

Supplementary Material Appendix A

Family Community Mentor Program, Goals and Expectations

How Family Mentoring Works

Family Mentors are personal community guides for Teacher Residents to share knowledge about the community, school, and district that may include introducing Teacher Residents to local traditions, favorite community activities, restaurants, and key people in the community. Family Mentors are selected by the partner district and possess skills that would help to ensure that Teacher Resident transitions are smooth and successful, and that Residents are able to quickly feel at home in your district, school, and community culture.

Teacher residency candidates have made the decision to work in rural and high-needs schools; however, they may be coming to your district and schools from communities outside of your geographical location. Teacher Residents are the newest members of your community and will be in your district for 4 years, at a minimum, and hopefully much longer. Family Mentors provide a resource to help welcome these new residents into your community!

What a Mentor Does

Family mentors assist our residents in becoming acclimated to the district, school, and community culture. They help to ease residents' transition into their community role as a teacher and assist in providing support for their full integration into community life. Family mentors are not directly involved with the teaching and instruction responsibilities of the Teacher Resident.

- Mentor assumes responsibility for community orientation, support, and a voice of encouragement for all the teacher residents placed in the district during their internship period.
- Mentor provides a link to the larger school and local community by identifying and locating community resources and experiences to share with residents.
- Mentor celebrates teacher residents' achievements and provides encouragement.
- Mentor introduces teacher residents to key members of the community and to community activities such as accompanying them to local churches, festivals, restaurants and introducing them to key community leaders, or connecting them to community resources.

Selecting Mentors

Mentors are chosen from volunteer candidates who apply to the district for this position or are recommended for the position by a partner district. It is up to the district to interview and screen any applicants and make final the selection. Mentors should have extensive knowledge of the community and be willing and able to help the interns share in the community experience. In addition, it is highly recommended that they have a strong internal drive to help people and that they display a positive and upbeat demeanor. *Mentors can but do not have to*

be directly connected to the school district. They can be retired former district employees, community members, or district employees.

Time Spent and Compensation

The expectation is that the mentor will spend time outside of school hours with the teacher residents and will provide them with opportunities to experience the cultural and leisure life of the community.

At least once a week meetings or activities are recommended with a four- to six-hour time commitment a month minimum (preferably 2 hours per week). Minimum commitment period of 1 school semester (fall or spring). Documentation of activities completed (description and date) and the amount of time spent is required to be submitted by February 1st and June 1st.

Supplementary Material Appendix B

Community Asset Mapping Project

*The **Community Asset Mapping project** was designed to help Teacher Residents, placed in partner districts in which they may not have prior knowledge or experience, become quickly acclimated to their community. Research shows that when teachers develop an awareness of community and context, their potential to develop a deeper understanding of their students and their ability to be able to connect learning experiences to student backgrounds within the context of their communities increases (Payne and Zeichner, 2017).*

Preparing for Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)

Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is a research-based approach focused on teacher practice that recognizes that students bring a wealth of life experiences to the classroom. Geneva Gay (2010) defined culturally responsive teaching as “using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to making learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them” (p. 31). Ultimately, you must see yourselves as a member of your students’ community (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

CRT uses your students’ strengths to construct learning opportunities so that there are meaningful connections between what you are teaching and your students’ culture, language, and life experiences. One of the first steps to CRT is to identify those cultural assets through an exploration of the communities in which your students live through a process called community asset mapping.

What is Community Asset Mapping?

Community Asset Mapping refers to a process of inventorying the resources or assets available to a specified neighborhood or community. When educators engage in community mapping, they explore such things as resources, housing, businesses, social-service providers, recreational facilities, religious institutions, neighborhood history, and public opinion about local issues.

Payne, K. A., & Zeichner, K. (2017). Multiple voices and participants in teacher education. *International Handbook of Research on Teacher Education*, eds D. J. Clandinin and J. Husu (London: Sage), 1101–1117.

Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Gay, G. (2013). Teaching to and through cultural diversity. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 43, 48–70. doi:10.1111/curi.12002.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32(3), 465–491. doi:10.3102/00028312032003465.

Summer Immersion Community Asset Mapping Project Guidelines

Project Overview: Inventory and catalog community resources and assets available in your district and school community. Prepare a Community Asset Identification map or guide to use as a resource to support your implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) strategies.

Process: This is a collaborative effort completed by each district cohort as a group project. Over the course of several weeks (August and September), you and your team will research and explore the network of community resources and assets available to students and families in your community. After reflection, you and your team will formulate plans on how this knowledge and context can be used to inform instruction and support your students and their families. In September/October, you will create a presentation that shares your team's findings and reflections with other Teacher Resident cohort teams.

Project Outcomes:

1. Construct an inventory of neighborhood and community structures and assets to uncover valuable community resources for children and their families.
2. Develop an understanding of how to leverage those resources and connect them to the curriculum in ways that increase learning for your students.
3. Discover barriers such as a lack of transportation to reach services or a limited range of community-based organizations, which can have an impact on your planning of parent and student engagement in your instruction.
4. Formulate plans on how to incorporate this new knowledge into your instructional plans and use of culturally responsive teaching strategies.

Community Asset Mapping Activity Project Directions

This project is completed by each of the district cohort teams of Teacher Residents. Presentations of findings and reflections by cohort teams will occur in the fall.

5 Project Components:

- Collection of community characteristics data and assets identification
- Analysis of collected information and relationships
- Mapping of assets and relationships identified as most relevant and important
- Findings and reflections
- Presentation of Findings and Reflections

Getting Started: Creating a community description and community resource/asset map is a good way to gain a comprehensive and clear overview of the community in which you will be teaching. It also provides you with information to familiarize you with the existing community assets, entities, and perspectives so you can develop insight into the common challenges of the community, as well as engage in meaningful conversations with parents and students. Finally, it

shows that you have taken the time and effort to get to know your community and the environment in which people live, work, learn, and play helping you establish trust as a foundation of your partnership with those families on behalf of their children. The “Resources” section of this module provides links to start you off on your discovery.

Project Component 1: Community Characteristics and Assets Identification. Much of this information can be found online, but some of the best and most interesting information, especially regarding local history and community culture, may come from community members themselves. First, as a team you will need to define your community study area parameters and then identify, locate, and assess various community resources. (Review the Community Characteristics and Asset Identification guidelines in the “Resources” section of this module for more details of what to consider and questions to ask.)

Project Component 2. Analysis of Collected Information – Looking for Relevance and Relationships. Assume that everything you see and discover is only a piece of the puzzle. Keep an open mind as you look for relationships and assess the relevance of what you observe from your research.

Project Component 3. Community Assets and Resources Identification Mapping. Create a physical representation of the community resources you have identified or resource guide and include contact references as appropriate. Using simple mapping tools or hand drawn maps or charts, create a physical representation of the assets and relationships you have identified or uncovered. The goal is to get a feel for where resources are concentrated or missing, identify access to resources from your teaching community, and determine where there are gaps in access or potential for making positive connections. (See the “Resources” section of this module for examples of simple maps.)

Project Component 4. Summary and reflection on findings. Write a brief community description as a record of your exploration and findings. That includes responses to the prompts below:

- What patterns do you see?
- What gaps or advantages do you see?
- What is at least one need and one resource that you uncovered during the community mapping activity?
- Reflect on what you learned about yourself, the community, student population, and how you can use what you learned as a teacher in your school and district.

Project Component 5. Presentation of Findings and Reflections. Each district cohort group will present the community asset mapping summary results with reflections on what they learned about the community, student population, and themselves. The presentation will include specific reference to how the teacher residents will use what was learned as teachers in their school and district placements.

Supplementary Material Appendix C

Family and Community Mentor Activity and Contact Log

Time Period: _____

Complete the log with date, time, and activities or communications with teacher residents noted in the comments section. You will use the log for both fall and spring semesters. At the end of the academic year, submit to: _____.

Regularly scheduled communications and “meetings” are suggested with a four- to six-hour time commitment a month minimum (preferably spaces one to two hours per week).

Date	Time Spent	Name(s) of Resident(s)	Session Description and Comments
<i>Ex. 8/9/2024</i>	<i>30 minutes</i>	<i>Jane Doe</i>	<i>Welcome meeting and visit to resident at their school</i>
<i>8/14/2024</i>	<i>1 hour</i>	<i>Jane Doe and John Ramsey</i>	<i>Community Asset mapping project discussion</i>
<i>8/18/2024</i>	<i>1 hour, 30 minutes</i>	<i>Jane Doe and John Ramsey</i>	<i>Introduction to and meeting with community leader</i>
August			
September			
October			
November			
December			

Supplementary Material Appendix D

Family and Community Mentoring Activities

Welcome and Acclimation Activities

- Introduction email with personal email and phone number followed by personal meeting with candidates at beginning of year
- Personal visit to welcome the resident into the district (within first two weeks of school)
- Work to develop a relationship with the residents during the first weeks of school with face-to-face meetings.
- Welcome to the district treat bag
- Welcome care package that includes school supplies
- Regular check-ins to provide guidance and encouragement

Community Knowledge Building Activities

- Support to help Teacher Residents successfully complete the Community Asset Mapping activity (i.e. gathering information, answering questions about the information) and helping them work collaboratively together to prepare the presentation. Activities such as:
 - Introducing TR to members of community who could provide background to the history of the county and schools;
 - Touring the town with TR to help them learn landmarks and have better understanding of where students live and what the community has to offer;
 - sharing information websites/news releases, meeting on a regular basis to discuss the project and prepare the presentation;
 - connecting TR with prior TR as project resources
- Accompany the TR to community events – “50 Yard Sale”, community festivals, etc.
- Accompany the TR to school/district events – Homecoming Parade
- Accompany TR to local restaurants for a meal and opportunity to meet and talk with residents
- Engage interns in and accompany them to local events such as the town Christmas Extravaganza and annual Watermelon Festival. Participate with TR in other community festivals, recreation, and social events
- Introductions to influential people in the community including the School Superintendent, town Mayor, and Town Councilmen.

Fostering Cultural Connections to Students and Families Activities

- Regular check-ins with teacher residents to provide guidance and encouragement
- Focus on engagement with TR in a variety of activities and experiences that promote understanding of family dynamics, effective communication skills, and how to engage with families

- Discuss cultural backgrounds and diverse experiences of families they will be working with including cultural norms, values, and communication styles.
- Support for TR in preparing for and conducting parent-teacher conferences
- Participate with TR in events designed to promote family engagement (i.e. family literacy nights, cultural celebrations, math workshops, etc.
- Meetings/visits held at local ice cream shop or shops to talk in a more relaxed setting while helping interns get acclimated to the community and have students see the intern outside of the school setting.