Music Mentor Checklist

AUGUST GUIDE FOR THE INITIAL MEETING

OVERVIEW: The Mentor’s job for the first meeting is to help the new teacher:
1. Plan for the first week of school.
2. Establish classroom routines, procedures, and expectations that will serve as a foundation for the year.
3. Find and organize materials and resources.
4. Prepare a positive environment.
5. Gain an overview of Music SOL’s that will guide long-range planning and pacing.
6. Understand the role of other professionals with whom you will work: IFT, counselors, paraprofessionals, Fine Arts Supervisor, Music Specialist, department chair, custodians, mentor, lead mentor, bookkeeper.
7. Answer questions.
8. Discuss best practices for communication (i.e. email, cell phone numbers, etc.)

THE BUILDING and GENERAL PREPARATION
(If your protégé attended the Beginning Teacher Institute August 7-8, the lead mentor at your school went over this section with your protégé.)

☐ Tour: work room, lounge, mailboxes, office, computer lab, students’ records, library, cafeteria.
☐ Personnel: who’s who, where are they and what exactly do they do?
  • Team and department
  • Lead Mentor in home school
  • Mentor
  • School Office
  • Fine Arts Office (571-252-1420)
    o Michael Pierson, Fine Arts Supervisor
    o Elaine Stanford, Music Specialist
    o Judy Taylor, Bookkeeper

☐ Itinerant teachers
  • Locate best travel routes to schools and meet all teachers in the department.
  • Know the process for inputting mileage into Oracle.

☐ Equipment
  • Where to find it, how to use it.
  • Complete the equipment request form (emailed from the Fine Arts Office in early September).

☐ Check Facilities: room, stage, sound system, storage rooms.

☐ Building Procedures
  • Duties
  • Hours
  • Sign-out
  • Emergency drills
  • Schedules
  • Meetings
  • Policies (dress code, extracurricular attendance, etc.)
Open House and/or Back-to-School Night

- Know what is expected of you.
- Prepare an agenda/presentation for the event.

Enthusiastically greet parents.

HS: Booster organizations.

Process for scheduling buses.

Know the students with health issues, including allergies and seizures. Check with your school nurse. Information also available in Phoenix.

Put dates on your calendar for Mr. Pierson’s meetings! Calendar is available online in the VISION LCPS Music Department site.

ROOM SET-UP

- Supplies: What do you need? Where can you find it? Find inventory of equipment or construct one.
- Sound system and microphones.
- Displays and Bulletin Boards
- Organization
  - Instrument and music storage
  - Class rosters
  - Practice charts
  - Routines/expectations

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

- Organize plan book according to Principal’s expectations.
- Plans
  - Plan for the first day: Please sing or play on the first day!
  - Plan for the first week.
  - Teach your protégés to do backward planning in preparation of their programs. Plan with the end in sight!
  - Obtain the calendar of activities for LCPS/VMEA music events (see LCPS Music Department VISION site) as well as your school calendar with all dates (including concerts). Meet deadlines for all events.
- Grades
  - Remind new teachers to check with your administrator(s) with of the number of grades required each week/grading period. Interims will be a month away, and they need to know how to be prepared.
- Rubrics for student assessment
- Resources: VISION resources for curriculum, Google Curriculum site, SOL’s, textbooks
- Organization: files, binders
  - Help them label folders for important information (parent correspondence, principal memos, faculty meetings notes, recertification, etc.).
  - Equipment: Inventory
  - Check VISION for allotment for music, accompanists, and sectionals.
- Special Education
  - IEP’s: What accommodations are needed? Complete “verification of access” in Phoenix for all IEP students by the date required by building administration.
- Contact Information
- Safety concerns: Example: Is a ramp needed? Health issues?
- Assistants accompanying students: Plan for their responsibilities.
CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

☐ Procedures: How will things get done? Example: How will a student receive a grade if on extended medical leave? How will students be dismissed for drinks and the bathroom?
☐ Routines: What do you want your students to do daily without needing to ask for directions? (i.e. How to get an instrument; how to care for an instrument.)
☐ Set rules and consequences for infractions.
☐ PBIS school-wide behavior expectations.
☐ Keep all students active and engaged.
☐ Learn names of students as quickly as possible. (Research shows this highly impacts a teacher’s ability to set a positive tone.)
☐ Secondary schools: construct a handbook, have principal review, distribute to students, having parents and students sign that they understand policies of the program.

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

☐ Awareness of Equity, Religious and Cultural Diversity
  • Assist non-English speaking students.
  • Plan programs with diversity in mind: document literature used in your programs.
☐ Discuss the benefits of professional organization memberships, such as NAfME, VMEA, VBODA, VCDA, ACDA. Check e-mail from Fine Arts Office that requests your intent to attend professional conferences.

PREPARE FOR NEXT MONTH

• Set the date of your September meeting today! Set the dates for EACH monthly meeting as soon as possible.
• Suggest ideas for Open House and/or Back-to-School.
• August 22: First Day of School for Students
• August 30, September 2: Holidays (Labor Day Holiday)
SEPTEMBER

The first 4 topics are top priority for EACH month:

☐ Check on planning and grading.
  • Protégés are to bring plan books to the meeting.
  • Discuss lesson plans for the month.
  • Find out what units are being taught in other subject areas for each grade level so that topics and themes can be integrated into music plans.
  • Discuss the way your department assesses and determines grades and records in Phoenix.

☐ Collaborate: share ideas, instructional strategies, units, and projects for the following month.

☐ Discuss and problem solve specific issues:
  • Classroom management behavior plan
  • Procedures and routines

☐ Review LCPS Music Monthly Calendar (google)

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

☐ Interims/Comments: know the school requirements.

☐ Phoenix

☐ Grading and assessment:
  • Formative
  • Summative
  • Recording grades
  • Rubrics and tests used
  • Practice charts
  • Participation
  • Beware of subjective assessments; they may be challenged.

☐ Special Education
  • Case Manager and SPED AP.
  • Make sure that IEP’s have been read and are understood.
  • Phoenix verification of access.

ORGANIZATION

☐ Room set-up and equipment storage ideas.

☐ Interruptions to schedule: assemblies, parties, field trips, etc. may interfere with plans.

☐ Substitute folder: show an example.
  • Plans should be easily accessible in case of an emergency, not just planned absences.
  • Daily schedule (to include schedules of all music teachers in the building).
  • Emergency procedures.
  • Music lessons and where to find materials.
  • Activities and games.
  • Equipment, including access to technology, and lock-up.
COMMUNICATION
☐ Communication with parents.
  • Share good news with parents!
  • Make sure parents have a calendar of events for the year.
  • Make sure written communication is proofread and approved by principal or designee.
  • Web Page (CMS): provide assistance and ideas. Keep it simple and up to date. Include important dates.
  • Phone calls: document the date, time, and topic in a written phone log.
  • Emails: Answer in a timely manner. Remember any e-mail can be forwarded, so do not discuss sensitive issues via e-mail. Any student issue warrants a phone call.
  • Parent volunteers and/or Booster Clubs.
☐ Communication with school personnel.
  • Notify teachers of any upcoming programs or field trips.
  • If any issues arise with a student, be sure to communicate with the grade-level teacher.
☐ Communication with music staff in LCPS.
  • Mark dates of music meetings on your calendar and attend each meeting.
  • Make use of the group distribution lists.
  • Communicate with members of your cluster and respond to events for collaboration.
  • Meet ALL deadlines for auditioned events (i.e. forms, information, fees)
☐ Communication with Fine Arts Office (Michael Pierson/Elaine Stanford).
  • Read e-mails carefully regarding equipment requests, meetings, conference attendance, reimbursement, and other items.
☐ Support the PTO/PTA by joining!
☐ Celebrate success and let Michael and Elaine know about those!
☐ Questions and concerns

LOOKING AHEAD

• Honors Choir Auditions
• Marching Festivals
• JRO/SRO Auditions
• AVJE Auditions
• Review information regarding interims.
• October 14: Holiday (Columbus Day)
• October 28: Student Holiday (Staff Development Day)
• November 1: End of grading period
• HS All-County Chorus
OCTOBER

*The first 4 topics are top priority for EACH month:*

- ☐ Check on planning and grading.
  - Protégés are to bring plan books to the meeting.
  - Discuss lesson plans for the month.
  - Find out what units are being taught in other subject areas for each grade level so that topics and themes can be integrated into music plans.
  - Discuss the way your department assesses and determines grades and records in Phoenix.
- ☐ Collaborate: share ideas, instructional strategies, units, and projects for the following month.
- ☐ Discuss and problem solve specific issues:
  - classroom management behavior plan
  - procedures and routines
- ☐ Review LCPS Music Monthly Calendar (google)

**TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

- ☐ Report Cards
  - Determine grades: formative and summative assessments.
  - Procedure for inputting grades into Phoenix.
- ☐ Prepare for all auditions, marching competitions, and concerts. Be sure to communicate carefully with students and parents regarding times, fees, requirements, etc.
- ☐ Observations
  - Formal: how to prepare, understand what the principal will expect and look for.
  - Informal observations with mentor: take turns observing one another.
- ☐ Technology
  - Continuously update program website, communicating important dates, events, policies, etc.
  - Check and respond to email regularly.
- ☐ Opt-out form - Explain the procedure for experienced teachers who wish to opt out of the Mentor Program.
- ☐ Celebrate Success! The first quarter is about to end…what has gone well?
- ☐ Questions and concerns

**LOOKING AHEAD**

- November 1: End of First Grading Period
- November 4 & 5: Student Holiday (Planning/Records/Conference Days)
- 6th Grade All-County Chorus
- Senior Regional Orchestra
- November 21-23: VMEA (with All-VA Guitar, All-VA Jazz, Honors Choir)
- Thanksgiving Break is November 27-29!
- Double Reed Day
NOVEMBER

The first 4 topics are top priority for EACH month:

☐ Check on planning and grading.
  • Protégés are to bring plan books to the meeting.
  • Discuss lesson plans for the month.
  • Find out what units are being taught in other subject areas for each grade level so that topics and themes can be integrated into music plans.
  • Discuss the way your department assesses and determines grades and records in Phoenix.

☐ Collaborate: share ideas, instructional strategies, units, and projects for the following month.

☐ Discuss and problem solve specific issues:
  • classroom management behavior plan
  • procedures and routines

☐ Review LCPS Music Monthly Calendar (google)

SPECIFIC ISSUES

☐ Completion of report cards.
☐ MyLearningPlan: how to search for courses and track course work.
☐ Recertification points
  • Maintain a file for licensure renewal with documentation.
  • Make sure your protégé knows the name of your school’s assigned Licensure Specialist.

☐ Know procedure for rescheduling of events due to inclement weather and subsequent communication with parents and students.

☐ Celebrate Success!

☐ Questions and concerns

LOOKING AHEAD!

• December is often the month when new teachers hit a “low”. Watch for signs of burn-out. Perhaps you can have your next meeting at a restaurant or plan a joint meeting with another mentor and his/her protégés!
• All-District Band Auditions and Winter Concerts
• Mid-West Band and Orchestra Clinic
• December 23-January 3 - Winter Break  (Classes resume Monday, Jan. 6, 2020 )
• All-County Orchestra Auditions

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DECEMBER

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- Check on planning and grading.
  - Protégés are to bring plan books to the meeting.
  - Discuss lesson plans for the month.
  - Find out what units are being taught in other subject areas for each grade level so that topics and themes can be integrated into music plans.
  - Discuss the way your department assesses and determines grades and records in Phoenix.
- Collaborate: share ideas, instructional strategies, units, and projects for the following month.
- Discuss and problem solve specific issues:
  - classroom management behavior plan
  - procedures and routines
- Review LCPS Music Monthly Calendar (google)

**TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

- How to deal with stress.
- Have plans completed before leaving for the Winter Break!
- Holidays
  - Be aware of various religious holidays and customs.
  - Perform a balance of music literature for concerts.
- Probation
  - Even though your principal cannot officially tell you that your protégé is going to receive “Mid-Year Support,” you can probably read your protégé well enough to know that there is a problem. If you haven’t already done so, schedule a time to visit each other’s classrooms.
- Celebrate success!
- **Questions and concerns**

**LOOKING AHEAD**

- Make sure your protégés do not return from Winter Break to piles of paper. Take some time to help them file what is important and toss what is not.
- December 23-January 4: Winter Break **Classes Resume January 6, 2020**
- January 20: Holiday (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)
- January 17: End of second quarter.
- January 21: Moveable Student Holiday (Planning/Records/Conference Day)
JANUARY

The first 4 topics are top priority for EACH month:

☐ Check on planning and grading.
  • Protégés are to bring plan books to the meeting.
  • Discuss lesson plans for the month.
  • Find out what units are being taught in other subject areas for each grade level so that topics and themes can be integrated into music plans.
  • Discuss the way your department assesses and determines grades and records in Phoenix.

☐ Collaborate: share ideas, instructional strategies, units, and projects for the following month.

☐ Discuss and problem solve specific issues:
  • classroom management behavior plan
  • procedures and routines

☐ Review LCPS Music Monthly Calendar (google)

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

☐ Report Cards: review grading and reporting procedures, Phoenix.
☐ MS and HS recruitment for music program.
☐ Course recommendations for MS and HS.
☐ Encourage informal “Walk-Throughs” to observe good teaching.
☐ Celebrate success!
☐ Questions and concerns

LOOKING AHEAD

• All-District Band
• All-District Chorus
• All-Virginia Band and Orchestra Auditions
• February is Black History Month
• February 15: Deadline to submit for Blue Ribbon Status
• February 17: Holiday (Presidents’ Day)
FEBRUARY

The first 4 topics are top priority for EACH month:

☐ Check on planning and grading.
  • Protégés are to bring plan books to the meeting.
  • Discuss lesson plans for the month.
  • Find out what units are being taught in other subject areas for each grade level so that topics and themes can be integrated into music plans.
  • Discuss the way your department assesses and determines grades and records in Phoenix.
☐ Collaborate: share ideas, instructional strategies, units, and projects for the following month.
☐ Discuss and problem solve specific issues:
  • classroom management behavior plan
  • procedures and routines
☐ Review LCPS Music Monthly Calendar (google)

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION
☐ Instrument night
☐ Continued recruitment for music classes (MS and HS)
☐ MS and HS: VMEA/LCPS Music Assessments
  o LCPS Fine Arts Office has the expectation that at least one group from every music discipline in every school will participate.
  o Invite guest clinicians to provide feedback.
  o Ensure that all information is submitted to the event chair on time.
☐ Celebrate success!
☐ Questions and Concerns

LOOKING AHEAD

• March is Music in Our Schools Month!
• District Band Assessments
• District Choral Assessments
• All-County Guitar Festivals
• ACDA/ASTA
• District Jazz Auditions
• March 2: Read Across America Day
• March 3: Student Holiday (Countywide Staff Development Day)
• March 26: End of Grading Period

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MARCH

The first 4 topics are top priority for EACH month:

☐ Check on planning and grading.
  • Protégés are to bring plan books to the meeting.
  • Discuss lesson plans for the month.
  • Find out what units are being taught in other subject areas for each grade level so that topics and themes can be integrated into music plans.
  • Discuss the way your department assesses and determines grades and records in Phoenix.
☐ Collaborate: share ideas, instructional strategies, units, and projects for the following month.
☐ Discuss and problem solve specific issues:
  • classroom management behavior plan
  • procedures and routines
☐ Review LCPS Music Monthly Calendar (google)

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION
☐ MUSIC IN OUR SCHOOLS MONTH….CELEBRATE!
☐ Instrument night
☐ Continue recruitment for music classes (MS and HS)
☐ MS and HS: VMEA/LCPS Music Assessments
  • LCPS Fine Arts Office has the expectation that at least one group from every music discipline in every school will participate.
  • Invite guest clinicians to provide feedback.
  • Ensure that all information is submitted to the event chair on time.
☐ Discuss any questions regarding the observation process with your administrator.
☐ Discuss upcoming trips, planning, forms, policies, etc.
☐ Celebrate Success!
☐ Questions and Concerns

LOOKING AHEAD

• Solo and ensemble festival
• All-County Orchestra
• All-Virginia Band & Orchestra
• All-Virginia Chorus/VA ACDA MS Chorus
• April 6-10: Holiday (Spring Break)
• April 2: Student Holiday (Staff Development Day)
• April 9: Student Holiday (Planning/Records/Conference Day)
APRIL

*The first 4 topics are top priority for EACH month:*

- Check on planning and grading.
  - Protégés are to bring plan books to the meeting.
  - Discuss lesson plans for the month.
  - Find out what units are being taught in other subject areas for each grade level so that topics and themes can be integrated into music plans.
  - Discuss the way your department assesses and determines grades and records in Phoenix.
- Collaborate: share ideas, instructional strategies, units, and projects for the following month.
- Discuss and problem solve specific issues:
  - classroom management behavior plan
  - procedures and routines
- Review LCPS Music Monthly Calendar (google)

**TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

- SOL testing schedule and how it affects your schedule and planning.
- Maintain expectations in behavior and quality of work.
- Ensure your music allotment has been spent.
- Make sure protégés understand end-of-year assemblies and graduations in which they may play a role.
- Continue to discuss upcoming trips, planning, forms, policies, etc.
- Celebrate success!
- **Questions and Concerns**

**LOOKING AHEAD**

- SOL tests, AP testing, and senior capstone projects: determine how they will affect your schedule.
- Plan May-June trips.
- 5th Grade All-County Chorus
- Jazz Festival and Assessment
- May 25: Holiday (Memorial Day)
- Begin preparing calendar for next year.
MAY

*The first 4 topics are top priority for EACH month:*

- Check on planning and grading.
  - Protégés are to bring plan books to the meeting.
  - Discuss lesson plans for the month.
  - Find out what units are being taught in other subject areas for each grade level so that topics and themes can be integrated into music plans.
  - Discuss the way your department assesses and determines grades and records in Phoenix.
- Collaborate: share ideas, instructional strategies, units, and projects for the following month.
- Discuss and problem solve specific issues:
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**TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

- Exam preparation for MS and HS.
- End-of-year procedures.
- Complete inventory and send to Fine Arts Office.
- End-of-year school field days, banquets, awards and certificates when applicable.
- Celebrate Success!
- **Questions and Concerns**

**LOOKING AHEAD**

- Plan activities for those exciting last days of school.
- June 10: Last Day of School for Students/End of Fourth Grading Period!
- June 11-12: Planning/Records/Conference Days
- The last day for teachers is June 12!
JUNE

CELEBRATE THROUGH REFLECTION!

• What was the best part of the school year?
• What was the most difficult part of the year?
• What will be done differently next year?

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

☐ End-of-Year Checklists for the school.
☐ Packing up
  o Inventory
  o Clean and organize the music/storage room.
  o File music.
  o Determine if instruments need repair and/or cleaning.
☐ Celebrate the successes of the year!

LOOKING AHEAD

• Help your protégés set goals for next year.