



## NISD MENTOR GUIDELINES

### ATTENDANCE

- Your student will be expecting you and excited about your arrival. Please be on time.
- If you are unable to attend a mentor session, contact the campus coordinator as soon as possible. The session will not be rescheduled. It will be cancelled until the next week. Students and teachers will be notified on your behalf. This also applies to school holidays. A school calendar will be provided for scheduling sessions.
- Remember students will be counting on you. Please limit your absences to not more than three in a semester.
- Your time is valuable to us! If you would like to confirm your student's attendance before you arrive, contact the school office after 9 a.m. Identify yourself as a mentor when you call; student information is not available to the general public.
- Keep all promises. It's better not to make a promise and surprise a child, then not to keep a promise.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

- **CONFIDENTIALITY IS MANDATORY.** There may be times when you will hear things about students and their families. This information should not be discussed with friends, family, or even fellow mentors. Any information imparted to you by the student you feel warrants discussion should be discussed with the school administrators or counselors.

### INCENTIVES

- Some children in the mentor program will come from homes with special needs. You may be tempted to give presents or other material items to the student. This is not an objective of this program. Please consider incentives such as a healthy snack that can be consumed during the mentor session and will not be messy. Other gifts could be a book or game donated to the school mentor program for all students to enjoy. Your time is your gift!
- Lunch with your student is encouraged. Consider this as a special incentive from the school cafeteria or bring their own. Menus and special adult prices are available from the school office.
- Field trips to the mentor's workplace can be arranged for all students in the campus mentor program. See the campus mentor coordinator for details.

### RESTRICTIONS

- Mentor activities are restricted to the school campus. At no time are you to schedule off campus activities with your student. Designated public areas for mentor sessions include the library, cafeteria, playground and other school common areas.
- At no time should a mentor be behind a closed door, alone with a student. This precaution ensures the protection of all participants in the program.
- Mentors must avoid giving medications or medical treatment to a student. Should medical attention be required during a visit, please accompany the student to the nurse's office.
- All serious disciplinary problems or suspected mental health or drug/alcohol problems must be reported to the campus coordinator. **Mentors are never to take matters into their own hands.**
- Remember to respect a student's privacy. Please refrain from proposing discussions of a religious or political nature with students.
- Mentor partnerships should never be used to promote any specific business, commercial product or brand name with students or on school premises.

- Northside ISD does not permit smoking **anywhere** on school grounds. This includes buildings, parking lots, breezeways, and playgrounds.
- Suspected child abuse or neglect must be reported to the campus mentor coordinator.
- Never engage in criticism of school staff with the student. If you have a difference of opinion, save the discussion for an appropriate time away from the student with the campus mentor coordinator.

## **SAFEGUARDS**

- The mentor program requires parental consent for all student participants.
- Background checks are required of all mentors. If not already conducted by the mentor's employer, this procedure will be handled through the Northside Human Resources Office. The information obtained will be used solely in determining mentor eligibility and will be treated as confidential.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

- Be positive, firm, fair, friendly, alert, organized, caring and conscientious.
- Be prudent and professional in any physical contact or public display with children.
- Talk about yourself and your job.
- Language is very important. Negative remarks hinder the learning process and tend to sour relationships. Positive strokes encourage and build self-esteem.
- If something about your student is bothering you, first decide if the behavior is simply troubling to you because you would do things differently, or whether it indicates a more serious problem. If there is a real problem, inform your school contact, who can, in turn, determine if specific action is needed. You are not expected to be a professional therapist, but the school contact may suggest ways for you to be supportive of the student in dealing with certain problems.