacks
- Recess
- Visiting the nurse/medications
- Student bathroom use
- Reporting an incident
- Using the library

Behavior Management

- Class behavior system
- Communicating with parents
- When to involve a guidance counselor and/or administrator

	<p>Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff resources ● Student resources ● BYOD policy ● Getting help ● School/class websites ● Student login information
October	
<p>Parent Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School expectations ● Weekly take-home folders ● Class website ● ClassLink ● Parent Portal ● Parent-teacher conferences <p>Special Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resources ● Accommodations ● Support staff & services ● IEPs & 504s ● Confidential information ● What to do if you have a concern about a student 	<p>Planning & Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assessment/grading policies ● Setting up guided reading groups ● Setting up guided math groups ● Teacher evaluation ● Differentiation using technology in the classroom <p>Gifted Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resources ● Support staff & services ● Recommending a student ● Differentiation
November	
<p>Grading & Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Grading procedures and policies ● Data Interpretation/Eduphoria ● Recordkeeping ● Report cards & interims ● Formal assessments ● Using pre-assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reviewing content before a test ● Keeping a copy of student work for portfolios or files ● Remediation ● Late/missing work policy ● Student retention
December	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Winter break ● Checking on student progress ● Discuss student data 	

January

- Reflection on the first half of the year
- Revisiting student behavior and classroom management
- Lesson planning

February

- Ways to keep up teacher morale
- Fostering a positive & caring classroom environment
- Meeting student needs/Differentiating Instruction/Grouping by TEKS
- Reflect are you meeting the needs of all students growth- preparation

March

- Planning for the rest of the year
- Collecting artifacts for teacher evaluation
- Look at student growth preparation
- Contact parents for with any concerns

April

- STAAR and End of Year testing and review
- Improving teaching strategies

May

End of the Year

- Packing up the classroom
- End-of-year procedures and special events
- Checking on student progress
- Reflection on the first year
- Thinking about next year
- Student paperwork
- Returning/checking out equipment
- Final grades
- Special events
- Yearbooks
- Student gifts
- Summer reading program

Mentoring Activity Calendar

1st Nine Weeks

Week	Activity	Completed	
		Signature	Date
1	Review the new teacher checklist prior to the first day of school. Assist the teacher in preparing for the first day and first week of school/On-Demand.		
2	Peruse the content of the new teacher's lesson plans and assist with ideas, resources, materials, etc.		
3	Assist and monitor the mentee with inputting grades in the new grading system.		
4	Assist the teacher in completing reports for T-TESS		
5	Assist mentee with making contact with parents of students experiencing some level of difficulty.		
6	Get feedback from mentee as to how things are progressing.		
7	Assist the mentee in preparing to export grades for the first nine-week period.		
8	Assist mentee in conferencing with parents regarding students' grades. Prepare the mentee for "Parent Conference Day" procedures.		

Mentoring Activity Calendar

2nd Nine Weeks

Week	Activity	Completed	
		Signature	Date
10	Review components of T-TESS in preparation for the next informal observation.		
11	Peruse the content of the new teacher's lesson plans and assist with ideas, resources, materials, etc.		
12	Assist and plan for monitoring student progress.		
13	Assist mentee in reviewing student data such as class work, homework, DCA results, teacher assessment results, etc. to determine individual student needs.		
14	Assist mentee with making contact with parents of students experiencing some level of difficulty.		
15	Monitor the inputting of grades.		
16	Get feedback from mentee as to how things are progressing.		
17	Assist the mentee in preparing to export grades for the second nine-week period.		
18	Assist mentee in conferencing with parents regarding student's grades.		

Mentoring Activity Calendar

3rd Nine Weeks

Week	Activity	Completed	
		Signature	Date
20	Discuss any issues or concerns the new teacher may have at this time.		
21	Peruse the content of the new teacher's lesson plans and assist with ideas, resources, materials, etc.		
22	Assist in planning for assessment reviews. (EOY or STAAR)		
23	Assist the teacher in updating student permanent record folders.		
24	Assist mentee with making contact with parents of students experiencing some level of difficulty.		
25	Assist and monitor the inputting of grades.		
26	Get feedback from mentee as to how things are progressing.		
27	Assist the mentee in preparing to export grades for the third nine-week period.		
28	Assist mentee in conferencing with parents regarding student's grades.		
29	Extra:		

Mentoring Activity Calendar

4th Nine Weeks

Week	Activity	Completed	
		Signature	Date
30	Discuss any issues or concerns the new teacher may have at this time.		
31	Peruse the content of the new teacher's lesson plans and assist with ideas, resources, materials, etc.		
32	Assist and monitor the mentee with inputting grades in the new grading system.		
33	Prepare the teacher for completing reports for T-TESS		
34	Review end of year procedures for the grade level and the campus.		
35	Review assessment protocol. (EOY or STAAR)		
36	Get feedback from mentee regarding the benefits of the mentoring program.		
37	Assist new teachers with report cards, textbooks, etc.		
38	Wish the new teacher a restful and safe summer.		

Observation Schedule
Mentee Teachers

There will be a total of **four observations** for new teachers (20 minutes).

- The mentee will have at least two opportunities to observe classroom instruction while the Mentor will observe the mentee at least two times per year.
- The first observation will include the mentee observing the Mentor.
- The second observation will be the Mentor observing the mentee.
- Work with the campus IC and/or Principal to secure coverage of classes if needed.

Observation Window 1	September 11 – 22, 2025	(Mentee Observes Mentor)
Observation Window 2	October 23 – November 3, 2025	(Mentor Observes Mentee)
Observation Window 3	January 15 – 26, 2026	(Mentee Observes Mentor)
Observation Window 4	February 11 – 23, 2026	(Mentor Observe Mentee)

PRE-OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

1. What are the objectives of the lesson?
2. What standards does your lesson address?
3. What will you be doing during the lesson?
4. What will students be doing?
5. How will you assess student learning?
6. How will you monitor student behavior during the lesson?
7. How will you differentiate to meet different learning styles and needs?
8. Are there any specific areas you'd like to me to focus on (i.e., wait time, transitions, checking for understanding, etc.)?

Observation Form		Gonzales ISD Growing Greatness
Mentor:		Mentee:
Course/Class:		
Date:		Time:
Observation Focus Areas		Descriptions/Comments
	Routines and Procedures and Classroom Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Students demonstrate knowledge of efficient routines, transition, and procedures (3.1) → Classroom is safe and thoughtfully designed to engage students (3.1) 	
	Managing Student Behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Teacher addresses off-task behaviors in a way that does not disrupt lesson momentum (3.2) → Pacing of lesson appropriate to diminish idle time (3.2) → Teacher provides specific, concrete, sequential, and observable directions for expectations 	
	Strong Voice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Uses clear strong voice → Uses formal register (Complete sentences and formal English) 	
	Classroom Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Creates a positive rapport among students (3.3) → Respects students and is fair and impartial → Engages student with relevant learning, shows enthusiasm 	
	Content Knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Conveys accurate content knowledge and delivers lesson with coherence (2.2) (1.1) → Anticipates possible student misunderstandings (2.2) → Lesson focuses on content that advances students towards grade level expectations (1.1) 	
	Standards and Alignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Lesson aligned to standards and evidence of preparation (1.1) → Communicates objective to students → Provides time for lesson closure (1.1) 	

	Teaching Methods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Formal and informal assessments to monitor progress of all students → Connects lesson to student's prior knowledge and experiences (1.3) → Adjust lessons as needed and adapt to address student needs (1.3) Uses questions that encourages all students to engage in complex, higher order thinking (1.4) 	
	Professional Responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Meets all professional standards (e.g.) attendance, professional appearance, behaviors (4.1) → Documentation of parent/guardian contact (parent contact logs) (4.4) 	

T-TESS Rubric

Timeline for Mentors

Principals	July 10, 2025	<input type="checkbox"/> Mentor Assignment spreadsheet completed
Mentors	September 8, 2025	<input type="checkbox"/> Mentor/Teacher Agreement Form <input type="checkbox"/> Compensation Form
Mentors & Teachers	September 8, 2025	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop Mentor/Teacher Schedule for On-Going Meetings

Mentors	September 29, 2025 January 29, 2026 (New Hires)	<input type="checkbox"/> Participation Letter (Talent Advisor Coordinator will distribute letters to mentors)
Principals	September 30, 2025	<input type="checkbox"/> Approves Mentor/Teacher Schedule for On-Going Meetings
Mentors	Review Training Dates Submit Paperwork in google drive: September 29, 2025 November 17, 2025 February 16, 2026 March 8, 2026	<input type="checkbox"/> Attends mentor training sessions <input type="checkbox"/> Submits all documentation of mentor/mentee meetings and observations in the google drive.
Mentors	October Mentor Meeting March Mentor Meeting	<input type="checkbox"/> Verifies all mentors and assignments for stipend distribution.
Mentors	January 26, 2024 (New Hires)	For mentors of new hires... <input type="checkbox"/> Mentor/Teacher Agreement Form <input type="checkbox"/> Compensation Form

Agreement 2025-2026

Gonzales ISD Knowledge of Expectations for being a Mentor to receive my Stipend for the 2025-2026

As a teacher mentor, I agree to abide by the guidelines and procedures outlined in the Mentoring Program Handbook. To receive a stipend as a mentor, I understand that I must submit all mentor agreements, attend mentor meetings, and submit all documentation. Submit all documentation to the Talent Advisor Coordinator by uploading the document by September 8, 2025, and May 6, 2026.

Mentor's Printed Name

Mentor's Signature

Date: _____

1. Name of Mentee: _____

2. Name of Mentee: _____