

Arlington Teacher Mentor Program

Welcome To Arlington!

The Arlington School District and the Arlington Teachers' Association have jointly established an **Arlington Mentor Teacher Program**. The purpose of the program is to provide peer guidance to Arlington teachers in the first year of employment. It is our collective view that an instructional staff of the highest quality can best be assured by providing strong support for teachers new to Arlington.

The handbook has been developed to provide the new teacher with relevant information, which will assist you in your first year in Arlington. It is our hope when you use this resource along with your mentor teacher, your teaching experience will be successful and enjoyable.

Every teacher new to Arlington is assigned a mentor, but be assured your principal and your teacher colleagues stand ready and willing to assist you! There may be times when you feel overwhelmed, but hopefully not alone. Your mentor should be viewed as your professional guide and advisor throughout the year. You are likely to encounter many situations, which will raise questions relating to all areas of your teaching responsibilities. These questions may range from planning for instruction, utilizing materials, recordkeeping, or any myriad of other concerns. Your mentor will offer answers to these questions and provide other essential support during the school year.

Sincerely,

Robert Maier, President
Arlington Teachers' Association

L. Edward Lynn
Associate Superintendent for Human Resources

INTRODUCTION

In 1996, The Arlington Central School District and the Arlington Teachers' Association jointly established one of the first mentoring programs in the region- the **Arlington Teacher Mentor Program**. Since then, nearly 400 teachers new to Arlington have had the opportunity to work closely with an experienced teacher mentor. The Arlington Teacher Mentor Program is one of the District's most comprehensive professional development programs in recent years, and it represents the District's strong belief that the most important element in the education of children is the teacher. The purposes of the Arlington Teacher Mentor Program are as follows.

- To provide peer guidance to Arlington teachers in the first year of employment
- To increase the probability of a first year teacher having a successful start to his/her career
- To provide new teachers with information about district and building policies and procedures related to pedagogy and classroom and school management
- To provide new teachers with informal feedback about their pedagogy
- To provide the opportunity for the mentor and the novice teacher to reflect upon their practice
- To provide new teachers with information about the Arlington curricula, new curriculum initiatives and best practices
- To provide an opportunity for the mentor to work with the building principal in facilitating leadership in curriculum and instruction

This handbook has been developed to provide the new teacher and the mentor with information about the teacher mentor program, the program procedures, the roles of the mentor and the novice teacher and the role of the building principal.

The handbook is the product of the contributions of many teachers and administrators since 1996. More recently, a committee of teachers and administrators reviewed the Arlington Teacher Mentor Program, and a number of the recommendations of the Arlington Mentor Study Group are contained in this new and revised handbook. The Mentor Study Group members included the following Arlington professionals.

Kristi Bogaczyk-	Noxon Road	Steve Kerins-	Union Vale M.S.
Kathy Cicala-	LaGrange M.S.	Christine Lowden-	Office of Instruction
Erica Deninger-	Arlington H.S.	Robert Maier-	Arlington H.S.
Joanne Gahn-	Authur S. May	Linda Roy-	Noxon Road
Eric Schetter-	LaGrange M.S.	Lillian Phillips-	Arlington H.S.
Edward Lynn-	Office of HR		

As Arlington continues its commitment to high academic standards, the nurturing and development of teachers new to Arlington are critical. Who better to provide this support than Arlington's veteran teachers who have made valuable contributions to generations of students.

HISTORY

The Arlington Teacher Mentor Program began in 1996. It was a joint effort of the Arlington Teachers' Association and the Administration of the Arlington School District to meet the professional needs of teachers entering the District (Appendix A). A teacher mentor pilot program was first established in 1994 at the Arlington Middle School. Both the ATA and the administration believed the District would benefit from a program that provided both support to teachers new to the District and recognition to many of the outstanding veteran teachers on the faculties. The Teacher Mentor Program is designed to encourage experienced, tenured teachers to share their knowledge, talents and skills with teachers new to the District.

PROGRAM PROCEDURES

Mentor Selection

All tenured members of the Arlington faculty are eligible to serve as a mentor. Effective July 1, 2007, Arlington teachers desiring to serve as a mentor will also be required to participate in a three hour mentor orientation program that will be offered on several occasions during the 2006-07 school year. Participation in the mentoring orientation program will yield three hours toward an in-service credit.

In addition, it is expected that the mentor will participate in three one hour seminars during the school year when working with a new teacher.

In the spring of each year, the building principal, through written or oral communication, will solicit nominations/volunteers to be a mentor for the following year. From the pool of volunteers, the principal will select and assign a mentor to any teacher(s) new to Arlington in his/her building. The following characteristics will be sought in selecting a mentor.

- Demonstrates mastery of pedagogical skills and curricula knowledge
- Demonstrates strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Demonstrates a willingness to participate in the program and devote time to assist the new teacher
- Demonstrates commitment to his/her own professional learning
- Possesses the ability to allow the new teacher to develop his/her own effective teaching style

The principal will assign a mentor to a new teacher in consideration of the same grade level and/or subject area where possible. It is recognized that it may not be possible in all cases to match the mentor and the new teacher by grade level or subject area. The principal will match the mentor with a new teacher as soon as possible after the new teacher is employed, which will typically occur before a school year begins. The

Arlington Teacher Mentor Program has been successful over the years because of the high level of trust that exists among the mentor, new teacher and the principal. All parties need to be in communication throughout the year.

Although the Arlington Teacher Mentor Program is designed for a teacher in his/her first year in Arlington, circumstances may necessitate that a teacher in the second year be identified or request a mentor. Also, there may be some circumstances related to staff transfers to another building that may warrant the assignment of a mentor. Such circumstances will be addressed on a case by case basis by the building principal and the teacher.

At the conclusion of the mentoring assignment, the mentor and the new teacher will complete a certification form that will affirm that the mentor and new teacher completed the teacher mentor program. The completed certification form will result in the crediting of two (2) in-service credits for the mentor.

THE EXPECTATIONS AND ROLE OF THE MENTOR

The mentor role is highly valued in Arlington. The following describe the role of the mentor.

- Provide support and encouragement to help the new teacher understand the history, customs and culture of the school district and his/her school building
- Provide the teacher new to Arlington with support related to subject and course curricula, instructional strategies, classroom management, report card grading, building and District policies and procedures, parental contacts and any and all other topics that may be of importance in the performance of the new teacher's duties.
- Maintain **confidentiality** of all discussions, observations and other contacts between the mentor and the new teacher.
- Participate in the **three one hour mentor seminars** during the school year
- Participate in the evaluation process of the teacher mentor program
- Meet with the new teacher before the beginning of the school year to initiate the teacher/mentor relationship
- Meet with the new teacher during the school year to provide counsel and support to the new teacher
- Provide instructional and building resources or direct the new teacher to such
- Model competence and professionalism.
- Demonstrate tolerance, patience, and sensitivity to the novice teacher's concerns.
- Serve as an advocate/advisor.
- Use perspective and vision to suggest the next steps a new teacher might consider.
- Guide the new teacher in recognizing special talents and capabilities. At the same time, address the novice teacher's shortcomings and work together to find remedies.

- Identify the new teacher's good qualities and establish a firm relationship so that areas of improvement are easier to handle.
- Critique the new teacher's strengths as well as weaknesses in a confidential manner.
- Assist the new teacher to identify effective strategies and experiment with new ideas.
- Complete the new teacher/mentor certification form

Appendix B provides a detailed "Checklist of To-Do's" for the Mentor Teacher.

A Comment About Confidentiality

The first year of teaching can bring many challenges and concerns for the teacher. Teacher mentors are selected to offer assistance and guidance to allow for a smooth transition for the novice teacher. The relationship that develops between the mentor and novice teacher is critical to the success of the program. This relationship must be developed in an ethical manner where both fairness and confidentiality are important to effective communication. In no way is this relationship to be used in the formal evaluation process.

The mentor teacher should determine the regularity of interaction, set up the communication mechanisms, clarify the level of confidentiality, and modify expectations to fit the real-life mentoring situation. As the mentor/novice teacher relationship develops, the mentor should also take the responsibility to initiate and maintain the relationship. The mentor must communicate that sharing expectations and periodic review will give strength to the process. The novice teacher, in interacting with the mentor or principal, should not be concerned that sharing problems could reflect inadequacy. A positive, accepting attitude by the mentor and principal is crucial and sets the tone for a cooperative relationship. The mentor and the principal should insure that the sharing of ideas, problems, feelings, and resources can be done in an atmosphere of an open, working relationship.

THE EXPECTATIONS AND ROLE FOR THE TEACHER NEW TO ARLINGTON

Within the Arlington Teacher Mentor Program, the new teacher also has defined expectations and roles. The new teacher needs to be willing to engage in conversation with the mentor about any number of topics related to teaching, learning, curriculum, instructional management, student discipline, District and school culture and professional development. The new teacher will need to feel comfortable in approaching the mentor, colleagues and the principal in talking about the craft of teaching.

Much time and effort are expended in the recruitment of new teachers to Arlington. The District desires that new teachers acclimate themselves and thrive as professionals in Arlington. The following describe the expectations for the new teacher within the teacher mentor program.

- To gain personal and professional growth as a teacher new to Arlington
- To participate in three one hour “new teacher seminars” during the school year, and to engage in the seminar topics relevant to teaching in Arlington
- To develop an understanding of the District and school culture, mission and goals
- To participate in the New Teachers’ Orientation Program in August
- To meet with the mentor on a regular basis to discuss subject and course curricula, instructional strategies, classroom management, report card grading, building and District policies and procedures, parental contacts and any and all other topics that may be of importance in the performance of the new teacher’s duties as a teacher
- Remain in the teacher mentor program for the school year
- Be open to constructive criticism as well as praise
- Assume responsibility for the process of inner analysis and self-acceptance
- Share ideas, problems, feelings, expectations and concerns
- Maintain confidentiality
- Participate in the evaluation of the teacher mentor program
- Complete the new teacher/mentor certification form
- Explore Arlington’s and your school’s home page via the internet. Much valuable and important information is now housed on these sites.

Appendix C provides a detailed “Checklist of To-Do’s” for the Teacher New to Arlington

RECOGNITION OF THE MENTOR ROLE

In recognition of fulfilling the role of mentor during the school year, two (2) in-service credits will be awarded to the mentor. When an Arlington veteran teacher (tenured) has been placed with a new teacher, the mentor must complete the “PRIOR APPROVAL APPLICATION FOR GRADUATE OR IN-SERVICE CREDIT” form, and forward such to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction. On this form, please note under the name of the course “Teacher Mentor Program.” At the end of the school year, the mentor will be credited with two in-service credits at the beginning of the next school year.

Arlington is proud of its Teacher Mentor Program. Ten years after the establishment of Arlington’s program, the New York State Education Department has finally recognized the importance of teacher mentoring as one aspect of a quality new teacher induction program. The new (February 2004) SED certification regulations mandate that a teacher seeking a professional teaching certificate have a mentoring experience in partial fulfillment of the certificate requirements. The Part 80-3 of the regulations stipulate that the initial teaching certificate holders must complete three years of satisfactory teaching experience, with the first year as a mentored experience.

Arlington teachers have over the years prepared strategies and “tips” to help in their new colleagues’ introduction to teaching. Arlington teachers and administrators **care** about each other, and we all know that the quality of the teacher is the most importance resource in the education of students. Appendices D through J share what Arlington teachers have learned about teaching and learning, and this information is included for your reference.

APPENDIX B

Checklist of To-Do's for the Mentor Teacher

___ Complete a prior approval form for in-service credit

Before the First Day of School, Familiarize the Novice Teacher with the Following:

___ The school building layout, time schedule, and school calendar

___ The procedures for, and the use of, the copy machines, fax machine, etc.

___ Procedure for obtaining AV equipment

___ Supervisory duty responsibilities

___ Homeroom/morning procedures

___ Grading policies and procedures (grade book, progress reports, report cards)

___ Paperwork--such as forms, reports, book lists, locker lists, etc.

___ Procedures for sending students to lavatory, office, health office, music lessons, etc.

___ Library and ancillary services

___ Discipline referrals and follow-ups

___ Classroom, playground, cafeteria, and study hall procedures and rules

___ Materials, textbooks, and supplies that the school district furnishes

___ Review lesson plans for the first week

Early in the School Year.....

___ Model lesson plans and their development

___ Plan district assessments

___ Model instruction (have novice teacher observe your class when possible)

___ Explain the assistance available from the Nurse, Guidance Counselors, School Psychologist, Social worker, etc.

- ___ Explain policies regarding sick and personal leave days (i.e. calling for a substitute).
- ___ Suggest solutions for dealing with difficult students or classes.
- ___ Explain procedures for staying with students after school.
- ___ Provide suggestions for open house.
- ___ Model various styles of communication with student's home.
- ___ Offer advice for handling parent conferences.
- ___ Monitor to see the curriculum is being followed and covered.
- ___ Explain coordination needs for Special Education students and Pupil Review Team process.
- ___ Explain the evaluation procedure.
- ___ Explain policies and procedures for field trips.
- ___ Explain college course/in-service prior approval form.
- ___ Explain school homework policy.
- ___ Review process and due dates for progress reports and report cards throughout the year.
- ___ Explain the snow day and delayed opening procedures.
- ___ Explain fire drill procedures.
- ___ Explain assembly procedures.
- ___ Review the faculty handbook.
- ___ Help novice teacher fill in BEDS forms.
- ___ Help prepare novice teacher for an administrative observation.
- ___ Review all written observations/evaluations.

As the Year Goes On....

- ___ Help with budget preparation.
- ___ Explain New York State assessments, any achievement tests, dates, and their role in measuring student performance
- ___ Explain final exam procedures and report card grading procedures for the end of the year.
- ___ Encourage professional development by occasionally observing the novice teacher's classroom.
- ___ Explain end of year procedures.
- ___ Discuss issues that arise in faculty meetings.
- ___ Explain the role of the ATA in the education process.

APPENDIX C

Checklist of To-Do's for the New Teacher

Before the First Day of School

- ___ Obtain your schedule and student roster.
- ___ Familiarize yourself with students' names (pronunciation); make name tags if appropriate for your grade level.
- ___ Secure textbooks, teacher guides and curriculum guides.
- ___ Complete student textbook forms, to the degree possible.
- ___ Plan for the first day:
 - an introduction to classroom policies and grading procedures
 - determine seating arrangement
 - see: Tips for Day One
- ___ Prepare your classroom to accommodate teacher- and student-centered activities.
- ___ Prepare a memo to students and/or parents outlining expectations regarding the following:
 - supplies
 - student conduct
 - textbooks
 - assignments (class work, homework, special projects)
 - progress evaluation (grading procedures)
 - parent/teacher communication
- ___ Communicate with your mentor--ask questions !!! Your mentor is there to help you.
- ___ Secure supplies essential to particular lessons well before they are needed.

APPENDIX D

Classroom Management Tips

Being organized is one of the keys to effective instruction. Planning ahead can help you avoid many problems. Classroom management can include management of the classroom climate, management of time, and management of student behavior.

Classroom Climate

- Arrange room to reflect interests of the students.
- Determine seating arrangement before first day of school.
- Bulletin boards and other visual displays should reflect the diversity in the classroom.
- Arrange seating so the students can view the board, projection screen, and overhead without the need to move seats.
- Store books and supplies so they are easily accessible.
- Be outside your classroom to greet your students.
- Accommodate students with special needs (i.e. vision or hearing impaired).
- Acknowledge students' positive qualities.
- Set tasks and limits based on the students' capabilities.
- Avoid singling a student out or having favorites.
- Learn students' names promptly.
- Establish and model ground rules.

Time Management

Laying a good foundation is important. The following suggestions may help:

- Every day make a list of things which need to be completed, do a little bit at a time, and don't prolong doing things.
- Make a habit to plan at the same designated time of day.
- To avoid stacks of paper (clutter), respond to it immediately. Handle a piece of paper only once. Either give it to someone else to deal with it, file it, or throw it away.
- Use a loose-leaf notebook for lesson plans so the order of lessons can be modified easily.
- Use a monthly calendar for unit planning.
- Save time by checking attendance with a seating chart.
- Put papers to be graded in labeled folders according to class or period.
- Prioritize! When time is a factor, consider what will affect your most immediate actions and do them first.

APPENDIX E

Student Behavior Management

Student behavior management will be an important part of your day. Learning and developing techniques, and using them consistently and responsibly, will be very beneficial to your program. You will be guided by the “personality” of the class. This can differ from year to year or from class to class. Your mentor teacher is your best source of advice regarding student behavior management.

Managing Discipline:

- Treat the students in a respectful manner.
- At the beginning of the year, lay the groundwork for class expectations that are consistent with school-wide standards.
- Consequences for undesirable behavior should be established in advance, and following through is critical.
- Learn to de-escalate undesirable behavior.
- Respect the personal space of the student and deal with individual problems privately.
- Be aware of your body language and the messages and feelings you communicate.
- Help students understand that feelings are acceptable, but inappropriate behavior is unacceptable.
- Don't use threats or ultimatums.
- Address discipline problems promptly, as procrastination leads to greater problems.

Below is a Series of Actions You May Want to Follow for Student Behavioral Management:

- Use signaling (facial expressions, body movement, sounds, and gestures).
- Talk to the student privately, either in the hall or after class in a meeting room.
- Discuss students with your mentor teacher. Your mentor teacher is your best source of advice regarding student behavior management.
- Change the student's seat.
- Involve parents.
- Consult principal for additional strategies and advice
- Isolate the student.
- Develop a behavioral contract with the student.
- Refer to the administration after other steps have been attempted and failed.

APPENDIX F

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Clear and concise communication is important and will help you feel confident in dealing with parents. Parent conferences can be anticipated with discomfort, but on the other hand can be very productive. Parents in general come to a conference with the intent of being cooperative and with the best interests of their child in mind. Focusing the discussion on the student's classroom progress and achievement will help prevent the conference from dealing with irrelevant issues. Encourage the parent to discuss the conference with the student both before and after the meeting. This will relay to the child that the teacher and parents are working together in the best interest of the child.

Before the conference, be prepared with a variety of information that may include:

- Test scores
- Homework progress
- Standardized test scores
- Attendance information
- Documented classroom behavior and any other applicable information
- School work
- Reading levels and math progress if applicable
- Special interests or points you may have noticed in the student
- Peer relationships and how the child interacts with other students
- Appropriate and/or inappropriate behavior inside and outside of the classroom

During the conference:

- Use good communication skills.
- Begin on a positive note, such as sharing students' strengths and progress
- Stay on the topic.
- Be certain to explain the governing factors surrounding the student's behavior and its impact on the educational process.
- Come up with suggestions for remediation.
- Respond with positive information. Allow the parents to understand that you sympathize with the dilemma they are facing, but at the same time continue to focus on dealing with the student's progress.
- Avoid communicating with emotions, and avoid triggers that could interfere with the tone of the conference.

After the conference:

- Document the conference in writing for your reference.

APPENDIX G

Substitute Teacher Provision

Arlington participates in the automated substitute teacher service coordinated by BOCES. Obtain from your principal or your mentor the information for accessing the BOCES substitute service.

In the event you must be absent, you should be sure to leave the substitute sufficient information in order for the day to go smoothly. Supply adequate and explicit lesson plans and any corresponding materials. The information can best be used by the substitute if organized in a clear, concise manner and left in a readily available place or in the main office file with the following information:

- Your schedule of classes:
 - List classes with times of periods and room numbers
 - List specials: (include time and day):
 - Lunch duty including special directions
 - Study hall and location of information for study hall
 - Music
 - Art
 - Physical Education
 - Alternate activities in case the special classes are canceled
- Names and schedules of students who may leave for special reasons (e.g., to nurse for medication, resource room, speech)
- Seating charts, class lists, and directions for dealing with any special students
- Home room activities for class:
 - How to report absences
 - Lunch totals (free, reduced, regular price)
 - Announcements
 - Pledge of Allegiance
- Class rules and procedures (e.g., nurse/bathroom pass, referrals)
- Location of materials to be used with lesson plans
- Explanation of extra work, if needed
- Instructions for use of equipment and materials, if needed
- Names of other school personnel usually in your class (e.g., teacher's aide)

- Names of dependable students who may provide assistance
- Name and location of teacher who may offer assistance
- Dismissal procedures (e.g., chairs up on desks, condition in which room should be left)
- Floor plan of classroom and building
- Fire drill/emergency evacuation procedures

Students should be aware of what is to be accomplished during your absence. Write the substitute a brief note in order to set a positive tone for the day, thanking him/her in advance for filling in, and request a report including attendance information.

APPENDIX H

Go! Tips for Day One

Jitters are expected on your first day of teaching. The following suggestions may help you create a business-like atmosphere beginning day one.

- Be flexible, positive, and assured. Be in control.
- Learn students' names. Recheck the spellings and pronunciations with students. Call students by name often. Provide name tags for lower primary students. Help students become acquainted. Be certain students know and use your name.
- Outline your expectations of conduct in the classroom, in the hall, and on the playground or campus. Be sure students know that you expect them to behave appropriately. For elementary students, reinforce appropriate behaviors you observe.
- Discuss your work standards, homework, and grading policies.
- Review lunch, recess, and other operating schedules, if appropriate. To the extent possible, describe routines elementary children will follow.
- Issue textbooks (if applicable) and complete textbook forms. (Assigning a seatwork activity to be completed as texts are issued can reduce off-task behavior.)
- Begin individual or group assessment and review of reading and math skills or other subject areas.
- Give a specific first-day writing and discussion assignment (if appropriate) such as...
“The best thing I did during the summer...” “When I think of school, I think of...”
“This year I hope...”
- Send home memos you and/or the school administrator have written to parents.
- Believe your students want to do the right thing.
- Review class activities and assignments (if appropriate), and end the day in a positive manner.

Let's begin: Further Hints for a Successful First Day

A good way to start the first day is to stand near the door and greet students as they enter. If a student enters in an unacceptable manner, stop the student, explain to him/her the behavior you expect, and ask the student to repeat the entrance appropriately. After all students are seated, begin with a brief introduction.

APPENDIX I

Tips for Survival

Handling Stress

Occasionally there will be days when you feel as if you had been hit by a Mack truck. This stress can make you cry, make you angry, or even make you want to walk out of class and not return. Before you do anything so drastic, read “The Therapeutic Thirteen,” which suggest positive ways to handle stress.

The Therapeutic Thirteen (Positive ways to handle stress)

1. Escape for a period. When stress begins to mount, escape from it either mentally or physically. This can be done by changing your thought pattern or by leaving your work and going for a short walk. It is ineffective to work when tired. Learn to relax. Use humor.
2. Develop release activities. Use crossword puzzles, exercises, hobbies, and other interests. Indulge yourself.
3. Find an individual you can talk to about your concerns. Consider organizing other beginning teachers in your school or district or joining an existing group within your grade, department, or school.
4. Try to keep an uncluttered desk. (A cluttered desk is usually perceived as disorganized and stressful.)
5. Examine your diet. Does it provide for your nutritional needs?
6. Establish a life balance. Aim for 8 hours of work, 4 hours of family, and 4 hours for self. Make a schedule and stick to it. Leave home problems at home and work problems at work. While school work may occupy some hours at home, try to deal with problems as soon as possible after they occur during the day.
7. Take things one step at a time. Make a “To Do” list. Zero in on one area and try to improve it rather than trying to overhaul your life completely at one time.
8. Don’t try to be “Super-teacher.” Establish priorities and put your emphasis on quality, not quantity. Remember the 80-20 principle: 80% of the value may come from the first 20% of work time, or 80% of the value may come from 20% of the items on your “To Do” list. Remember, all of your students’ problems are not yours; help or refer help when you can and don’t worry for them.

9. Delegate responsibility whenever possible.
10. Hone your professional skills. Go back to school. Being a student is a good role reversal technique that gives you the student's perspective. Read current literature, or seek advice or suggestions from those you consider to be "good teachers."
11. Learn to be professional. Support your colleagues and principal. Do not speak unkindly of them. Be prepared in your teaching. Involve your student in the instructional process. Participate in your professional organizations. Use protocol in trying to resolve problems, or use the "chain of command" approach. Respect your students as individuals.
12. Know thy self. Become aware of what situations cause stress to you. Then either avoid these circumstances or desensitize yourself to them. This might require that you learn to compromise. You do not always have to be right.

Good Luck! Plan, ask questions, and keep trying. Remember, one day you will be the "experienced teacher." In fact, by this time next year, you will be.

Reprinted with permission from Tennessee Education and Appalachia Education Laboratory from Bridges to Strength: The TEA-AEL Beginning Teacher's Handbook, Nashville, TN. 37219, 1988.

APPENDIX J

More First Day Do's

- Your beginning activity should be one the students can complete successfully with little or no help.
- Teach whole-class and seatwork procedures immediately.
- Remember, since this is a new situation for the students also, repeat rules, procedures, and consequences.
- Set a pleasant, positive tone to the end of the day, and students will look forward to returning to class. Let them know you are looking forward to an enjoyable year.
- **PLAN! PLAN! PLAN!**

The first day, second day, and the first week of school set the tone for the entire year. By knowing what you are going to teach and by having the materials you need, you will be prepared for a successful beginning and feel more confident.

Students will try to see if you really are going to make them follow the rules. **BE CONSISTENT** in holding students to your expectations. Ignore misbehaviors that do not interrupt the lesson or interfere with others.

Remember that many of the things happening in your classroom during the first few weeks are happening to all teachers. Many are “first few weeks” problems that have to be solved with each new class (Wildman, 1985). Meet each problem and solve it as quickly as you can. It is not the severity of punishment but the certainty of it that deters unacceptable behavior. Again, talk to experienced teachers who have gone through the beginning of school “blitz.” Some problems can be averted or eased simply through conversation.

After your long-anticipated and well-planned first day of teaching, you and your students will have learned a great deal about one another. Some mutual expectations will have been established in terms of behavior, procedure, and attitude that will direct the course of learning throughout the whole year. Naturally, those expectations will be refined and amended as the need arises.

APPENDIX K

Arlington Central School District

**Teacher Mentor/Mentee Certification Form
(Due January 15 and June 15)**

I certify that I have worked collaboratively with my teacher mentor/mentee as outlined in the Arlington Teacher Mentor Handbook.

Circle One: Mentor Mentee

Print Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Building Name: _____

Name of teacher with whom you worked: _____

Did you find the Mentor/Mentee process to be useful for introducing new faculty members to teaching in the Arlington Central School District?

Please return to Building Administrator.

Signature of Building Administrator: _____

Staff Development Office Use -

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

