



SMART FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions about SMART Mentoring

Commitment/Time

A mentor is asked to commit to meeting with her/his mentee once a week for 48 weeks.

- What happens if I cannot meet with my mentee due to sickness, travel, or some other obligation such as family?

Occasionally, a mentor may have to miss a weekly meeting with the mentee. Notify your mentee as soon as possible and make arrangements to make up the meeting. If you know you will be missing a meeting in advance, plan around it. If it is due to illness or an unforeseen emergency, let the mentee know as soon as possible. This can be done in several ways:

- *You can connect using email or video conference (Skype, Face Time, etc.) to go over that week's assignment and discussion.*
- *You can modify the assignment to keep the mentee moving forward.*
- *You can arrange to meet face-to-face at another day and/or time that week.*
- *This is a perfect reason keep in touch with your mentee between in person meetings.*

The weekly meetings are designed to keep the mentee working through the process of furthering her/his education beyond high school, providing accountability, and interaction with someone who cares and is a resource. As a mentor, you need to model the behaviors you wish to see in your mentee.

- Can I be a mentor and be a desert part time resident?

That will depend on how many months you spend in the desert. The first few months are crucial because that is when the students are learning about the process and what are the expectations of them, and the mentor-mentee relationship is formed. We do



live in a world of virtual connections, but that is not the same as in-person meetings. If

you spend from mid-September through June in the desert, you may be able to be a mentor.

However, if you arrive around Thanksgiving and leave after Easter, there may be other ways you can volunteer to help PSUSD students.

- What does it mean that mentors communicate with a mentee between in-person visits?

It is important to show your mentee that you are there for her/him. We want her/him to feel comfortable contacting you in between meetings to ask questions, when they are stumped, or simply want to talk about things. One of the best ways to show interest is to keep in touch. This could be quick emails to ask how things are going, telling them how much you enjoyed the meeting, or some such.

- What do I do if my mentee does not like or refuses to work with me?

Use this as a teachable moment. This is an opportunity for the mentee to learn to work with someone she/he may not like, just as the mentee may not like a boss or teacher. The focus should always be the project. It is possible over time that the mentee will grow to like you once she/he sees you are honestly interested in her/his success. Some of these youth have been frequently disappointed by adults. Don't take it personally. This is something that you will want to let your team lead know immediately.

- What do I do if my mentee doesn't do the assignments, show up, or shows up late?

You need to determine if this problem is continuous or an occasional slip up. You need to document it in either case. If the problem is becoming continuous, contact your team lead immediately. Your team lead will take the information up the line and get back to you on the next steps, whether they are taken by you or someone else.



- What do I do if my mentee goes missing in action—does not return calls, emails, texts, or shows up for meetings?

Contact your team lead as soon as you determine your mentee is missing in action. Be sure to document the missed meetings and lack of return emails. Your team lead will take the information up the line and get back to you on the next steps, whether they are taken by you or someone else.

- How often do I need to be in contact with my team lead?

It is probably best to touch base regularly with your team lead by email, phone, or text just to check in on how things are going. How often you check in may be function of your relationship with your mentee. You may want to check in more often during the beginning of the program when everyone is settling in and getting to know one another. There may be times when you need to communicate more often, if the mentee is having trouble with an assignment or is excited about an accomplishment. Once or twice a week will probably be the average.

Communicating to the team lead is a good way to spot potential problems before they become big ones. If you are having problems, contact your team lead immediately. Doing so is not a criticism of your problem solving ability, but offers another perspective to assess what is going. There are resources the SMART program can draw upon if we are aware there is one.

Being a Role Model

- What does it mean to be a role model as a mentor? Things have changed so much since I went through the college and financial aid process.
Being a role model simply means demonstrating the behaviors you want to reinforce in your mentee: be respectful, reliable, prepared, punctual, dress appropriately, and communicate openly and honestly. If you don't know something, say so and that you will find out. You may be one of the few people that your mentor may see who exhibits



those behaviors consistently as well as on whom she/he can depend.

- What does dress appropriately for a mentor mean?

Appropriate dress is simply business casual. For a woman, slacks, top, skirt and blouse, comfortable shoes or sandals. For men, casual slacks such as Dockers and Levis, button down or polo shirt, and socks and shoes. No flip-flops or shorts.

- How should the student address me?

The student may address a mentor by her/his first name if they are comfortable doing so. This will allow some informality to the relationship, but should not be a sign that the mentor is to be considered a peer.

- What is the relationship between the mentor and mentee supposed to be?

It will vary based on the mentor's and mentee's personality. It will likely evolve over time. At its core, there needs to be mutual respect and trust. Some relationships will be closer than others. It is important that no matter how close the relationship becomes that the mentor maintain a level of professionalism and not be regarded as a friend/peer.

Curriculum

- How much discretion do I have with the content in the SMART Handbook?

You need to cover all the assignments in the SMART Handbook in the order that they occur. You have discretion on how you present the material and work with your mentee. In that, it is no different from two teachers of the same subject and grade level teaching the same material in their individual styles that are authentic and comfortable for them. Putting your own personality into the mentoring process can only help strengthen the mentor-mentee relationship.



Confidentiality

- I understand that my work with a mentee is confidential. What happens if I come upon information such as substance use/abuse, other abuses, depression/suicide, pregnancy, etc.?

Notify your team lead immediately with the information/evidence that led you to that conclusion. The team lead will take it from there. The school district has procedures for those eventualities. The team lead will ensure that the appropriate people are notified in order to take the appropriate action.

School Procedures

- Where do I go to get finger printed and a TB test?

The school district has procedures to have people who work in schools be finger printed and get TB tests. Information will be provided to mentors along with other information such as where to park, checking into the schools, etc.