



Guidance for Mentoring Programs Regarding the Start of the School Year

July 31, 2020

Dear Vermont Mentoring Programs,

With all the uncertainty surrounding the start of the school year, MENTOR Vermont reached out to Secretary of Education Dan French to seek guidance on how school-based mentoring programs would be able to operate in the fall. Based on reading the Agency of Education's "[Safety and Health Guidance](#)," which called for no outside volunteers to be allowed in schools for the start of the 2020-2021 school year, MENTOR Vermont assumed that all school-based mentoring would likely need to take place remotely at least for the fall. We asked Secretary French if mentoring program staff members could be allowed in the schools as contracted service providers, and for future assistance with safely bringing in-person mentoring back into the schools in the future.

On July 22nd Secretary French responded:

"Coordinators and mentors would fall under the contractor guidance. This is a permissible activity subject to districts' implementation of the health guidance."

Based on his response, MENTOR Vermont encourages all school-based mentoring programs to determine how they believe their program can most effectively and safely operate this school year and then seek guidance from the school district/supervisory union administration to inquire if the program's ideal operating plan is possible. How your program will be able to operate this school year will ultimately be a local decision between you and the local school leadership.

MENTOR Vermont is here to assist you and I encourage you to reach out if you need support. We are all in this together and even though each program and school may approach this coming year differently, we can learn from and support one another in figuring out how to best serve our youth and communities.

Thank you for all you do!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chad Butt".

Chad Butt
Executive Director