

Greenville School District Teacher Mentoring Program Confidentiality: Statement of Understanding

The mentoring program at the Greenville School District was instituted to ensure that each new teacher in the school district be afforded the support of experienced faculty for orientation and instructional coaching. For mentoring to meet its goal of aiding new teachers in effective instructional and professional practices, the environment must be risk-free and non-threatening. New teachers need to avail themselves of such help and willingly open their classrooms to their mentors. It is also important for mentors to open their classrooms to their new teachers and assist new teachers in gaining experience through other professional contacts in the school and the broader educational community.

- Mentors will not to have any role in the new teacher's evaluation process.
- Mentors will not share any information regarding new teachers with the new teacher's principal(s), other administrators, colleagues or students. It is understood, however, that there may be situations where mentors will need to share information in confidence with other mentors for support purposes or professional development.
- Principals will not seek any information from mentors regarding the new teachers or from sharing their own evaluative observations with mentors.
- At their discretion, new teachers may wish to share personal or evaluative information with either mentors or principals as a means of seeking help-advice.
- The mentor or new teacher may inform the Program Coordinator/Committee if the mentor-new teacher relationship is faltering so that adjustments can be made.
- Program coordinator and Program Committee, and possibly the principal, will be informed if/when any new faculty avoids or refuses to participate in this program-
- If a new teacher's retention or future contract to the school district is in question, mentors will not be asked for comment.
- If a new teacher requests a letter of recommendation from a mentor for promotion or rank or tenure, compliance is the personal decision of the mentor.

Under the law, it must be understood that should it become relevant in any sort of legal proceeding to obtain the testimony of a mentor, the law will not recognize any privilege in the relationship that would permit the mentor not to testify or that would permit the new teacher to prevent disclosure. Under the law, the relationship between a mentor and the teacher with whom the mentor is working is not a privileged one such as that between spouses, physicians and patients, priests and penitents, or lawyers and clients. For example, should a new teacher not be retained or otherwise terminated and decide to challenge that action, communications with the mentor might become relevant in a court of law

