



## **ABCs of Successful Mentoring: Appreciate, Befriend, Communicate**

Mentors feel **APPRECIATED** in schools when:

- ♦ Teachers give mentors positive feedback (including specifics about their work).
- ♦ Teachers share with mentors growth and changes they see in mentees throughout the year.
- ♦ The school newsletter features the mentoring program and mentors' names are mentioned.
- ♦ Mentors receive copies of the school newsletter.
- ♦ Mentors are introduced at staff and school board meetings.
- ♦ Mentors are invited to school events, concerts, plays, etc.
- ♦ Mentors receive an unexpected letter of recognition/appreciation from their mentee, a teacher, the principal, or a school board member.
- ♦ Small, ongoing signs of appreciation are as important as one large event at the end of the school year. So do both!

To **BEFRIEND** mentors means to:

- ♦ Get to know the mentors—learn about their background, area of study, interests, goals, and dreams.
- ♦ Know their birthday and acknowledge it.
- ♦ Ask mentors for their ideas and opinions, and incorporate them when possible.
- ♦ Bring them the extra cookies you made on a snow day.
- ♦ Invite them to join you at a CFES conference or workshop.
- ♦ Invite mentors to a CFES school-college partnership retreat and write a mini-grant proposal together.

**COMMUNICATE** well and often:

- ♦ Strive for open lines of communication; including e-mails, phone calls, and short notes (e.g., notes of thanks, “we can’t wait to see you next week,” etc.). Soon communication will be flowing both ways.
- ♦ Share information about upcoming units and fieldtrips; college mentors may have contacts that are relevant for a specific unit (and may be able to bring them in!) or know of a college resource the school could use.
- ♦ Notify your mentor when you will be out of school.
- ♦ Notify mentors when there is a snow day. While there may be a system of notification in place, it is wise to ensure the message is received.
- ♦ Find a way to update one another on a regular basis. Catching up with mentors when they come to work with your students may not be practical; alternatives include getting together for five minutes after class or talking on the phone that evening.
- ♦ Mentors appreciate hearing directly from teachers when there is a problem. Discuss the problem while it is still small, before it becomes a major issue. Regular feedback is essential for mentors to be effective.