A Mentoring Program for New Math and Science Teachers in ND

Description

The NDMSA New Teacher Support Project will pair new science and mathematics teachers with experienced mentors from across the state. The project is supported in part by a US Department of Education Title II “Eisenhower” grant from the DPI and NDUS. Participants, to be known as “First-STEP Fellows,” will have extensive interactions throughout an academic year. The activities are designed to help support the new teachers during their critical first years of teaching, while simultaneously revitalizing experienced mentors through interaction with colleagues from across the state and exposure to current ideas about science and mathematics instruction in schools. Fellows will receive a stipend for their work on the project.

During the year, mentors and mentees will meet weekly to discuss teaching and learning in science and mathematics in relation to state and national science and mathematics standards. Mentor pairs will complete a series of structured activities during these weekly meetings. Groups of mentoring pairs will meet monthly to review their activities and to develop mentoring skills. Project participants will have 3 summer and school year workshop meetings dealing with science and mathematics education reform, mentoring and the standards movement. These activities will be organized by higher education math and science education experts in the state with additional resource and personnel expertise from MCREL. Participants may earn graduate credit for their participation in project activities.

Eligibility

New Teachers: The primary focus of the program is on ND science or mathematics teachers who are new to a district and have taught math or science for fewer than three years in the K-12 setting. If there is room in the program, more experienced teachers who are new to a district or have changed their teaching areas may be considered. New teachers must have the support of their administration to be considered for admission to the program.

Mentors: Mentor teachers should have at least three years of experience teaching math or science in the K-12 level. Additionally, mentors are expected to have outstanding recommendations from individuals with direct knowledge of their classroom experience and capabilities. The program will seek to match qualified mentors with new teachers in their own building or a nearby building so that weekly meetings between mentor and mentee can take place. Mentor teachers must have the support of their administration to be considered for admission to the program.

Dates (subject to change)

April-August 2002: Program information and application forms available (ND MSA and NDSU CSME Websites), application process continues, Fellows for 2002-3 academic year named
September 13-14: Orientation Academy (details – TBA)
September 26, October 24, December 19, January 30, Feb 27, April 24: Fall/Spring Monthly regional dinner meetings (4:30-7:30 pm Thursday)
November 22-23: Fall meeting (Fargo, 4:30 - 9 Fri, 8:30-3:30 Sat); March TBA Spring meetings in conjunction with NDSTA and NDCTM spring meetings. Participants will be invited to attend the May 15-17 (dates tentative) Reform of Science and Mathematics Education Conference in Bismarck.

Commitments

C Participants commit to attending and actively participating in all meetings: Orientation Academy, Fall conference (Friday/Saturday in November), Spring subject conference (math or science, Friday/Saturday in March)
C Districts agree to help teachers arrange schedules so they are able to attend at least one of their partner’s classes each week.
Participants agree to spend 2-3 hours per week visiting their partners classes and meeting at a mutually agreeable time to discuss teaching issues. They further agree to provide brief written summaries of these contacts to the project coordinator by email or mail each week.

Financial Information
- Travel, accommodation, and meal expenses will be covered by the First STEP program.
- Participant’s districts agree to provide release time and cover substitute teacher expenses for participants to attend the Fall and Spring workshops.
- Participants will receive a stipend in three installments: at the completion of the Summer Academy and at the completion of the Fall and Spring conferences. Stipends reflect the significant time that participants will spend working on the project outside of normal contract hours.

Further Information
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