

Idaho Agricultural Education Beginning Teacher  
Mentoring Program Handbook



Idaho Agriculture Teachers Association

in partnership with

The University of Idaho

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# I. Introduction and Program Outline

The University of Idaho Agricultural and Extension Education Department and the Idaho Agriculture Teachers Association have created a Mentoring Program for Beginning Teachers in an effort to help new teachers transition into successful teaching by utilizing the knowledge, experience, and leadership of veteran teachers.

A *Mentor* will be selected for each beginning teacher to serve as a trusted counselor during the first year of the *mentee's* teaching career. Mentors will provide guidance and support to a novice professional in an effort to retain high quality teachers in the state of Idaho.

The mentoring program will be offered to all beginning agriculture teachers in the state of Idaho. Each beginning teacher will be assigned a mentor that will provide information and direction related to three components of an agricultural education program; Classroom and Laboratory Instruction, FFA Activities, and Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) Activities.

This program is designed to be non-evaluative in nature and solely focused on providing beginning teachers with a foundation of support and guidance during their first year of teaching.

*Both mentor and beginning teachers may receive one (1) Professional Development credit through the University of Idaho (dependent on University funding).*

## II. Expected Activities & Time Commitments

1. The mentoring program expects the beginning *and* mentor teachers to attend IATA Summer Inservice.
2. The mentor would travel to the beginning teacher's program ONE time minimum throughout the course of the program.
3. The beginning teacher would travel to the mentor teacher's program at least ONE time throughout the course of the program.
4. The mentor would contact beginning teacher by phone or in person at least twice during the first month and once a month after. Mentors can use the recommended topics to guide phone conversations and program visits.

### Objectives

1. ***Increased Retention Rates of Beginning Teachers in Idaho.***  
A mentoring program will replace the "sink or swim" approach to teaching. Developing professional relationships between new and veteran teachers will help keep beginning teachers in the profession.
2. ***Increased Professional Activity of Mentor Teachers.***<sup>2</sup>  
Placing veteran teachers in mentorship roles will encourage them to lead by example and engage in professional activities at the local, district, and state level.
3. ***Improved Quality of Student Instruction and Classroom Management by Beginning Teachers.***  
By utilizing the expertise of veteran teachers, beginning teachers can confidently structure their programs with effective planning and management skills thus providing their students with quality learning experiences.

# III. Recommended Discussion Topics

## 1. First Quarter

- Idaho Ag Ed Teacher Toolbox
- Classroom management
  - Rules and procedures
  - SpEd expectations, accommodations
- Lesson planning
- Sub plans
- Share curriculum and discuss available resources
- Program budgeting and accounting
- CDE preparations
  - Choosing which CDEs to participate in
  - Practices

## 2. Second Quarter

- Time management
- Share successes and struggles
- Solutions for common hurdles
- State FFA activities
- FFA fundraising

## 3. Third Quarter

- Self care- mental health days, avoiding illness
- SAE programs and record books
- Course offerings for next year
- Budgeting for next year
- State CDEs planning and management
- FFA banquet ideas

## 4. Fourth Quarter

- Recruiting for FFA
- Officer team selection and training
- Areas for improvement
- Summer planning
  - SAE Visits
  - Fairs
- Professional development opportunities
  - IATA Summer Inservice
  - CTE Summer Conference
  - CASE

## **IV. Mentor Roles and Responsibilities**

A mentor is a person who takes on the role of a trusted counselor, advisor, and leader. Mentors for this program will be selected because they are highly regarded in their profession and have a desire to use their expertise to guide and support beginning teachers as they transition into the world of teaching.

### **Overview**

Experienced Idaho Agricultural Education teachers will be selected for this program. It is suggested that mentors attend NAAE Region 1 Conference and CTE Summer Conference, but attendance at IATA Inservice is mandatory. A debriefing for the mentors and beginning teachers will be held during this conference.

### **Expectations**

1. Contact beginning teacher by phone twice during the first month and once a month after, using the recommended topics provided as an outline for discussion.
2. Complete at least one day-long visits at the beginning teacher's school throughout the course of the program.
3. Host the beginning teacher at your school for at least one day-long visit throughout the course of the program.
4. Share program tips and resources with beginning teacher.
5. Send reminders prior to important dates, events, and registration deadlines.
6. Provide positive and constructive feedback concerning program planning, instruction, and classroom management.
7. Engage other mentors in conversations regarding the mentoring program.
8. Keep updated records of mentoring activities and forms to be submitted to Mentoring Program Coordinator.

### **Recommendations**

1. Must have completed at least three years of teaching in the same FFA district as the beginning teacher.
2. Must be a NAAE and IATA Member.
3. Must have a desire to work closely with new teachers and take on the role of a mentor.
4. Should be professionally active at the local, district, and state Agricultural Education levels.

## Requirements

1. Must attend required mentor/beginning teacher events and it is highly encouraged to attend professional development workshops and conferences.
2. Initiate contact with beginning teacher; do not wait for them to reach out to you.
3. Must dedicate the time to become familiar with beginning teacher's program in order to effectively provide personalized feedback and guidance.
4. Be prepared to share past experiences, best practices, resources, and advice for beginning teachers.
5. Complete *at least* the minimum required visitations and phone calls with beginning teacher.
6. Assist with local, district, and state networking by introducing beginning teacher to people in the profession.
7. Provide constructive feedback regarding program operations.
8. Complete mentoring program activities and forms for submission to program coordinator.
9. Identify areas of concern and help beginning teacher overcome specific struggles through problem solving.
10. Demonstrate coaching skills to aid the beginning teacher with FFA advisor responsibilities.
11. Conduct follow-ups as needed with the beginning teacher.

# V. Beginning Teacher Roles & Responsibilities

## Position Summary

First year Idaho Agricultural Education Instructors are encouraged to participate in the mentoring program. First year teachers often feel overwhelmed and isolated. The mentoring program is designed to offer first time teachers a support system that will promote successful collaboration, networking, and program development. Beginning teachers should be forthcoming with any questions and concerns that they encounter and seek advice from their mentor.

## Expectations

1. Must attend required mentor/beginning teacher events and it is highly encouraged to attend professional development workshops and conferences.
2. Must complete at least ONE day-long visit at the mentor teacher's school throughout the course of the program.
3. Host the mentor teacher at your school for at least ONE day-long visits throughout the course of the program.
4. NAAE and IATA membership strongly encouraged.
5. Must teach in the same FFA district as the mentor, if at all possible. ☐

## Skills and Abilities

1. Maintain a passion for learning through collaborating with others.
2. Should be open-minded and tolerant of new ideas.
3. Be able to identify areas of concern and problem solve with mentor's assistance.
4. Respect mentor's time.
5. Be able to willingly accept mentor's advice and assistance. ☐

## Required Job Functions

1. Must attend required events and mentoring meetings as scheduled.
2. Generate a list of questions to bring to meetings.
3. Become familiar with mentor's curriculum/courses.
4. Share experiences, questions, successes, and failures with mentor.
5. Reply to mentor contacts in a timely manner and initiate contact with the mentor as ☐needed.



# Mentoring Program Visitation Form

After the visit, complete this form and submit to Mentoring Program Coordinator.

Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_ Beginning Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Visit: \_\_\_\_\_

Visit was made to: \_\_\_\_ Mentor's School \_\_\_\_ Beginning Teacher's School

Topics Discussed during Visit:

Strategies discussed:

**At least ONE visit is required to the mentor's school and at least ONE visit to the beginning teacher's school for a total of TWO visits minimum.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Mentor's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Beginning Teacher's Signature**

Updated 1/8/18

# Mentoring Program Visitation Form

After the visit, complete this form and submit to Mentoring Program Coordinator.

Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_ Beginning Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Visit: \_\_\_\_\_

Visit was made to: \_\_\_\_ Mentor's School \_\_\_\_ Beginning Teacher's School

Topics Discussed during Visit:

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**At least ONE visit is required to the mentor's school and at least ONE visit to the beginning teacher's school for a total of TWO visits minimum.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Mentor's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Beginning Teacher's Signature**

Updated 1/8/18

# Call and Meeting Log

*Use this log to keep track of mentor/mentee contact.*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Communication Method</b> (meeting, phone, email, etc)	<b>Location of Meeting</b> (if applicable)	<b>Topics Discussed</b>	<b>Action Items</b>

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