Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter Public School

1 Westinghouse Plaza, Hyde Park, MA 02136

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*Project SUCCESS Participants 2013-2014 School Year*

**1. Vision and Purpose**

To create a mentoring and induction program focused on student achievement that supports a community of educators dedicated to sustainability and growth through differentiation, collaboration, and effective allocation of time and resources.

**2. Human Resources and Stakeholders**

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| *Personnel* | *Role* |
| Susan Thompson,  Executive Director | Hiring, allocating money and resources, final approval of plans |
| Alex Lisak,  High School Principal | Hiring, allocating money and resources, final approval of plans, ongoing communication with mentors in division |
| Rene Dickhaut,  Middle School Principal | Hiring, allocating money and resources, final approval of plans, ongoing communication with mentors in division |
| James Nardo,  Lower School Principal | Hiring, allocating money and resources, final approval of plans, ongoing communication with mentors in division |
| Department Chairs | Available to mentors and new teachers as curricular resources and as a liaison between department and Lead Mentor |
| Grade Level Chairs | Available to mentors and new teachers to provide support around grade-level routines and initiatives and as a liaison between team and Lead Mentor |
| Lead Mentors | Lead meetings, email bulletins to new teachers, share resources and add to curriculum, participate in bi-monthly observations and reflections |
| New teachers, Year 2 | Participate in monthly check-in meetings with point person with focus on troubleshooting and collaboration, bi-monthly observations, reflections. |
| New teachers, Year 1 | Attend weekly small group meetings, participate using mentoring curriculum, bimonthly observations, reflections. |

**3. Financial Resources**

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| *Resource* | *Funds Needed* | *Explanation* |
| Mentoring Program Coordinator stipend | $800 | See job description |
| Mentors stipend | $1000 | See job description |
| Food | $500 | * Bi-monthly social gatherings * Mid- and end-of-year celebrations * Monthly meetings? |
| Video cameras | $300 | * Flip video cameras which also connect via cable to APR laptops * Use for observations and reflection meetings |
| Supplies | $100 | * Binders for mentor and mentee portfolios * 1 copy of “Mentoring in Action” * 1 copy of “First Year Matters” * APR Mentoring Curriculum (Bound) |

**4. Program Components for New Teachers**

**GROUP 1**

All teachers who are new to APR will participate in the same Orientation Weeks and first five weeks of school. During this stretch, weekly group meetings will be held – one for all new teachers in the LS and MS (with the LS and MS mentors), and one for all new teachers in the HS (with the HS mentors).

**Orientation Details**

New teachers will meet the Mentoring Coordinator and the Mentors on their 2nd day of New Faculty Orientation. Mentees will get the overview of the mentoring program at APR, have an opportunity to ask any and all questions that they have formed over the first day and a half, and eat an informal get-to-know-you lunch with the mentors. Mentors will be available in the afternoons for the remainder of New Faculty Orientation week and a second full-group meeting will be held on the final day of that week to more formally introduce the differentiated APR-specific mentoring curriculum and gather feedback from mentees.

During Faculty Orientation, Group 1 mentees will meet in divisional groups (LS/MS/HS). At this meeting, they will be introduced to the Group 2 mentees in their division, have candid conversation about the realities (both benefits and challenges) of their division, and review best practices around classroom setup and routines.

**Differentiated Groups**

On or around October 1st, the Mentors and Mentoring Coordinator will meet to make differentiated mentoring groups for the rest of the year. This will allow us to best match our mentoring resources to the needs of our new teachers as the number of new teachers in Group 1 may fluctuate year to year.

Group 1A will be made up of teachers who are new to the profession and veteran teachers who have demonstrated (in initial meetings, conversations, and observations) a need for greater assistance adjusting to APR for one reason or another. Group 1B will consist of teachers new to APR that are comfortable in the teaching profession already and have transitioned with relative ease to APR’s way of doing things. Group 1B mentoring will focus less on aspects of effective instruction and more on cultural and logistical aspects of the school. Ideally, one mentor would lead each group in each division of the school, but numbers will have to determine the exact placement of the mentors relative to these groups.

**Mentor/Mentee Meetings**

Mentee groups (both 1A and 1B) will meet weekly with their mentors from the time groups are set through December to discuss and reflect on their craft and development.  These meetings will follow the APR-specific mentoring curriculum (including observation & reflection, classroom management, lesson planning, review of materials, etc.) but there will also be ample time for troubleshooting and anything else the mentees request or the mentors deem necessary. Much of the APR mentoring curriculum is borrowed and/or adapted from the MIA handbooks but is supplemented with materials from our faculty guidebook and other in house documents. The collaborative work from these meetings will be used to build the portfolios.

After returning to APR in January, mentee groups will meet all together with their mentors monthly. These monthly meetings will be used to discuss upcoming important dates and events, reflect upon common challenges, and set up subsequent observations, one-on-one meetings, subgroup meetings (mentor and a few mentees working towards similarly themed goals), etc. The intermittent weeks will be used for these purposes at the discretion of the mentor and his/her mentees.

**Observations**

Each small group will set up a series of observations, which are meant to be constructive rather than critical.  The observations will include both mentor-mentee and mentee-mentee pairings and are expected to take anywhere from 10-30 minutes each, based on the area of focus for the observation. Periodically mentees will choose a teacher outside of their mentoring circle to observe, but mentors will observe mentees a minimum of once each trimester. There will a choice of templates to be used during observations and reflections, all of which will be added to the portfolio.

**The Portfolio**

The portfolio will consist of selected resources along with observation forms, reflections, Professional Development Goals and the APR Teacher Evaluation Rubrics.  Mentors and mentees will work together to build this portfolio throughout the year.  The portfolio may be shared with the administrators during the evaluation process or used as evidence in support of yearly PD goals.

**Social Gatherings and Celebrations**

Mentees will be invited to attend informal social gatherings put on by the Mentors (approximately bimonthly) at a watering hole nearby APR. These gatherings build staff culture/camaraderie and give all teachers much-needed opportunities to let their hair down. The Mentors will also host special meetings on or off campus that will involve food and the opportunity to share stories and feedback with one another in December and June.  These meetings will be an opportunity for Mentors and mentees to come together in celebration of their hard work.

**GROUP 2**

Year 2 teachers at APR have already been paired with a mentor for one year and are returning for a second year with improved skills and a more thorough understanding of APR’s routines and culture. They are educators who will need increased support around a variety of topics, but they will not need a pre-determined curriculum like the first-year teachers. The mentoring program for Year 2 teachers has a more flexible approach with a focus on problem solving in conjunction with a primary point person who is a mentor or other teacher leader in the building. Mentors and Mentoring Coordinator will meet at the end of the school year in June to determine the exact makeup of Group 2 for the subsequent year and their proposed point people.

**Orientation Details**

At one the final one-on-ones with mentees in June, Mentors will introduce the Group 2 model and brainstorm goals and support with the individual mentee. Once all Mentors have had this closing meeting with their mentees, the Mentors will meet with the Mentoring Coordinator to determine appropriate “point people” for each Group 2 mentee and will facilitate pre-summer meetings between these pairs/groups.

During Faculty Orientation, Group 2 mentees will meet Group 1 mentees in divisional groups (LS/MS/HS), lead a candid conversation about the realities (both benefits and challenges) of their division and help the Mentors review best practices around classroom setup and routines.

**Mentor/Mentee Meetings**

Each Group 2 teacher will meet monthly with their point person to reflect on progress and set goals or a plan for the upcoming month. Those plans may involve observation and debrief, review and feedback on materials, curriculum development, etc. The Lead Mentors will check in with the point people to ensure that these meetings are occurring.

Lastly, Group 2 will meet all together with the Lead Mentors once each trimester. These meetings will be for celebrating progress, sharing ideas (including full group problem to possibility discussions), and gathering feedback for the program as a whole.

**Observations**

Group 2 mentees will set up a series of observations, which are meant to be constructive rather than critical.  The observations will include both mentor-mentee and mentee-mentee pairings and are expected to take anywhere from 10-30 minutes each, based on the area of focus for the observation. Point people will observe mentees a minimum of once each trimester and mentees will conduct an observation of their own a minimum of once each trimester as well. The mentee could choose to observe their point person, another Group 2 peer teacher, another teacher in their department, or somebody else in the building to whom they are recommended. There will a choice of templates to be used during observations and reflections, all of which will be added to the portfolio.

**Social Gatherings and Celebrations**

Mentees will be invited to attend informal social gatherings put on by the Mentors (approximately bimonthly) at a watering hole nearby APR. These gatherings build staff culture/camaraderie and give all teachers much-needed opportunities to let their hair down. The Mentors will also host special meetings on or off campus that will involve food and the opportunity to share stories and feedback with one another in December and June.  These meetings will be an opportunity for Mentors and mentees to come together in celebration of their hard work.

**5. Program Components for Mentors / Lead Mentors**

**Mentors**

Mentors are veteran APR teachers who are excited to support new teachers as they adjust to APR. Mentors will be open to providing and receiving feedback and to participating in the give-and-take of regular observations. Mentors will be facilitators of meetings rather than leaders; they will work to be good listeners and to let the ideas of their mentees take precedence in discussions.

Each mentor will ideally work with 2-4 new teachers (from Group 1) and may also have a role in a Group 2 mentoring relationship, but the exact numbers will be worked out each year at the meetings with the Mentoring Coordinator in October and June. Mentors will lead weekly meetings for the first half of the year aligned to the APR-specific mentoring curriculum before shifting to a more fluid monthly meeting model in January where mentors can use the off-weeks to focus in on one-on-ones or subgroup meetings as the needs of the mentees branch apart organically. Each mentor will conduct a minimum of one observation of each mentee per trimester and will arrange each mentee to conduct at least one observation cycle in the reverse order (with mentee observing mentor).

**Meetings**

* June: Mentors will be hired at the end of the school year and meet in June to discuss the outline of the program, read job descriptions, review the syllabus, and ask questions. A portion of this meeting will also be dedicated to figuring out the plan for Group 2 mentoring the following year.
* Orientation: Lead Mentors will be present for Wednesday to Friday of New Teacher Orientation week to meet new mentees and help answer all the questions new teachers have in their first week before they meet all of their key collaborators. Mentors will also meet with the Mentoring Coordinator during orientation week to review the calendar for the first month of the program and read and reflect on articles on mentoring, group mentoring, and effective listening.
* Monthly: Once a month, mentors will meet with the Program Coordinator to review the topics for the upcoming month, discuss any challenges, and possibly discuss an article or video about mentoring.

**6. Evaluation of Mentoring Program**

Each year the APR Mentoring Program starts with a shared brainstorm at the beginning of the year, in which the mentors and new teachers form homogenous groups to brainstorm their worries and hopes at the beginning of the mentoring relationship, then the two groups compare the charts to find similarities and differences. This year we launched the first ever mid-year first year teacher support survey and administered it to all new teachers. We rolled up and shared the data (broken down by division) with the principals and deans and had some very productive discussions around the results. We will continue this mid-year survey, along with our typical end of year mentoring survey.

In addition, we want to ask new teachers to fill out background surveys at the beginning of the year to find out where new teachers are coming from in their careers. These surveys will help us differentiate small group discussions for the new teachers.

Finally, at the end of the year, the Lead Mentors will meet with administrators to review retention rates and analyze survey data to decide on changes for the following school year.

**7. Building a Community of Learners**

We will do the following to build a community of learners at APR:

* Foster collaboration between new and veteran teachers through faculty room seating and day to day interaction.
* Continue to hold bimonthly social gatherings and build off of their success.
* Promote interaction between lower/middle/high school programs.
* Increase support for new teachers through regular observation and reflection.
* Increase school’s retention rate of new teachers.

**8. Anticipated Reception**

We believe our plan will continue to build upon the successes of APR’s current mentoring program, as well as provide more structure and make the program more effective. By increasing supports for teachers in years 1-2, providing additional training for mentors, establishing a curriculum, and differentiating based on teachers’ needs, we will be using the well-researched methods from the Project SUCCESS course to make an impact for new teachers at APR.