Welcome to the CEC/CEC-PD Mentoring Program! The following provides some information that may be helpful as you begin your mentoring role in this Program.

1. **STUDENT SELECTION PROCESS**

The CEC student chapters which are interested in participating in the Mentoring Program submit an application to CEC. CEC determines the chapters to be selected, and based on the total student membership of each chapter, the number of participating student chapters, and the number of mentor openings existing, develops a ratio to allocate the number of student mentees per chapter. **All mentees in the Program must be a member of one of the selected CEC student chapters and remain a member of CEC throughout the participation in the Mentoring Program.**

Each faculty advisor of the approved student CEC chapter implements a selection process for the students who will be accepted to participate in the Program. Each interested student completes the Student Information Survey. Before approving the students for participation, the faculty advisor agrees to review the Guidelines for Students with the interested students from that chapter to ensure that they understand their responsibilities in the Program and know the types of mentoring and other services and benefits that may be available to them through their participation in the Program.

The Student Information Surveys are completed online and submitted to CEC for review. After documenting the receipt, verifying the number of applications submitted, and checking to ensure that all information is completed, CEC forwards the Student Information Surveys for that student chapter to the coordinator of the mentors, Linda Marsal, where the matching of the mentor to the mentee is completed.

2. **STUDENT AND MENTOR MATCHING PROCESS**

The coordinator of the mentors uses the information contained on the Student Information Surveys relative to age levels of children/youth (pre school-transition) and the areas of exceptionality interests (LD, DD, etc.) to match these with the areas of interest/expertise of the mentors (as listed on the Mentor Information Sheet). Geographic matching will be done when possible.

The mentor will receive via e-mail the Student Information Survey for the “matched student” which will contain the student’s areas of interest, age levels of children/youth, contact information, anticipated graduation date, goal for participation in the Program, etc. The faculty advisor for that chapter will also receive notification when the matches are completed and the name and e-mail address for each mentor with the student match.
3. **INITIATION OF THE MENTORING PROCESS**

Before initiating any student contact, each mentor should review the Mentor Guidelines. It is important that these guidelines be kept for ongoing reference as the mentoring relationship develops and when questions may arise.

Upon receipt of the Student Information Survey from the coordinator of the mentors, each mentor shall contact the assigned mentee. This contact is required to be made within ten (10) days of the assignment. It would be preferable if student contact was completed within seven (7) days. It is important to begin the mentoring process as close to the beginning of the fall school term as possible.

As the areas of interest on the Student Information Survey (LD, significant, pre school, etc.) are general in nature, during the initial contact with the mentee, specifics of his/her interests within these areas should be explored. This will assist you in providing more specialized and pertinent information during the mentoring.

If a mentor has agreed to mentor two (2) mentees, the second match will not be made until all mentors have been assigned the initial mentee.

The faculty advisors will check with the students to ensure that this initial contact was made. If it has not, the faculty advisor will either contact the assigned mentor directly or contact the coordinator of the mentors to determine the problem and seek resolve. The coordinator of the mentors will then contact the mentor to discuss the communication issue.

During the initial contacts, the mentor and mentee will introduce themselves; share other personal information/interests; determine the schedule for the mentoring; develop an orientation for the mentoring process; discuss needs and types of mentoring that can be offered; etc. Each mentoring situation is similar, but yet distinctive personal.

4. **TYPES OF MENTORING THAT CAN BE OFFERED**

The goal of the CEC/CEC-PD Mentoring Program is to create a supportive, caring, information sharing online relationship between the volunteer mentor (professional CEC member) and the selected CEC student member (mentee). The information shared is special education as well as CEC oriented.

The types of mentoring offered may be varied and determined by the time periods of the mentoring process; the needs of the student; the mentee’s student teaching/field experiences; course assignments; the questions posed to the mentor; and suggestions/resources the mentor feels are important for the student to have relative to the field of special education, critical issues in education, and CEC membership.

Specific types of mentoring may include:

- Personal support of a general nature
- Information about CEC programs, services, products, and other benefits to members
- Suggestions for specific student related issues
- Content area modifications/adaptations
- Behavior management techniques
Reinforcement of certain values and belief systems
Types of collaborative relationships
Models for delivery systems of special education programs and services
Reference sources for term papers, theses, dissertations, etc.
Vetted special education information as well as information relative to emerging field issues
Job search skills and resume’ building
Exploration of future graduate level studies

5. THE CONSISTENT COMMUNICATION PROCESS DURING MENTORING

In order to have an on line mentoring process, communication must be consistent and ongoing. Without communication, there is no mentoring.

Therefore it is important that the mentor:

- communicate with the mentee every two (2) weeks, even if it is merely to just check in; offer support; or show an interest.
- keep the communications brief and to the point unless the question/request from the student requires a more lengthy answer.
- report to the faculty advisor or the coordinator of the mentors a lack of response to e-mails sent to the mentee. A lack of response is considered to be no type of communication from the mentee for more than two-three weeks.
- provide feedback to the mentee in a timely manner.
- make the messages sent up beat, supportive, and encouraging.
- use other communication links if favored by the student (texting, Twitter, Facebook, etc.)
- use the “Topics and Tips for Mentors” to assist the communication flow.

6. INFORMATION FROM THE COORDINATOR OF THE MENTORS/CEC STAFF

The coordinator of the mentors will send updates to all mentors on a monthly basis. The updates will be sent electronically and will include information about the activities of the current Mentoring Program, CEC resources to be shared with the mentees, general special education information that might be of interest to the students, CEC membership material, resources that may be helpful to the student in the instructional process, details about new materials available from the IDEA Partnership (www.ideapartnership.org), and suggestions/pointers shared by other mentors.

These Information Sharing E-mails are meant to be used as suggested resources for the mentors. Each mailing should be reviewed and a determination made by the individual mentor as to what would be useful to the individual mentoring situation. The mailing is not intended to be copied in total and sent to the mentees as not all the material is applicable to all mentees. In addition, at times, the coordinator of the mentors adds notes in these mailings to the mentors which would also not be appropriate for the mentee to receive.

At any time a mentor has a question, needs clarification, or desires additional information, the coordinator of the mentors should be contacted.
7. **CHALLENGES**

As challenges have been identified in the Program’s operation, the team of mentors, faculty advisors, CEC staff, and the coordinator of the mentors have collaborated to reach resolve. Each year, these solutions have helped build a stronger program which then directly benefits all those involved in the CEC/CEC-PD mentoring process.

Most of the challenges identified during the years of operation have involved a breakdown in communication; either with the mentee or the mentor not acknowledging e-mails sent. When these communication challenges have been brought to the attention of the coordinator of the mentors, all of them have been able to be resolved in some manner. The problems arise when the issue is not reported in a timely manner. When there is no exchange taking place between the mentor and mentee, no one benefits from the Program’s offerings.

When a challenge occurs, when a question arises, or when there is a need for additional information/assistance, please contact the coordinator of the mentors immediately so that a resolution can be reached. (Dr. Linda Marsal, CECPDmentoring@cec.sped.org, 252.353.8919.)

Again welcome, and thank you for your willingness to share your experiences and expertise with a future special educator.

*Linda*

Dr. Linda Marsal  
Coordinator of the Mentors  
CEC/CEC-PD Mentoring Program

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