



## Mentors Working With Teachers: Beginning of Match

### **Introduce yourself to the teacher via email**

- Introduction should include why you're volunteering, prior experience working with children, your skills or academic interests and what you hope to gain at the end of the experience.
- Introducing yourself provides the teacher more context to who you are and how best you can work with the student(s) you're assigned to.

### **Ask the teacher the best way to communicate with them**

- Let the teacher know how you prefer to communicate as well. Setting expectations around communication preferences early will help establish consistent communication later on.

### **Ask about the student(s)**

- Use the introduction email to learn more about the students and the class. Ask the teacher questions such as why they nominated this particular student, how they created a small group, what they hope the student will get out of your sessions, the student's learning style, or specific goals they have for student(s). This will help you prepare for setting goals and expectations with the student(s).

### **Preparation for the First Day**

- Check in with the teacher about how they will introduce you to the class and what students will call you. Ask the teacher where in the classroom you will be working with the student and what a typical session will look like.
- Ask what the teacher's classroom routines, procedures, and practices are. This will help you learn the classroom and school culture. It also conveys to the teacher that you want to integrate into their classroom and support them. Ask what the classroom and school procedures are around behavior.
- Expect your first session to mostly be an observation. This gives you a chance to introduce yourself to the teacher and student(s). It is also an opportunity to observe classroom norms and procedures.

# Mentors Working With Teachers: Throughout the Match

## **Regular Attendance**

- Your regular and punctual attendance is critical! Being at the sessions, engaged with your student goes a long way. Things do come up, causing volunteers to miss a session or two (illness, work or life emergency), please be in communication with your teacher so they are aware. Whenever possible, reschedule missed sessions for a different day that same week.

## **Consistent communication with the teacher**

- Check-ins and debriefs can be conducted in person or over email. Either way, the conversation should address mentee progress and difficulties as well as feedback for you. Talk to the teacher about the student academically, socially, and personally. Our most successful volunteers recap the session weekly via email shortly after in order to limit any disruptions.

## **Strategize with the teacher how you can model and reinforce behaviors**

- As a mentor, you should be modeling student behaviors and classroom norms, such as listening when someone is talking or asking questions during a lesson. Talk to the teacher about how you can best serve as an example for the students. Ask for any cues or routines the teacher uses to keep the class on task that you can model and use in your mentoring.

## **Set Clear Expectations**

- Your first few sessions should be spent getting to know the student and the teacher. More specifically, volunteers and teachers should set expectations around frequency of communication and classroom expectations.

## **Follow-up with the teacher after class about any concerning behavior disruptions, involving your student or other students in the classroom**

- Do not intervene; you are not there as a disciplinarian and can even end up undermining the teacher.
- Check-in with the teacher afterward about how you are feeling and how they are feeling. Ask them how you can support them and your student(s) without intervening. Ask what the classroom and school procedures are around behavior.
- Talk to your student about how they feel when that happens. Make sure they are okay and have a conversation about the behavior.
- As a mentor, try to always have empathy for all students in the classroom and ask questions for context about the behavior. Feel free to reach out to us for support or with any questions.