



# Illinois New Principal Mentoring Program

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **RECENT QUESTIONS**

**Mentoring did not begin for many new principals until well after the start of the school year. Is it still expected that their experience will include 50 contact hours with the mentor?**

Yes. One way to address the late start is to extend mentoring services through mid June. The date for submission of the required 'year-end-summary' and certification of completion will be extended to accommodate mentoring through most of June.

**Must a Mentoring Entity seek renewal of approval as a provider of mentoring?**

Approval of mentoring entities is valid for 3 years. There will be a short During March each Mentoring Entity will be asked to restate commitment to providing mentoring during the 2008-2009 school year, and to provide a description of any significant changes to the approved proposal. This process will be discussed at Regional Meetings for Mentoring Entities scheduled during the last week of February and first week of March.

**How are new principals made aware of the requirements and expectations for mentoring?**

Since PA 94-1039 became law in 2006, superintendents and principals throughout Illinois have received information about New Principal Mentoring from a variety of sources. Still, the very best source for them is the Mentoring Entity and the Mentor. Another source for all stakeholders is the INPM website, [www.ilprincipalmentoring.org](http://www.ilprincipalmentoring.org).

**I was wondering why travel expenses for mentors are not reimbursed as part of the new principal mentoring program?**

The Illinois State Board has attempted to include all costs of the mentoring program in program reimbursements. ISBE has set the total amount for providing mentoring at \$2750 per new principal. After much discussion about the amount for stipend and the amount for travel, telephone, etc, it was decided to set the total for all time *and* expenses at \$2000 per new principal served. The remaining \$750 is forwarded to the mentoring entity to cover other expenses incurred in providing professional development, meetings, etc. Any mentor, as an independent contractor to the mentoring entity, may negotiate additional reimbursement from the entity for exceptional circumstances that is agreeable to both parties.

**Would you send me the definition of "contact hours?"**

Section 35.30 of the Rules and Regulations address contact hours. No fewer than 50 contact hours are required in activities demonstrably involved in the mentoring process. Note, the mentor and recipient may conduct "some or most" of their contact by using means of telecommunication. There are to be at least three meetings in person. Also, travel time is not to be counted as contact time unless if mentor and new principal travel together and are engaged in mentoring activities during the trip.

**With the late start this first year, are entities and mentors expected to meet specifications of Rules and Regulations?**

Yes. Mentoring may continue through the end of June for those that experience a late start. The new principal is required to participate and is entitled to a minimum of 50 contact hours. All other elements of an entity's proposal including professional development, networking and other opportunities for mentors and new principals are to be fulfilled. Stipends for mentors and fee for service payments to entities are contingent upon compliance with the entity's proposal and Rules and Regulations.

**Is mentor foundational training approved for Administrator Academy credit?**

It is not. There are no plans to apply for AA approval at this time as the training program content, timeline and related materials are under revision. Evaluations from last year's participants as well as ongoing research on mentor training are being used to refine the training as part of an effort to create an Illinois Model for New Principal Mentor training. The improved program will be available for use in the spring of 2008.

**Should a Mentoring Entity establish a line for 'New Principal Mentoring' in its budget?**

Each entity has the flexibility and responsibility to determine the best way to handle mentoring in its budget. Some may choose to designate mentoring fees for service as a separate line item while others may opt to include it with other miscellaneous income in their budget. A key point to keep in mind is that dollars paid by ISBE through the Program manager are viewed as a fee for service, and no account of expending these funds is required by the Program Manager.

**Does a mentoring Entity serving no new principals need to complete the New Principal/Mentor Match xls document?**

The 'Match' document consists of two pages – one for new principals being served and one for mentors. This document provides data that are needed for compliance documentation, payments and reporting to ISBE. Each entity is to complete it being sure to list mentors. The new principal page can be left blank if the entity is not providing mentoring this year.

**Do mentor stipends have any impact on the 6% cap or other TRS issues?**

It depends. If the mentoring entity is a TRS covered employer, the 6% cap applies. If the mentoring entity is not a TRS covered employer, the 6% cap does not apply. In cases where the mentoring entity is a TRS covered employer, the mentoring stipend counts as "salary," and is therefore applied against the 6% salary cap. If the mentor was not employed by the mentoring entity during the previous year, there should not be any salary cap implications, as there is no salary history for the 6% cap to be applied against. However, if the mentor was employed by the mentoring entity during the previous year, the total salary for the current year, including the mentoring stipend, cannot increase by more than 6% without subjecting the employer to possible additional TRS costs. Please contact TRS directly for definitive guidance on specific situations.

**If a mentor is working with more than one new principal, should a disclaimer sheet be signed for each new principal?**

Yes. While this may seem redundant, a record for each new principal that includes all disclaimer pieces is the final goal.

### **When will mentors receive payment for services?**

Current rules and regulations provide for mentors to receive payment at the conclusion of mentoring service and after a completion certificate is submitted. Any deviation to this payment schedule by an entity may result in complications in meeting this part of current rules and regulations.

### **What are the requirements for Mentoring Entities to report expenditures for mentoring?**

Payment to the Mentoring Entity by the Program Manager is a fee for services. It is set at \$750 for the 07-08 school year. A Mentoring Entity need not report to the Program Manager how the \$750 is spent. Entities do need to meet whatever internal reporting requirements they need to address to meet their own auditing procedures.

### **What stipend will a mentor receive for a partial year of service?**

Rules and regulations speak to sharing the \$2000 stipend between mentors in the event that more than one mentor works with a new principal. In much the same manner, a pro rated stipend based upon the number of contact hours and reporting functions fulfilled will be paid to a mentor if, for any reason, the mentoring process is terminated before the end of the school year.

### **Can a Mentoring Entity make enhancements and/or modifications to its Mentoring Proposal during the year?**

An Entity may request an enhancement or modification in its certified proposal. And modification of proposal should improve service to new principals, enhance the entity's operation, and be consistent with similar elements that currently have been approved for other entities. Any gross change to current proposals needs to be submitted for review as part of the annual process for certification of new mentoring entities.

## **GENERAL**

### **What is the Illinois New Principal Mentoring Program?**

The Illinois New Principal Mentoring Program, defined by standards and criteria, is designed to provide new principals with the individualized mentoring support they need to successfully transition into effective educational leaders. New leaders receive mentoring from proven, trained mentors who are paired with new principals based on geography, grade level, and need. The INPM Program is constantly evaluated for continuous improvements to make certain that the needs of new educational leaders and their students are being met.

### **Is the Illinois New Principal Mentoring Program mandatory?**

The Illinois New Principal Mentoring Program is mandatory for all principals new to the profession. The mentoring requirement for new principals is contingent upon continued funding from the state.

### **Who must participate in the Illinois New Principal Mentoring Program?**

All principals new to the profession starting with the 2007-2008 school year must participate. New principals who were formerly assistant principals for five years in the school where they will be

principals are not required to fulfill the mentoring requirement. However, school districts can require those individuals to complete new principal mentoring.

## **MENTORING ENTITIES**

### **What are the qualifications for becoming a mentoring entity?**

Statewide organizations representing principals, institutions of higher education, Illinois community colleges, regional offices of education, school districts and other qualified entities are eligible for certification by ISBE to provide mentoring services to Illinois new principals. Entities interested in providing mentoring to new principals must be committed to the purpose, goals, and objectives of the Illinois New Principal Mentoring Program. New Principal Mentoring Entities are identified and certified through a standards-based process and will receive orientation training regarding new principal mentoring.

New Principal Mentoring Entity Qualifications include:

- Commitment to the overall purpose, goals, and objectives of the Illinois New Principal Mentoring Program
- Commitment to the professional development of new principals
- Capacity to provide high-quality principal mentoring with an emphasis on instructional leadership
- Capacity to meet the individual needs of new principals
- Compliance with ISBE approved standards and criteria for new principal mentoring in Illinois Principals Association

### **How does my organization apply to become a mentoring entity?**

The application process for new mentoring entities will take place Spring 2008 and is outlined in the Mentoring Entity section of the INPM Website.

### **What are the primary functions and responsibilities of a mentoring entity?**

New Principal Mentoring Entity Responsibilities include:

- Recruiting and selecting mentors
- Training mentors
- Providing ongoing professional development of mentors
- Matching mentors and new principals
- Facilitating mentor-new principal relationships
- Providing relevant resources for mentors and new principals
- Providing regular opportunities for the new principal to provide data and feedback about the mentor and quality of the mentoring entity
- Using new principal feedback to make adjustments to process of mentoring and to guide professional development of mentors
- Completing necessary reporting and evaluation processes and procedures

## **SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

### **Are school districts required to pay for mentoring?**

No. Mentoring is only required if money is allocated and approved in the ISBE budget each year.

### **Can a school district become a certified mentoring entity?**

Yes. For more information, please read the FAQs for mentoring entities above.

## **MENTORS**

### **Who can be a mentor?**

Experienced current, former and retired Illinois principals who have demonstrated success as instructional leaders will be selected to serve as mentors for Illinois public school administrators who are in their first year of service as building level principals. Mentors will be selected by mentoring entities through a fair and open process.

New Principal Mentor Qualifications:

- A minimum of three years of experience as a building principal in Illinois
- Strong, ethical character
- Strong inter-personal skills
- Instructional leader as defined by but not limited to:
  - Facilitates a vision of learning within a learning community
  - Develops and sustains a collaborative professional learning community
  - Develops and sustains a positive school culture and instructional program
  - Makes data driven decisions that focuses on the improvement of student performance
  - Effectively manages the operations, resources, and safety of a school
  - Positively influences the greater political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context of learning communities to effectively advocate for their students
- Support of three professional references

### **What are the responsibilities and time commitment of the mentor?**

High qualified, committed, experienced principals who are fully prepared to serve as mentors play a pivotal role in the implementation of a successful new principal mentoring program in Illinois.

Mentors are expected to:

- Fully attend the initial mentor training and all ongoing professional development activities
- Dedicate sufficient time to mentoring to meet program requirements and serve the needs of the new principal (50 hours minimum)
- Be available to the new principal as specified by mentoring entity expectations and the needs of the new principal
- Create, develop and maintain an effective, professional mentoring relationship with the new principal
- Make regular reports of status and progress in the mentoring process to the appropriate mentoring entity and ISBE
- Complete final evaluation reports as required by the mentoring entity and ISBE