

E-Mentoring Program Guidelines for Mentors

2010-2011

Welcome to the E-Mentoring Program! The success of an e-mentoring relationship depends in great part upon the contribution you make. These guidelines were created to help you learn how you can contribute and get the most from your e-mentoring experience. Taking full advantage of the E-Mentoring Program will provide you with not only a convenient way to volunteer, but also the satisfaction of knowing that you are making a difference in the life of a youth!

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E-MENTORING PROGRAM OVERVIEW

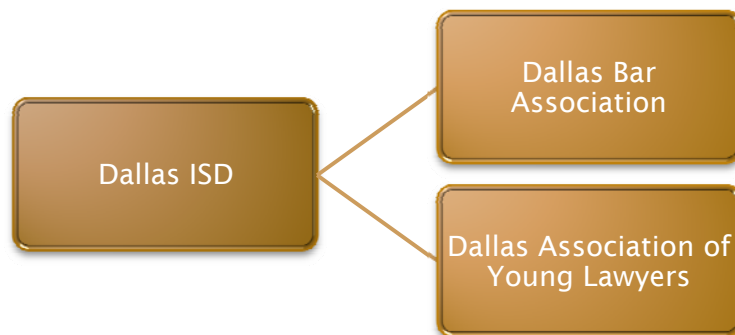
What is E-Mentoring?

e-men•tor•ing [ee-men-tawr-ing]

A means of providing a mentoring relationship between business or legal professionals and school age children, largely through e-mail. The mentoring relationship brings an added interest and aim to the classroom that benefits many students in significant ways. The ease of use provided by e-mail allows the mentor to spend a small amount of time making a large positive impact in a young person's life.

Our History

The E-Mentoring Program was created in 2004 by a group of attorneys who wanted to help better prepare the youth in their community for the world. The program was developed in partnership with the Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD), the Dallas Bar Association (DBA) and the Dallas Association of Young Lawyers (DAYL).



Our Mission

The mission of the E-Mentoring Program is to create e-mail based mentoring relationships between Dallas professionals and Dallas ISD students with the purpose of encouraging students to stay in school, graduate and go on to college. E-Mentoring seeks to make an impact on alarmingly low graduation rates and college entry among economically disadvantaged youth.

Our Schools

The Dallas ISD and the E-Mentoring Committee work together during the summer to select the high schools that will participate in the E-Mentoring program during the upcoming school year. Schools that are eligible to be considered must participate in the Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) or Education is Freedom (EIF) programs and are selected based on interest, computer access and need.

Every attempt is made to bring back schools that participated in the prior year.

Below are the schools that have been chosen to participate in 2010-2011:

Advancement Via Individual Determination

Hillcrest High School
W.W. Samuell High School
South Oak Cliff High School

Education is Freedom

W.H. Adamson High School
North Dallas High School
H. Grady Spruce High School
Thomas Jefferson High School
L.G. Pinkston High School
Seagoville High School
A Maceo Smith High School
Woodrow Wilson High School

Judge Barefoot Sanders Magnet Center for Public Service: Government, Law and Law Enforcement at Yvonne A. Ewell Townview Center

Our Students

Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) Students

Students who participate in the AVID initiative typically will be the first in their families to attend college and many are from low-income or minority families. The partnership between the Dallas ISD, DBA and DAYL provides a unique way to motivate these students and show them that Dallas professionals care about them and want to help them fulfill their dreams. We support AVID in their work to advance students scholastically and socially to ensure they can meet the demands of college when they get there. <http://www.avid.org/intro.html>

Education is Freedom (EIF) Students

EIF Dallas is a local, comprehensive college readiness school-based program that addresses the lack of educational support, mentoring and college-going orientation among low-income youth in the Dallas ISD. The program aims to prevent low-income students from dropping out of high school, help students prepare for college during middle school and high school, assist with the navigation of the college entrance and financial aid processes, equip students with skills needed to complete college and help students leverage private and public scholarship funds to pay for college. <http://www.educationisfreedom.com/>

Judge Barefoot Sanders Magnet Center for Public Service: Government, Law and Law Enforcement at Yvonne A. Ewell Townview Center Students

The Judge Harold Barefoot Sanders Magnet Center for Public Service: Government, Law and Law Enforcement is one of several Dallas ISD magnet schools. The school aims to prepare its students for college and careers in government, law and law enforcement through experiential and hands-on learning activities. This will be the Law Magnet's first year participating in the E-Mentoring Program. www.dallasisd.org/schools/hs/law/Law_Magnet_Real/Law_Index.html

E-Mentoring Program Participants

Many people from the local legal and business community are involved in the operation of the E-Mentoring Program. Below is a list of the people you may hear about as you participate in the program.

- **AVID School Coordinator**: The Dallas ISD teacher who oversees your student if your student participates in AVID.
- **EIF Higher Education Advisor**: The EIF employee who oversees your student if your student participates in EIF.
- **E-Mentoring Committee**: A group of volunteers from the local legal and business community who oversee the day-to-day operations of the E-Mentoring Program.
- **E-Mentoring Program Directors**: The leaders of the E-Mentoring Program. 2010-2011 Directors are Allen Butler, Bria Smith-Hofland, Everett New, Mary Nix, Tracy Wolf and Stephanie Zaleskin.
- **E-Mentoring School Coordinator**: A member of the E-Mentoring Committee who is assigned to your school. Your E-Mentoring School Coordinator works with all the mentors assigned to a school to ensure that communication is flowing between you and your student, to address any issues that arise and to help set up opportunities for you to meet your student face-to-face.
- **Law Magnet Advisor**: The Law Magnet Advisor who oversees your student if your student attends the Yvonne A. Ewell Townview Law Magnet Center.
- **Mentee**: A Dallas ISD student who participates in the E-Mentoring Program.
- **Mentor**: A volunteer from the community who has attended college and is matched with a Dallas ISD student.

WHAT IS A MENTOR?

Definition

The word mentor comes from the Greek language and has its roots in the terms “steadfast” and “enduring”. The author Homer in *The Odyssey* gave the name Mentor to the friend who Odysseus entrusted with the guidance and education of Odysseus’ son. Since then, the term “mentor” has been synonymous in Western thought with one who is a wise teacher, a guide, and a friend.

- A mentor is an experienced, trusted adult who befriends and guides a young person.
- A mentor shares ideas and wisdom with a younger person and opens doors of opportunity for the young person to explore.
- A mentor provides the younger person with a positive vision of the future and believes in their dreams.
- A mentor stimulates an interest in learning by creating new learning opportunities.
- A mentor helps a young person realize that they can succeed.

Qualities of a Successful Mentor

- A mentor commits to invest time necessary to assist with the development of the student.
- A mentor discusses educational opportunities, career options and higher education preparation.
- A mentor is a positive role model.
- A mentor is non-judgmental.
- A mentor is not a disciplinarian.

What Can I Offer a Student?

- A unique opportunity to talk to a business professional who can help them realize their dream of attending college.
- A better understanding of what to expect in college and how to prepare.
- Exposure to the business world, including an understanding of the values and skills necessary to succeed.
- A better understanding of the link between education and career opportunities.
- An opportunity to interact with an adult who is interested in issues and ideas that are important to them.

YOU AND YOUR STUDENT

Matching You to a Student

Matches are made as soon as the E-Mentoring Committee receives the student rosters from each school – usually in September.

If you were matched with a student in 2009-2010 and they return to the program, you will be matched back to them, unless one of you previously notified your E-Mentoring School Coordinator that you would like a different match.

Matches are made based on gender.

Every effort is made to accommodate special requests from mentors but cannot be guaranteed.

Your Student's E-mail Address

Your student will be assigned an E-Mentoring Program e-mail address and may only communicate with you from that e-mail address (studentxxx@dbaementor.com). They may not communicate with you via phone, social media websites (Facebook, MySpace, etc.), text or any other method of communication. If you receive a communication from your student from anything other than their E-Mentoring Program e-mail address, please notify your E-Mentoring School Coordinator.

Your student's AVID School Coordinator, EIF Higher Education Advisor or Law Magnet Advisor (and perhaps an E-Mentoring Committee member) will be able to monitor your student's e-mails.

Your student's e-mail address will be deleted in June, after the school year ends. They will receive a new e-mail address each year they participate in the E-Mentoring Program.

Getting Started

You will receive an e-mail from your E-Mentoring School Coordinator providing you with your student's e-mail address and further information on how to proceed, including when you can expect your first e-mail from your student. Typically, we ask the students to send the first e-mail.

Your First E-mail from Your Student

Have reasonable expectations. Remember, some students are unfamiliar with computers and they are e-mailing a stranger – they may be intimidated!

Your First E-mail to Your Student

As a mentor in the E-Mentoring Program, you are about to enter into a rewarding experience! As with all new relationships, you may feel awkward about e-mailing your student at first and may not know what to say.

Respond as quickly as you can to your student's first e-mail. Answer any questions your student has asked you. Be sure to tell your student how much you are looking forward to getting to know them. Your student does not know why an adult would want to mentor and needs to be reassured that you are truly interested in getting to know them and letting them know you.

Take the time to describe yourself briefly - your background and where you are employed. Be careful not to sound as if you are trying to impress the student – it might be intimidating. At this point your student is probably more interested in knowing where you grew up, how big your family was and what you imagined doing as an adult. In turn, you might ask your student about his/her siblings, favorite sports, favorite outings and special events in his/her life.

Be sure to let your student know how frequently you check your e-mail and ask when your student typically will be checking their e-mail.

Meeting Your Student in Person

There is no requirement that you meet your student in person. However, we find that meeting your student goes a long way towards opening up the lines of communication. Your E-Mentoring School Coordinator will set up several events and opportunities for mentors and students to meet during the school year – we encourage you to attend one.

In addition to E-Mentoring Program events, you may meet with your student on their school campus during school hours – ask them if you can have lunch with them! If you plan to visit your student on campus, you must notify your student's AVID School Coordinator, EIF Higher Education Advisor or Law Magnet Advisor. The student must remain on campus at all times during your visit.

You may not meet your student in any other scenario. If your student invites you to meet off campus, politely decline and remind your student that the program is about online communication and that you look forward to continuing to working together via e-mail or at E-Mentoring Program events.

Tips for Meeting Your Student

- Be on time. Remember your student is looking forward to seeing you.
- Your student's name is important – learn to say it and spell it correctly!
- If you must cancel a meeting with your student, let your student, their AVID School Coordinator, EIF Higher Education Advisor or Law Magnet Advisor AND your E-Mentoring School Coordinator know.
- When you meet your student, greet them warmly, with a smile and a handshake (if appropriate, teach them about shaking hands confidently). Introduce yourself in the manner you wish to be addressed.

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR STUDENT

Tips for Effectively Communicating with Your Student

When communicating with your student, be sure to:

- E-mail at least once a week. Your student is as happy to hear from you as you are from them!
- Add a weekly reminder to your calendar to e-mail your student!
- Be consistent, reliable and keep all promises. Your student will develop confidence and security in your relationship if contact is consistent and reliable. Your student is watching you and getting more out of your relationship than you realize.
- Be accountable - e-mails don't have to be long. Even in the midst of an office deadline, you can find 2 minutes to e-mail your student. Accountability sets a good example for your student to emulate and cements trust between the mentor and student.
- Help your student learn how to set goals – See Appendix B for Dallas ISD's Goal Setting Steps.
- HAVE FUN!

Questions You Can Ask Your Student

- What type of career are you interested in?
- What colleges are you interested in?
- What are your favorite subjects in school?
- What sports do you play?
- What culture are you from?
- What do you like to do in your spare time?
- What are your hobbies?
- What games do you like to play?
- What kind of (movies, books, music) do you like?
- What do you think about (add current news event)?
- What would you like to talk about?
- How many brothers/sisters do you have?
- Do you have any pets?
- Share something interesting or exciting that you have done since your last e-mail.
- Ask about events that have occurred in your student's life since your last e-mail.

Deeper Conversation Suggestions

- Discuss a current event from a newspaper or magazine article with your student. Encourage him/her to express his/her opinion about the topic.
- Share cultural traditions and values. Differing traditions can be fertile ground for conversations and better understanding of one another. Explain some of the special aspects of your heritage and encourage your student to share theirs.
- Let the student be the expert - discover something your student is knowledgeable about and let them teach you. When a student has the opportunity to be the expert and their mentor shows genuine interest, the student's sense of competence and self-worth may bloom.
- Discover five new words a week with your student. Teach them new words and let them teach you new words.
- Assist your student in developing a study schedule.
- Teach your student how to use a planner or online calendar to better account for their time.
- Help your student develop problem solving and decision making skills. Ask your student to write down all the positives that could result from a particular decision in one column and all the negatives in another column. Putting these on paper helps the student clarify the issue, sort out the negative consequences and evaluate what would be a wise decision.
- See Appendix A for Dallas ISD's 2010-2011 Academic Calendar Conversation Suggestions - monitor your student's progress throughout the year!
- Help your student set goals - See Appendix B for Dallas ISD's Goal Setting Steps.

COMMUNICATION ISSUES

If you aren't hearing from your student on a regular basis, **DO NOT GIVE UP!** It is unacceptable to decide to not e-mail your student because they are not e-mailing you often enough or not providing you with "quality" communication.

Causes

Communication inconsistencies normally are caused by one of three things: 1) a shy student who may have trouble opening up, or 2) a student who is not getting enough computer access, or 3) a student who simply does not want to participate.

What Do I Do?

Let your E-Mentoring School Coordinator know about any communications lags and keep them informed of any frustrations you may experience! Their top priority is to make your experience a positive one, but they cannot help you unless you keep them informed.

Your E-Mentoring School Coordinator will address any communication issues you bring to their attention immediately with your student's AVID School Coordinator, EIF Higher Education Advisor or Law Magnet Advisor. Together they will determine if anything can be done to improve the student's participation, or find you a new student if improvement is not likely.

Your E-Mentoring School Coordinator can also suggest more topics that you can discuss with your student and tips if you get stuck.

In the event your student is removed from the E-mentoring Program, you will be notified as soon as another student becomes available.

In the event you and your E-Mentoring School Coordinator determine that you and your student are simply not a good match, you will be notified as soon as another student becomes available.

WHEN AND HOW TO GET HELP IN CASE OF A PROBLEM

Safety and security are critical in a school environment and must be taken seriously when dealing with youth.

You are participating in this program because you care about our youth and their education. But it is important not to confuse your enthusiasm and commitment with expertise. There is no expectation that you should take on the role of parent, teacher, guidance counselor or psychologist. It is important for you and your student's protection that you not give advice to a student on areas best handled by teachers, school guidance counselors, parents or guardians.

If your student behaves inappropriately or discloses information to you that leads you to believe (1) they have been abused; (2) they have done something or plan to do something to hurt someone; or (3) they are planning to do something to harm themselves **you must immediately notify your E-Mentoring School Coordinator and E-Mentoring Program Directors.** They are trained on how to handle these matters and will notify the proper contacts.

In addition to your E-Mentoring School Coordinator you may also contact any of the E-Mentoring Program Directors listed below with any questions or concerns:

Allen Butler	salal@sbcglobal.net
Bria Smith-Hofland	briahofland@gmail.com
Everett New	enew@coxsmith.com
Mary Nix	Mnix@gordonrees.com
Tracy Wolf	twolf@gordonrees.com
Stephanie Zaleskin	szaleskin@lpf-law.com

PROGRAM RULES

1. Write to your student every week.
2. Notify your student if you will be on a vacation or on a business trip that will delay weekly contact.
3. Your student may only communicate with you from their E-Mentoring Program e-mail address (studentxxx@dbaementor.com). They may not communicate with you via phone, social media websites (Facebook, MySpace, etc.), text or any other method of communication. If you receive a communication from your student from anything other than their E-Mentoring Program e-mail address, please notify your E-Mentoring School Coordinator.
4. Do not give your home address or phone number to your student.
5. You may only meet with your student at E-Mentoring Program events or on their high school campus during school hours. If your student invites you to meet off campus, politely decline and remind them that the program is about online communication and that you look forward to seeing them at E-Mentoring Program events or on campus.
6. If you plan to visit your student on campus, you must notify your student's AVID School Coordinator, EIF Higher Education Advisor or Law Magnet Advisor. The student must remain on campus at all times during your visit.
7. You may not provide legal advice.
8. If your student behaves inappropriately or discloses information to you that leads you to believe (1) they have been abused; (2) they have done something or plan to do something to hurt someone; or (3) they are planning to do something to harm themselves **you must immediately notify your E-Mentoring School Coordinator and E-Mentoring Program Directors.** They are trained on how to handle these matters and will notify the proper contact.

MENTOR AGREEMENT

A person takes on a lot of responsibility when he or she agrees to be a mentor. Please consider these responsibilities before you join the E-Mentoring Program and decide if you are willing to commit to the requirements.

As a mentor in the E-Mentoring Program, I agree:

- To abide by all the Program Rules.
- To notify my student and E-Mentoring School Coordinator if I am unable to continue in the E-Mentoring program.
- To notify my E-Mentoring School Coordinator immediately if a problem arises.
- To notify my student and E-Mentoring School Coordinator of any changes in my contact information.
- To only communicate with my student only through the e-mail address provided to my student by the E-Mentoring Program.
- To immediately **notify my E-Mentoring School Coordinator and E-Mentoring Program Directors** if my student behaves inappropriately or discloses information that leads me to believe (1) they have been abused; (2) they have done something or plan to do something to hurt someone; and (3) they are planning to do something to harm themselves.

APPENDIX A – DALLAS ISD ACADEMIC CALENDAR CONVERSATION SUGGESTIONS



CONVERSATION SUGGESTIONS 2010 – 2011

- August Introductions - Self description, favorite music, movie, etc.
 What did students do over summer break? Vacation? Summer school?
 How many credits did you receive last year (secondary students)?
 *******Three goals for this year?*******
- September What classes are students taking? Do students like the teachers?
 Which classes are favorites? Hardest?
 Ask students which teacher is the best and why?
 Ask students why they can learn / have challenges learning in classes.
 How many credits do they need to earn in order to be promoted to the
 next grade in 2011-12 (secondary students)?
 Sept. 6 Labor Day - Holiday
 Sept. 27 Student Holiday
 Check progress towards three goals.
- October Fair Day: Oct. 1 Elementary (regular school day for secondary students and teachers);
 Oct. 8 Secondary (regular school day for elementary students and teachers);
 Did student go to the Fair? Favorite activity?
 Do you celebrate Halloween?
 Report cards issued on October 12. How were 1st six weeks grades?
 Parent Conferences: Oct. 12 High School, Oct. 13 Middle School and
 Oct. 14 Elementary
 What colleges sound interesting?
 TAKS Testing October 19-22 (various grade levels/subjects)
 Oct. 22 Students Early Release Day
 Check progress towards three goals.
- November Thanksgiving break is November 22-26
 Happy Thanksgiving! Describe what you will do on Thanksgiving.
 How will student spend Thanksgiving?
 What are you/student thankful for on this special day?
 Report cards issued on November 29. How were 2nd six weeks grades?
 What were grades? Pass all classes? Fail any classes? Why?
 Check progress towards three goals.
- December Winter break is December 20 to January 31
 Final Exams for 1st semester are given after winter break
 Happy Holidays! Does family celebrate in special way?
 Plans for the holidays?
 Does the school or church or community have a special event planned?
 Check progress towards three goals.



- January Jan. 3 Student Holiday
Jan. 17 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
Jan. 18 Student Holiday
Jan. 28 Early Release Day
New classes for 2nd semester?
Report cards issued on January 25
What were grades? If a class (or project, or exam) was failed, how will it be made up?
Check progress towards three goals.
- February Happy Valentines! Plans? Special person?
Career interests?
Observances this month: Engineers Week, Healthy Heart Week, Kindness Week
Check progress towards three goals.
- March TAKS Testing March 1-4 (various grade levels/subjects)
Report cards issued on March 8
Parent Conferences: March 8 High School, March 9 Middle School, and March 10 Elementary School
Spring Break March 14-18 Plans for Spring Break?
Check progress towards three goals
- April TAKS Testing April 4-5 and April 25-29 (various grade levels/subjects)
Do students think they will pass classes?
Report cards issued on April 25
Check progress towards three goals
- May TAKS Testing May 16-18 (various grade levels/subjects)
May 30 Memorial Day Holiday
- June Last day of school June 2
Plans for summer?
Summer school? Camp? Vacation?
Attend end of the year event?
Report cards issued on June 2 (Elem) or June 8 (Sec)
Reflection on the year...Good happenings?

APPENDIX B – DALLAS ISD GOAL SETTING STEPS

Goal Setting Steps:

One of the most important parts of mentoring is setting personal goals. The heart of the relationship is for the student and the mentor to help, encourage, coach and hold each other accountable for progress toward and ultimate completion of the goals. The following are guidelines for goal setting:

- Set one goal to achieve in each of three areas:
 1. Academic
 2. Physical fitness
 3. School/Moral/Community service
- The goals should be achievable, measurable and honest. To become valedictorian may be a long term academic goal. An immediate goal may be to raise the Grade Point Average. Another example is to increase study time by 15 to 30 minutes per day. Be creative!
- The mentors and students must be involved with setting the goals.
- Make a commitment **in writing** on what the goal is and how it will be achieved.
- Review a goal that is not being achieved. Was it too difficult? Are there outside influences or obstacles preventing goal achievement? The mentor needs to encourage the student and discuss why a goal was not achieved. In turn, the mentor should be honest about the progress that has been made towards achieving his or her own goals.
- Celebrate goals achieved. Discuss the feelings associated with success and how it can lead to further accomplishments.

For additional ideas on mentoring: www.mentoring.org/index.html