



2020-2021 Virtual Mentoring Program

Vision: 100% Student Achievement

Mission: Every child has someone who cares

Program Goals:

- Support Social-Emotional development
- Support academic gains
- Improve school involvement and attendance
- Help with personal growth-- career planning, organizational skills, time management, and transition to high school, trade school or college
- Provide an exceptional experience for mentors and students

Why Lunch Pals

COVID 19 and the current social climate can have far-reaching social and emotional trauma on students. And it can be most severe for disadvantaged children.

Lunch Pals can help overcome day-to-day challenges, providing the opportunity for children to share their feelings and emotions and connect with a caring adult.

Is Lunch Pals going to be face-to-face or virtual in the new school year?

Due to COVID 19, all mentoring will be virtual – at least for a while.

When face-to-face mentoring is possible, will virtual mentoring still be possible?

Yes – We are planning for virtual mentoring to be a permanent part of Lunch Pals. We hope to have face to face mentoring as an alternative in the future. For Lunch Pals who continue as virtual mentors, we would like to offer the opportunity for occasional face-to-face mentoring as well.

What schools are the focus of Lunch Pals?

Because mentors will be meeting virtually, Lunch Pals can mentor students at any school. This allows Lunch Pals to focus on the schools with the greatest number of students who need us most. This will not impact current Lunch Pals relationships at other schools, nor will it preclude a Lunch Pal who would like to mentor at a particular school.

Who are the students, and how are they identified?

Each student is identified by school personnel as a child who could benefit from a mentoring relationship. Sometimes they are facing social, family and/or academic challenges, or they are just at a point in their lives where they will especially benefit from an additional positive and encouraging adult who spends time with them.

How and when does mentoring happen?

Each Lunch Pal meets one-to-one, virtually, with their assigned student for 30 minutes – generally during the student’s lunch time, on a designated day each week.

Lunch Pals only meet with students when school is in session. There is no contact (in person, by phone, text or email) with the students outside of school time. There is no contact with the parent or guardian of the student. All sessions are monitored by a school employee.

What is the process for getting started?

All mentor applicants must complete an online volunteer registration form and attend a Mentor Workshop Webinar.

- [Register Here](#) to attend a 60-minute Mentor Workshop Webinar and complete the volunteer registration form.

How will virtual mentoring work?

Once attendance at the workshop webinar is completed and the volunteer registration is reviewed, the Family and Community Liaison at the school will pair the mentor with a student and set a mutually agreed upon day of the week and time for the student and mentor.

Meeting session procedures are under development.

What do I talk about with my student? How do I get ideas for each session?

We are developing a mentoring toolkit that will provide you with a list of topics and activities to use during each mentoring session.

You will also receive a mentor strategies handbook, a weekly conversation starter bookmark and an activities booklet. There are also [resources](#) on the Pinellas County School website for you to use.

But what you talk about is not as important as your commitment to be present, and to be a good listener.

Do parents or guardians know their students have mentors?

Parents are informed by school personnel to assure they are in favor of their student having this opportunity.

What are the expectations?

Mentors are committed to meet with their students virtually (or face-to-face when permitted) on the scheduled day and time each week for the school year.

What if I cannot make my scheduled virtual mentoring session? Who will contact me if the student is unavailable for our scheduled session?

The [Family & Community Liaison](#) at the school will be your main contact and is responsible for all day-to-day correspondence, school concerns, and scheduling of sessions. If the student is unavailable you will be contacted the morning of your scheduled session, and a new day and time can be arranged. (It is understood that there may be an occasion when the mentor or student will miss a meeting.)

Can I only become a Lunch Pal at the start of the school year?

No, you can join Lunch Pals at any time during the school year.

What kind of feedback and results will mentors receive?

Mentors will receive program updates and a regular mentor newsletter. At the end-of-the school year mentors, mentees and staff are surveyed, and program results will be shared.

What are the benefits of being a Lunch Pal?

We believe that the mentor mentee relationship is beneficial to both you and the student...your willingness to invest time in others and to be accessible and open to listening and not judging will create an important connection, with your student. Mentoring can be life changing for both the mentor and mentee – and it is well worth the effort.

Most importantly you are making a difference to a student through a lasting and impactful contribution of your time, and it's fun!



Office of Strategic Partnerships Family & Community Relations

www.pcsb.org/mentor