

BEST PRACTICES FOR MENTORS SUPPORTING STUDENTS

BOSTON PARTNERS
IN EDUCATION

TIPS FOR BUILDING A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

- Before the first session, communicate with the parents/guardians. Introduce yourself to the family, include why you are volunteering, prior experience, your skills or academic interests and what you hope to gain.
- Before the first session, communicate with the proctor. Set expectations around the working relationship with the proctor, discuss how you two will collaborate.
- Get to know the “whole child.” Try to learn about the student’s family, likes/dislikes, hobbies, and interests. Share these things about yourself as well! It can take time for the student to trust you, especially being online. Building a relationship with the student will be the foundation of everything else you do together.
- Be flexible and consistent. Your regular attendance is critical. Make sure that you are consistent in your behaviors and expectations while working with the student.
- Be patient but persistent. Working through areas of struggle can be frustrating for both you and the student, but by modeling persistence you can teach the student the importance of being patient with oneself.
- Incorporate some fun and short break time into your mentoring time each week. This could be as simple as a conversation or as involved as a pre-planned educational activity. Maybe it's a fun warm-up, a brain break, or a rewards system for when the student meets goals or completes assignments.
- Motivate the student to want to learn and work hard. Part of your role is to be a cheerleader for the student. Teach them the importance of a love of learning and school.