

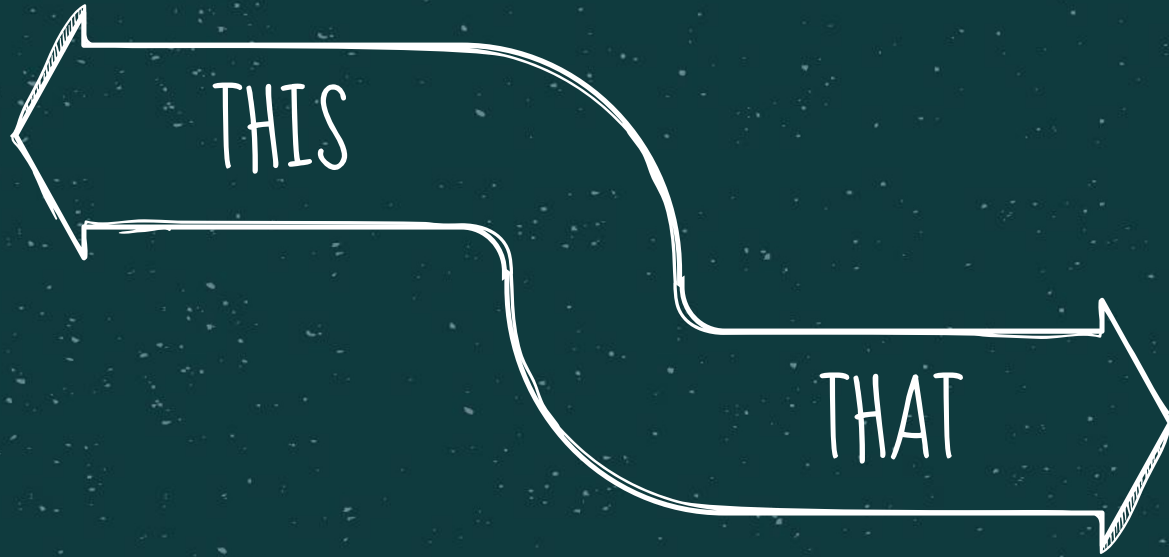


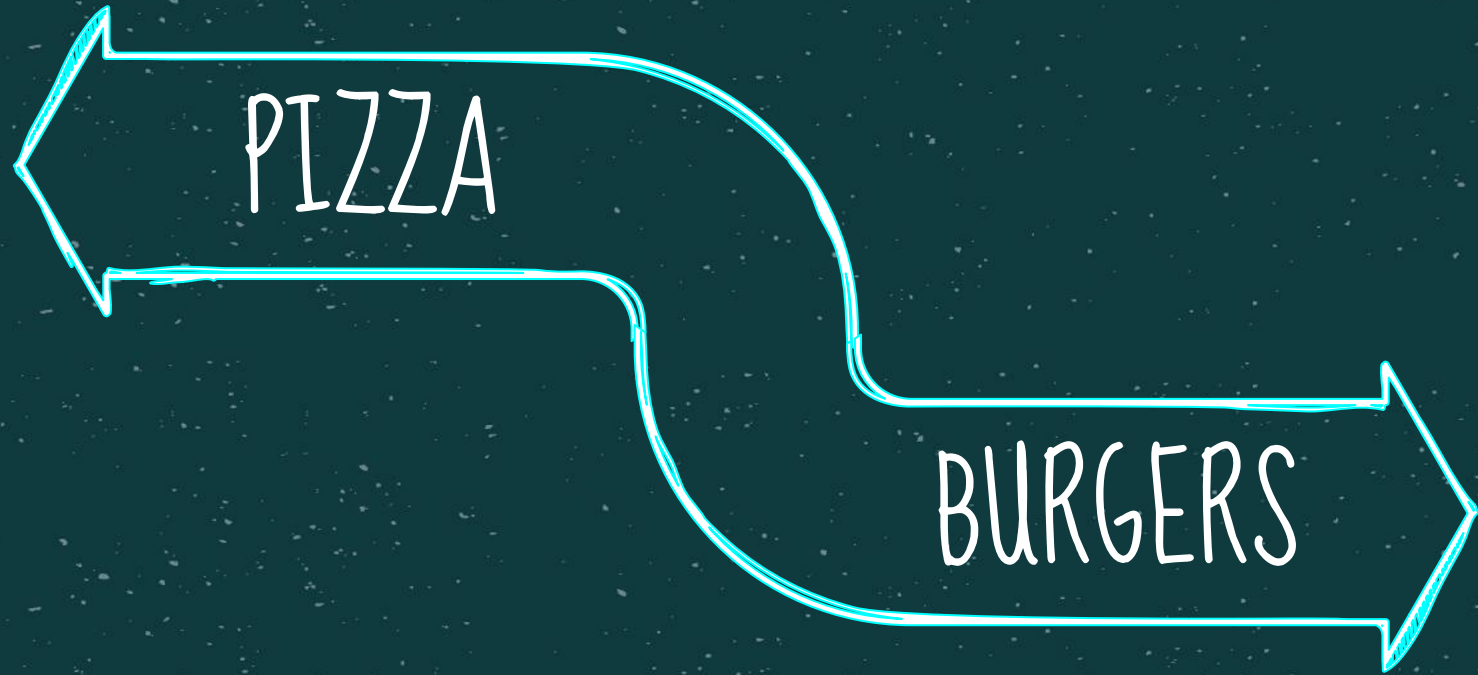
Building A Mentor Program from the Ground Up

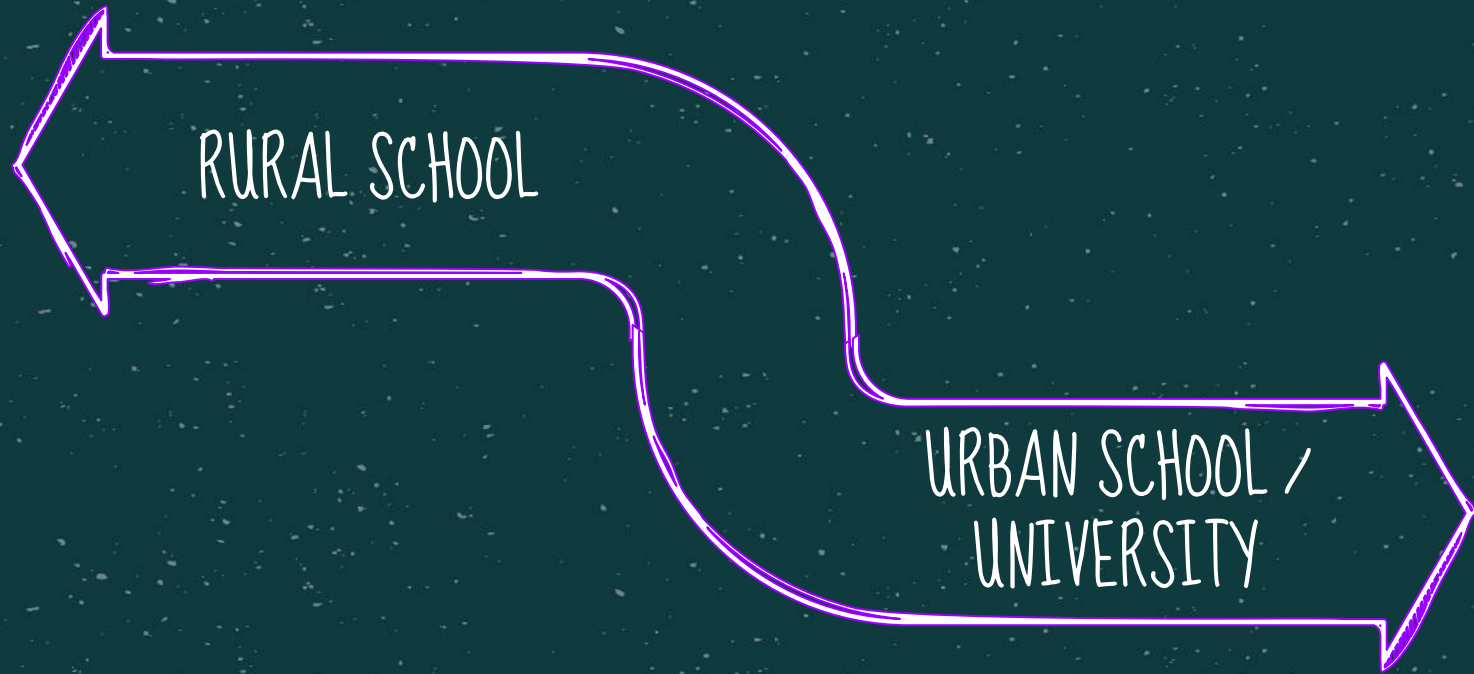
Jake Palmer & Maddie Wright

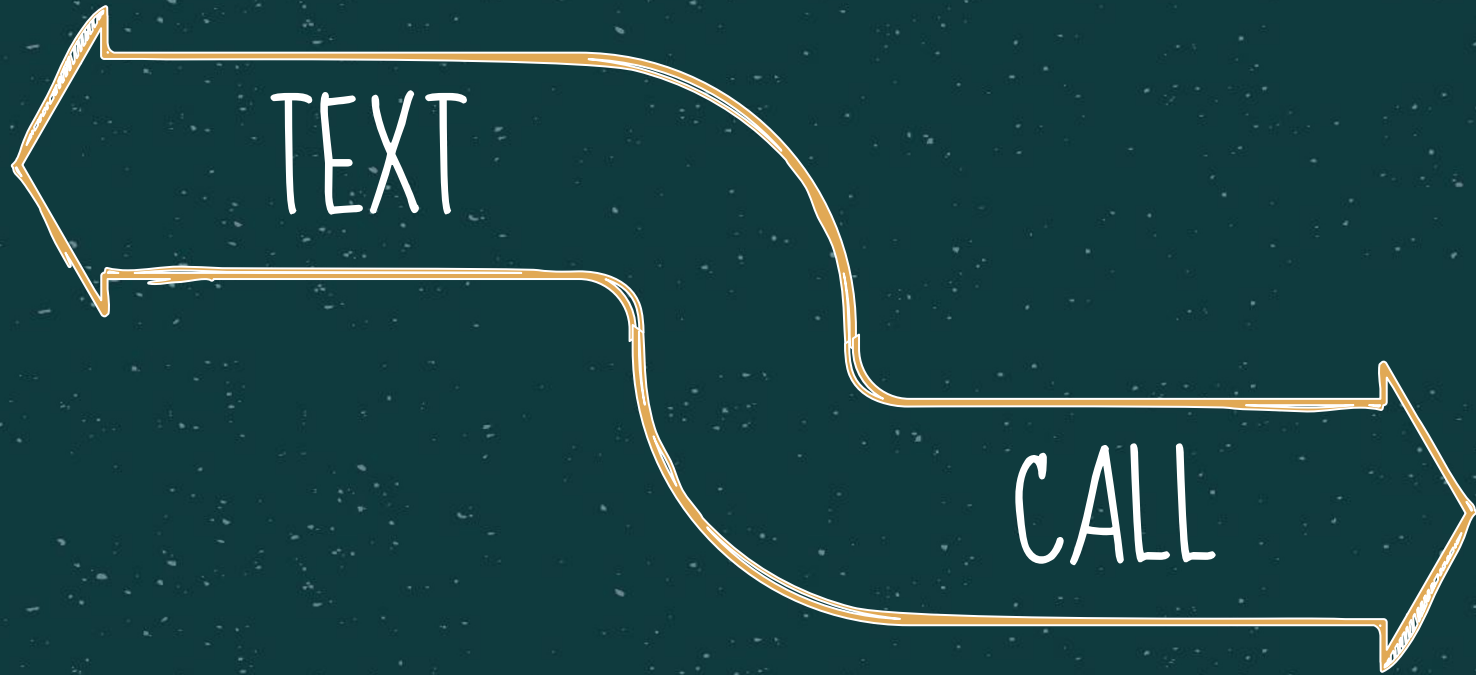
Everybody up! Join us for a game of This Or That.

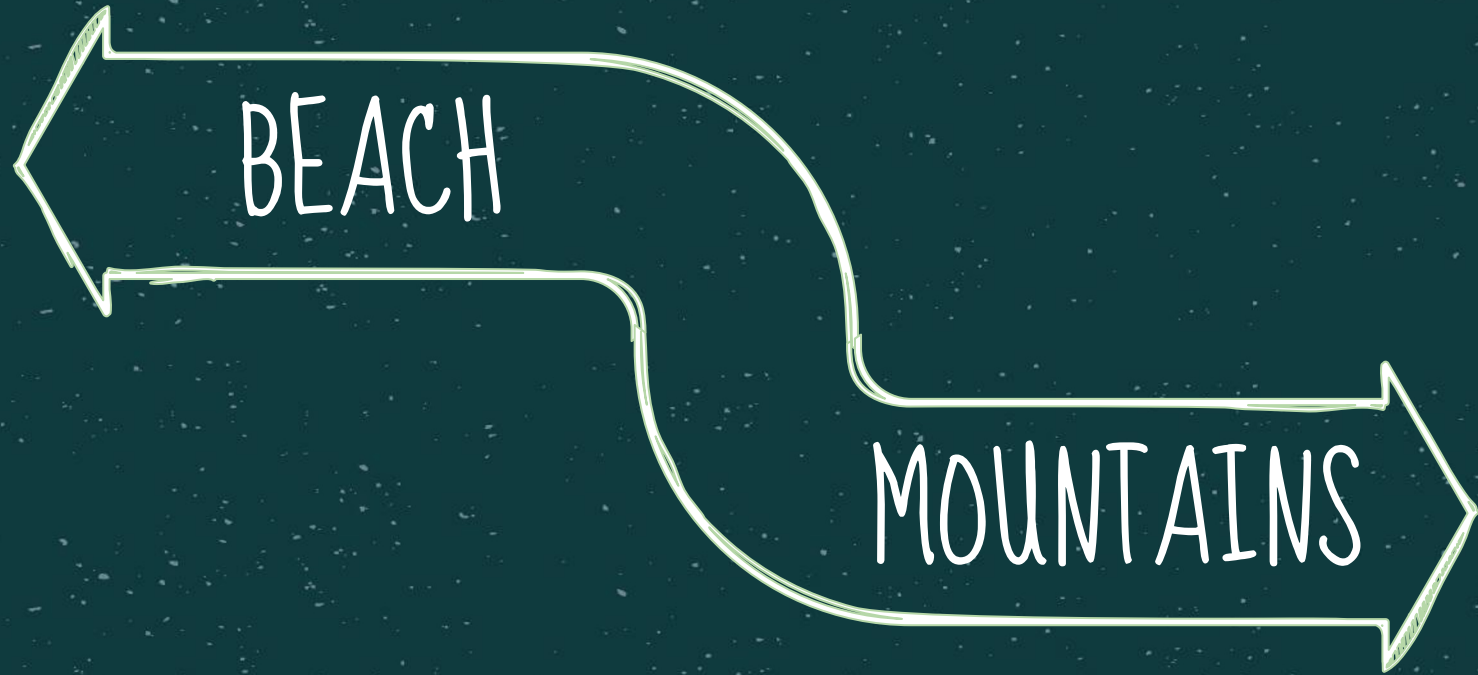
Choose your side for each question asked!

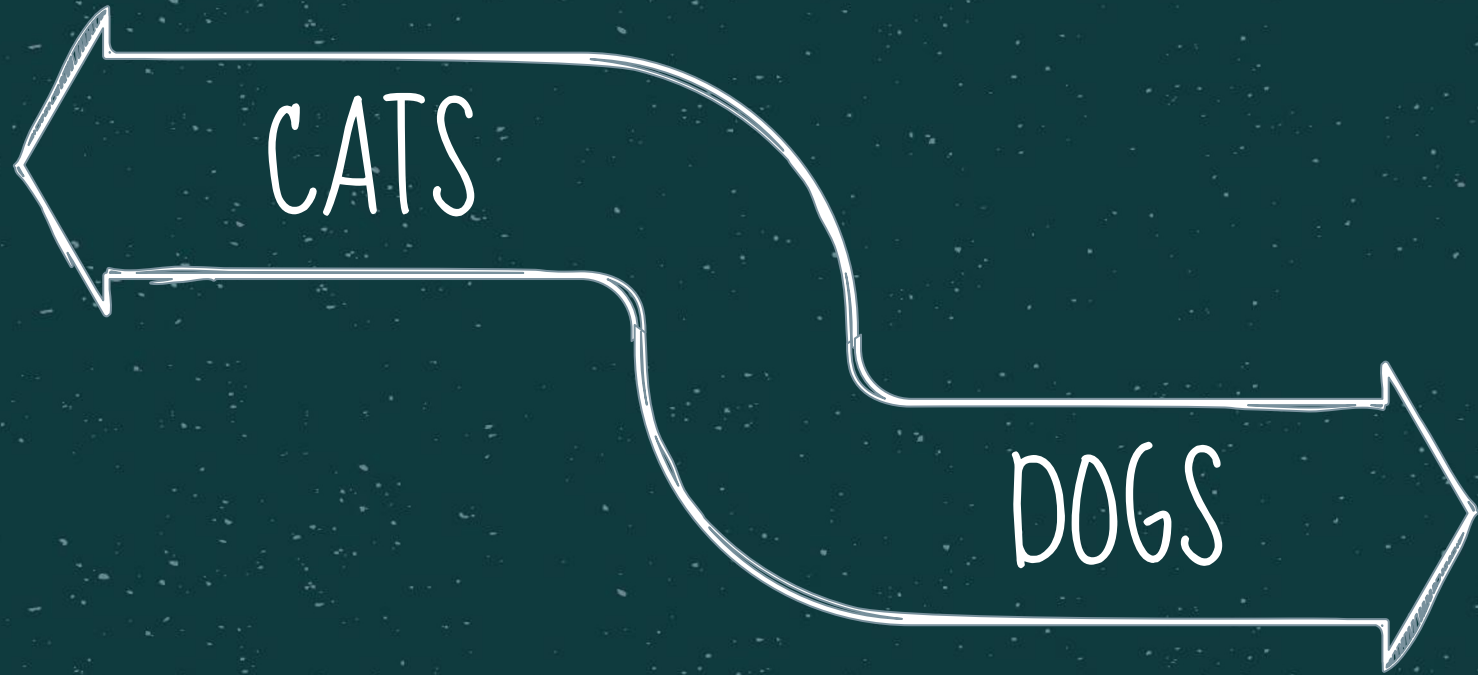


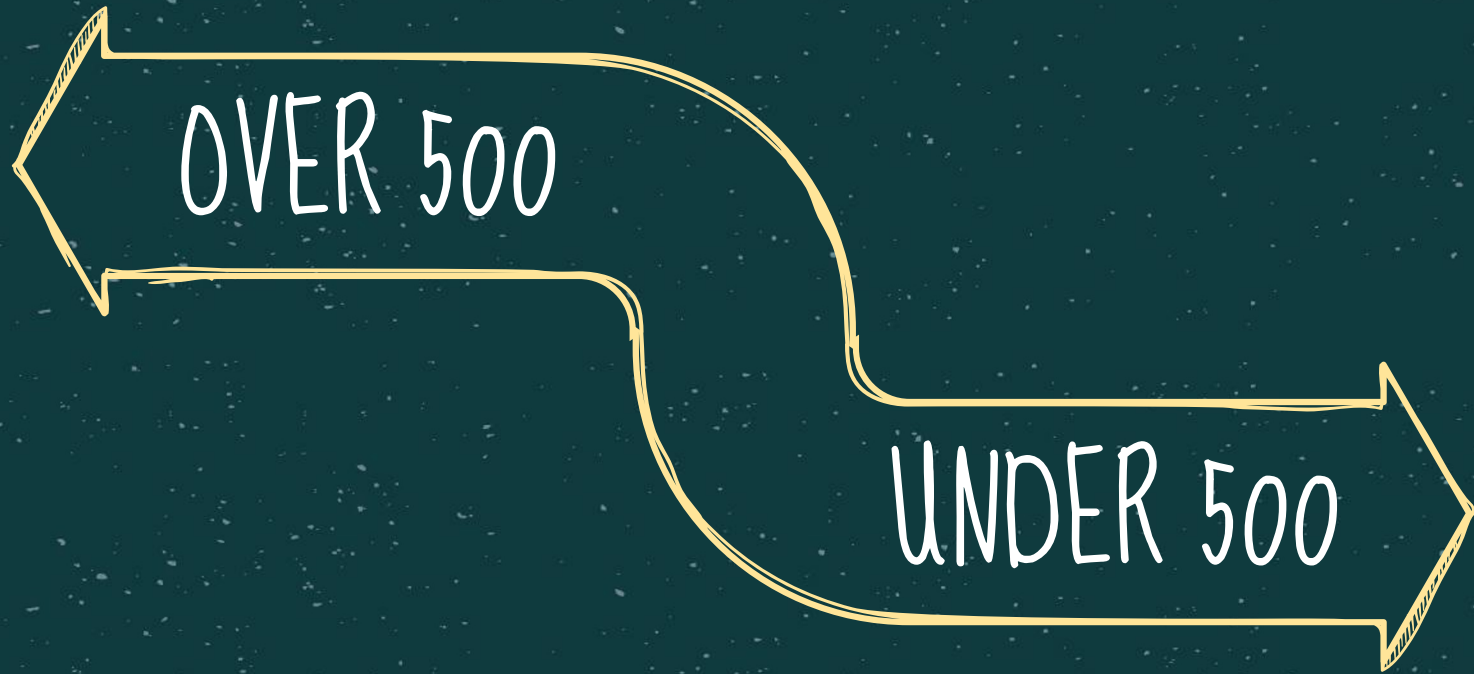












KEEP STANDING



FIND YOUR SEAT

● JAKE PALMER

PROFESSIONAL

Principal at Fisher Grade School

- August - 5th year

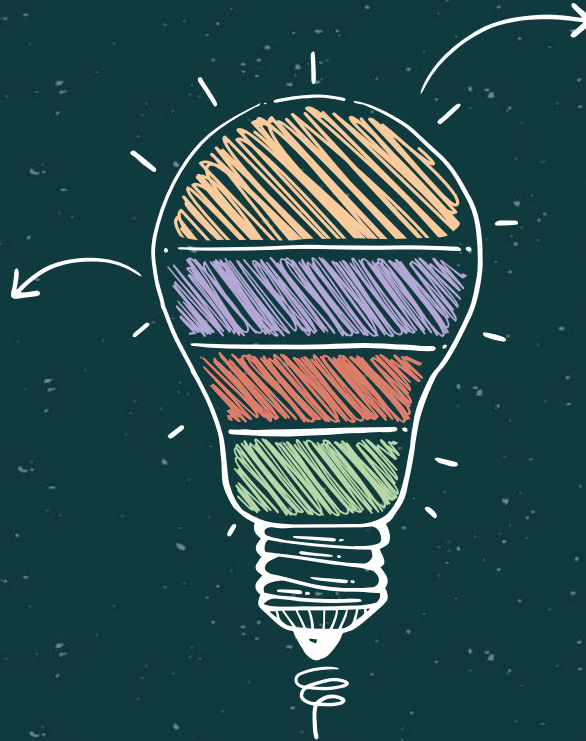
Third Grade Teacher - 4 years

Dean of Students & AD - 3 years

PERSONAL

- Wife - Rachel
- Cat Daddy - Mack & Hero
- From - Villa Grove
- Resides - Fisher
- Loves - Traveling, Exercising & Pizza

WHO ARE WE



MADDIE WRIGHT ●

PROFESSIONAL

- Mentor Teacher
- Fisher Grade School
- Teacher-6 years
- 3rd, 4th, & 6th Grade ELA

PERSONAL

- Husband - Travis
- Kids - Henry (4) & Robert (1)
- From - Mahomet, IL
- Loves - Camping, Reading, & Hiking

FISHER SCHOOLS BACKGROUND



COMMUNITY

- Located 20 minutes northwest of Champaign
 - Between Rantoul & Mahomet
- Village of 2,000 people
- Rural community
- 38% Low Income

DISTRICT

- 600 students
- 90 total employees
 - 50 FTE
- 4 administrators
- Many teachers live in surrounding communities

GRADE SCHOOL

- Kindergarten-6th Grade
- 320 students
- 27 FTE
 - 14 Non-Tenured
- 1 administrator
- Strong family partnerships

OUR JOURNEY



13-14



20-21



23-24

- 93% tenured staff
- 1 day of New Teacher Orientation in August
- No formal mentoring program
 - Buddy Teacher who assisted when necessary

- 58% tenured staff
- 2 days of NTO
- Formalized program
 - 15 minutes monthly meetings
 - Assigned mentor staff to attend meetings

- 48% tenured staff
- 5 days of NTO
- Significant increase in support

Significant need for new teacher support



WHY

is having a mentor program important?

WHO

can your new staff connect & build community with?

WHEN

do you start your mentor program?

WHAT

components make an effective mentor program?

WHY

is having a mentor program important?

WHY IS A MENTOR PROGRAM IMPORTANT?

- Student teaching doesn't provide the training necessary to prepare new teachers
 - Even teachers with experience have a learning curve coming to a new district
- Teaching is one of the most demanding professions in the world
- Lightens workload of established staff already in the building
 - Better equipped new staff = less time spent from veteran teachers

NEW TEACHER NECESSARY SKILLS

Various Skills Required:

- Communication
- Flexibility
- Empathy
- Organization
- Patience
 - with students
 - with themselves – “It takes what it takes”

WHEN

do you start your mentor program?

SETTING SCHOOL CULTURE

- Before accomplishing anything with your new teachers, they must understand the culture of your school & staff
- The culture, expectations & norms of how your school operates are essential for your new teachers to understand
- Instead of asking when do you start your mentoring program, instead ask:

WHEN DO YOU SET YOUR STAFF CULTURE?

*we'll use culture/climate interchangeably in this presentation (we're not smart enough to differentiate)

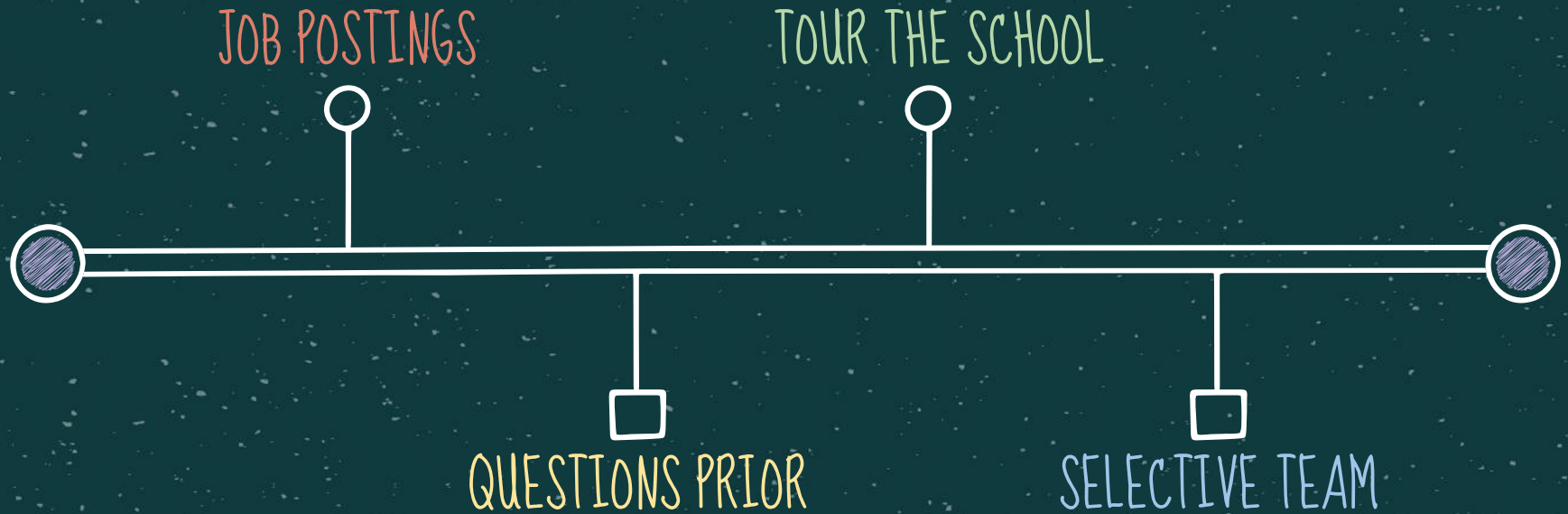
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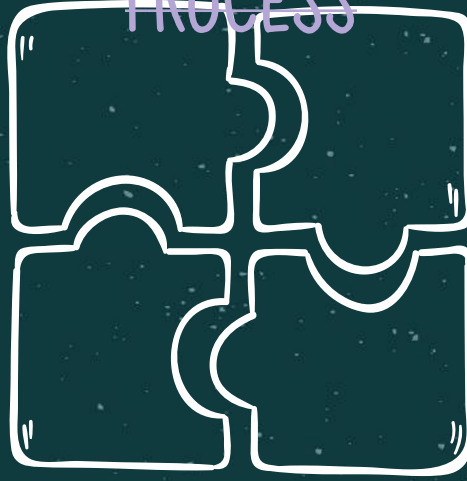
Mentimeter



SCHOOL CULTURE DURING HIRING PROCESS



HIRING
PROCESS



RECRUITING

JOB POSTINGS

- First interactions a potential candidate = online when accessing your job posting
- How can schools set themselves apart from other districts who are vying for the same candidates?
 - Difficult if applicants don't visit your website or dive into your social media
- Large chunk of our applicants are new graduates who don't have the attention span to do either



WHICH JOB WOULD YOU APPLY FOR?

DUTIES

Elementary Teacher in 4th
grade with other duties
assigned by administration
(IASA Job Bank)



#1



#2

DUTIES

Looking for a fresh start in an elementary setting that focuses on supporting teachers and students through positive school culture & high expectations? Fisher Grade School is just the place for you. Located less than 20 minutes from Champaign-Urbana & 45 minutes from Bloomington-Normal, Fisher provides a rural school setting with the amenities of being close to a larger city. With a robust mentoring & induction program, Fisher Grade School is an excellent place to begin (or refresh) your teaching career!

*additional information on duties included

TOUR THE SCHOOL

- Once the interview team is ready, the candidate is introduced & then immediately taken for a tour of the building
 - Our building is new(ish) & this is a selling point for us
 - It provides an opportunity to highlight classroom space, resources, technology, building, grounds, school norms, etc.
- Informal – the candidate has the opportunity to relax
- Observe the candidate interact with staff & students
- Increasing candidates excitement & enthusiasm for prospect of employment

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Interviewees are given questions prior to joining the interview team
 - Given 5 minutes to look over questions in main office
 - Cannot write anything down
- This allows candidates to reflect, make considerations & get their bearings
 - We want good teachers **NOT** good interviewers
- During this time, interview team reviews resume & letters of recommendations
- Gives valuable information as to if the potential candidates are adaptable

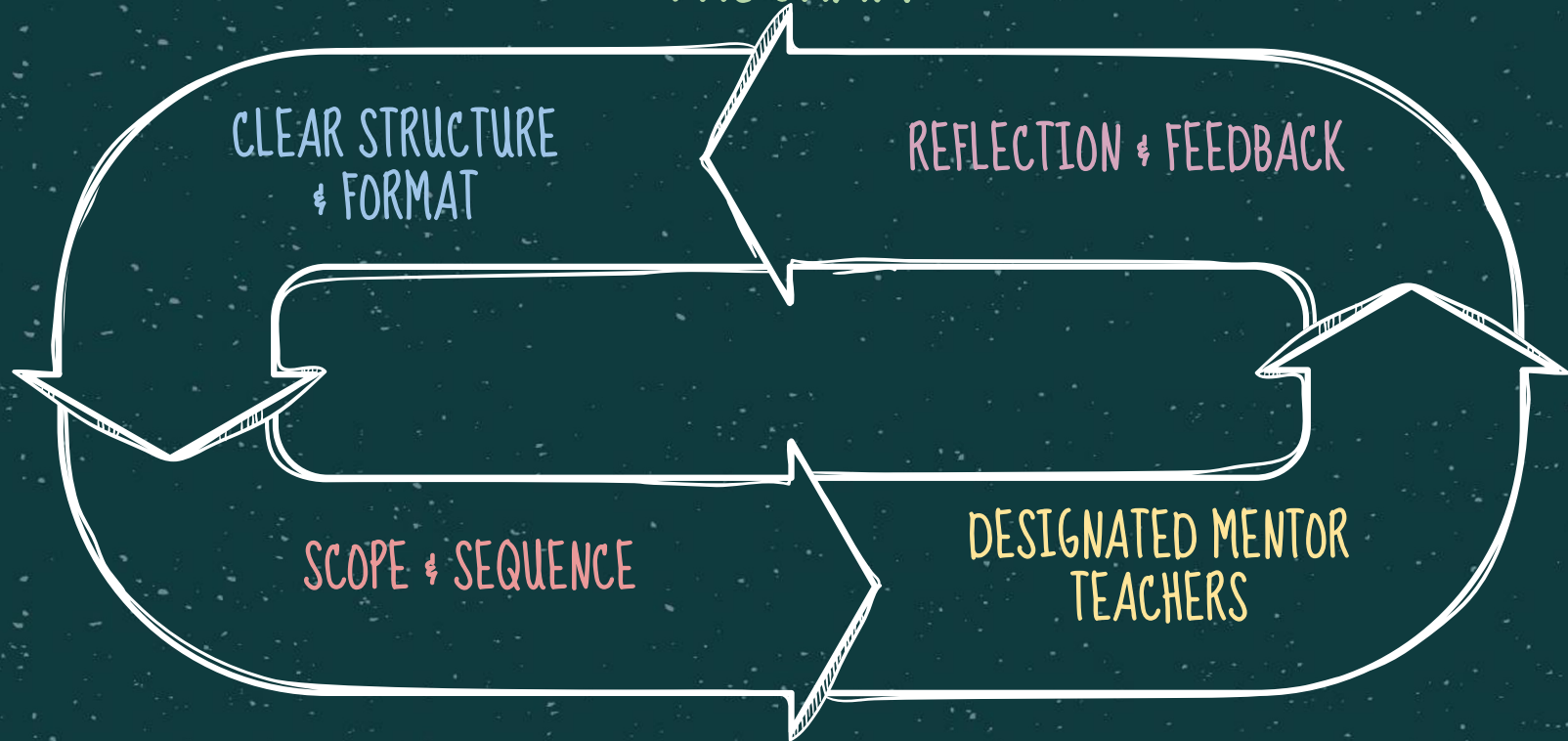
SELECTIVE INTERVIEW TEAM

- Interview environment is reflective of the school culture
 - Our kindest & fuzziest staff members are chosen for the interview process
- Warm & inviting atmosphere
 - Candidates can feel at ease and get a glimpse of what it would be like to be apart of our staff
- Hope candidates leave wanting to work with our staff
- Our interview team is a combination of teachers within that grade-level or team

WHAT

components make an effective mentor program?

WHAT COMPONENTS MAKE AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR PROGRAM



AND HOW TO CREATE ONE FOR YOUR SCHOOL

CLEAR STRUCTURE & FORMAT

- First, you must decide what your mentor program will look like:
 - When will you begin meeting?
 - Who attends each meeting?
 - What time will meetings take place?
 - How often will you meet?
 - What's an appropriate length of time?
 - Who is responsible for facilitating?

CLEAR STRUCTURE & FORMAT

☆ **Time**

- 30 minutes in whole group setting
- 30 minutes devoted to small group breakout session

☆ **Frequency**

- 1st Semester – meet twice/month
- 2nd Semester – meet once/month

☆ **Agenda**

- Given prior to meeting so teachers know what to bring & what will be covered
 - Important that mentors & mentees understand the objective

CLEAR STRUCTURE & FORMAT

- 5 Days of New Teacher Orientation (July & Early Aug)
 - Meet every Wednesday – 9AM-3PM
 1. Classroom Management & Family Partnerships
 2. Reading Curriculum
 3. Math Curriculum
 4. Science, Soc Studies, Writing & Scheduling
 5. District Procedures & Teacher Handbook

***Find a schedule that works for your staff & stick to it**

SCOPE & SEQUENCE

- Backwards mapping
 - What do you want your teachers to be able to do?
 - Build a curriculum/topics/goals around that

***Can't expect teachers to know if you haven't taken time to teach it**

- Possible Topics to Cover
 - Teacher handbook & policies (if you don't have, you should)
 - School Information Systems (sending emails, grades, attendance)
 - Assessemblies, Parent Teacher Conferences
 - Benchmark & assessment implementation (AIMSweb, STAR)
 - TRS & retirement planning

DESIGNATED MENTOR TEACHERS

- **Stipends**

- Compensating mentor teachers for the additional time spent is crucial
 - If you don't have a stipend, talk with your union & administration to negotiate this into the contract
- Paying mentor teachers is an investment in new teachers

- **Mentor Assignments**

- All new staff are assigned to a mentor teacher
 - This is their "go to" person for support & questions

- **Impact**

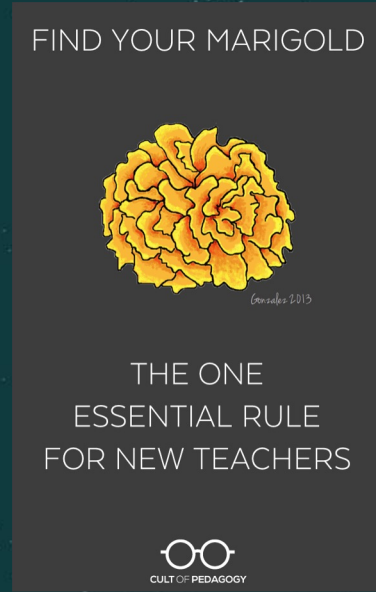
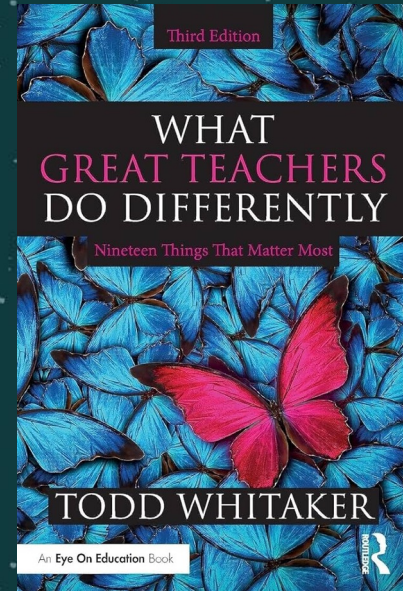
- Helps both new & veteran staff members alike
- Reduces burnout for veteran teachers – not constantly having to support/train new team member

REFLECTION & FEEDBACK

- **Break out sessions**
 - Focused questions
 - Sharing ideas
 - Open the floor to conversations
- **Informal checks**
 - Plan a time after school
- **Observations**
 - Scheduled time for Mentees to observe effective veteran teachers
 - Reflections of what they observed

REFLECTION & FEEDBACK

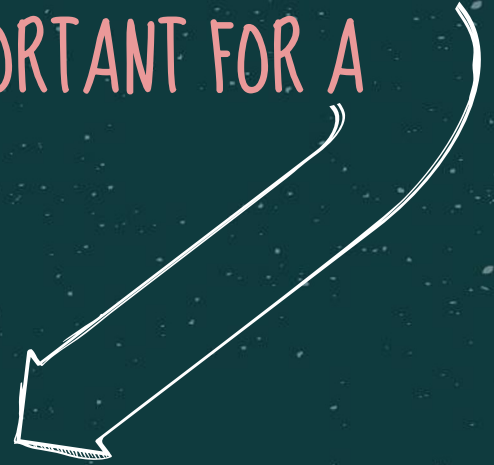
- ***Find Your Marigold: The One Essential Rule for New Teachers***
 - Article during district NTO
 - Discusses importance of who new teachers surround themselves with
- ***What Great Teachers Do Differently***
 - Mentor book study
 - What qualities define excellent teaching



WHO

can new staff connect & build community with?

WHAT CHARACTER TRAIT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT FOR A MENTOR TO POSSESS?



Mentimeter



SPEND TWO MINUTES AT YOUR TABLE
DISCUSSING WHICH TRAIT YOU CHOSE &
WHY.



MENTOR TEACHERS

- **A mentor program is only as good as its mentor teachers**
 - Crucial that mentor teachers are:
 - Approachable
 - Excellent communicators
 - Possess deep understanding of effective practice
 - Positive & encouraging
 - Empathetic
 - Lifelong learners

***No matter how great your PROGRAM is,
it cannot overcome poor MENTORS**

MENTOR EQUATION



***Community is often the forgotten component when creating/planning a mentor program**

BENEFITS OF BUILDING COMMUNITY

- **Retention** – teachers stay in communities they like
- **Open Communication** – capitalize on strengths & improve weaknesses
- **Reduced Stress** – new teachers don't feel alone in their endeavors
- **Increases Confidence** – promotes autonomy & risk taking
- **Professional Growth** – increased sharing of ideas & resources

WAYS TO BUILD COMMUNITY

NEW TEACHER
RECOGNITION

STAFF
ACTIVITIES



SUMMER
CONNECTIONS

STAFF
EVENTS

STAFF LUNCHES & GOLF CART TOUR

- New Teacher Orientation
 - Take 1-2 hours for lunch each day
 - Builds camaraderie among new staff before school begins
- Golf Cart Tour the town prior to lunch





ANNUAL CUBS-CARDS GAME

- Late July/Early August
- Purchase group discounted tickets
- Meet in Chicago or StL to celebrate back to school



SUMMER PHOTOS

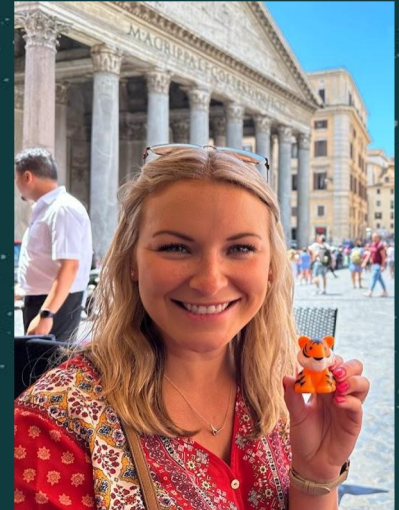
- Teachers email photos of summer activities
- Shared during first staff meeting



This summer is gonna be **WILD!**



This summer, take a photo with your wild animal doing something you do to recharge or unwind! The photo can be spending time with family, enjoying vacation, or simply relaxing at home. **Email** Jake the picture before school starts so we can all share what we did this summer at our first staff meeting!





NEW HIRE WELCOME

- First Week - New Teacher Toast
- New Teacher Social
 - All staff bring ingredients except our new teachers
 - Welcome to Our Hive
 - New teacher who sold honey during summer
 - Ice Cream Sundae Social



- One month into school during a 2:05 dismissal
- Questions about new staff
- Opportunity to learn about new hires

FGS New Teacher

JEOPARDY!

Divide into groups of three. The winning team will get bragging rights & TPT Gift Cards.

How well do you know your new co-workers?

Topic 1 - \$300 Question

Back in the day, this teacher was voted most athletic...and most gullible by their HS peers

Click to see answer



DISTRICT CHRISTMAS PARTY

- Rent a local pizza restaurant
 - Food & soda provided by district
 - Cash bar available
- Ugly Sweaters encouraged
- Entertainment Provided
 - Trivia hosted by administration
 - Live music



HOLIDAY PAINT PARTY

- Done during an early dismissal
- Lead by our Art Teacher
- Total cost - <\$50



CHEERS & CHATTER

- Hosted by teachers last Thursday of each month
- From 3:03-3:30
 - Done during contractual hours to accommodate family/evening schedules
 - Replaced poorly attended Happy Hours
- Voluntary, as simple or complex as they would like



HOW TO BUILD A MENTOR PROGRAM FROM THE GROUND UP



WHY

If you want new teachers to be effective, it's your job to provide training & support so they can succeed.



WHEN

Your mentoring program begins when candidates read your job posting. Your school culture is apparent the moment they enter your building.



WHAT

In order to have effective mentoring programs, you need to create clear structures, identify important topics & align training/ support for new teachers.



WHO

Your new teachers need to feel connected to the school community. This doesn't happen without providing opportunities for them to build relationships with fellow staff & gain a sense of belonging.

As school leaders, it's up to

us

THANK YOU!



CONTACT INFORMATION

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SCAN ME