



ONE MENTOR STRONGER - ONE CHILD AT A TIME

# U-District Mentoring

November 3, 2017

IN THIS ISSUE: THE BEGINNING!

The U-District Foundation Mentoring Program began in October of 2011. We started by researching other mentoring organizations as well as best practices. The focus was on Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS), Ignite Mentoring and others.

Policy and Procedure Manuals were started in January of 2012 and completed by March. They were reviewed, some minor revisions were advised and made.

Child Protective Services came on as an advisor and partner in February. We use their online training for all mentors as mandatory reporters.

Background and driving record checks were contracted with ACRAnet in March.

Meetings with potential partner schools began in March 2012 with St. Al's and Grant. Teachers there were more than happy to recommend students to the new program.

First contact with parents, students and mentors was in April.

Most importantly, we worked out our processes for interviewing mentors, parent/guardians and students. The mentor interview is especially in-depth. Each one takes 90 minutes. But

with only minor adjustments, it's still the same interview we use today, six years later.

Our first two matches took place in May of 2012. They still meet together every month! Five years is unusual for a mentoring match, but such a gift to both mentors and students!

Our fifth match took place in early July. Our students came from St. Al's and Grant.

At this point, our cost per match was \$529. The national average cost per match for BBBS and others is \$1000.

Match support and supervision began in June and takes place each month with calls to each mentor, parent and student. After the first year of a match is completed, this changes to quarterly calls.

One of our mentors identified a problem with reading and writing with her student. We worked together on the problem and the student was enrolled in a literacy tutoring program at G.U. and was soon improving and again enjoying reading.



In September, we contacted Cooper, Bemis and Trinity Elementary Schools. Our next wave of students came from these schools.

It was a great start for our program and a great first year! Perhaps best of all was to have gone through the new processes with five mentors and five families. They worked!

The background checks from ACRAnet came through quickly and were thorough. Although we could save money by using other background check companies, the owners at the U-District have stayed with this high-quality firm. Having been through the complete interview process with each mentor and lengthy interviews with students and parents/guardians gave us some real confidence in our new program. Five matches that are meeting and look strong was a good beginning for us!