

BEST PRACTICES FOR MENTORS SUPPORTING STUDENTS

BOSTON PARTNERS
IN EDUCATION

TIPS FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS ACADEMICALLY

- Before the first session, doing some research can help you prepare. Depending on what you feel like you know least about or are most interested in, researching context about the classroom can be helpful. For example, visit the school website, search common core standards for the subject, or research BPS.
- Talk to the student about academic strengths, struggles, and goals for themselves. This will help you to build your understanding of the students' learning style and needs, based on what you have observed in earlier sessions. It can help provide a focus area for the match.
- Leave time for quiet reflection and thought after asking a question or when a student is stuck, and don't immediately offer the answer. Try prompting them with a related question or by reviewing what you already did if they are really stuck. Be okay with the silence.
- Emphasize the learning process as much as a specific skill or the answer. It's okay to learn alongside your student; you do not need to be an expert in the material to mentor them. Learning with them allows them to see that happen and is another way to learn how to learn.
- Create a productive, focused environment while working with your student. Motivate and encourage them to want to learn, complete their work, and engage with school. If they are off task, redirect them back to the task at hand instead of disciplining them. Ask the student why they are disengaged and include them in working together to find a solution.
- Try new things and experiment with how you approach your student. Try different strategies, ways of thinking, or methods of doing something. Relate the learning back to real world concepts and things that are interesting to them.