Hi! My name is Melanie Burgess, and I am the Project REACH Mentorship Coordinator. During the E-Mentorship orientation, you will have the opportunity to read my full bio.

The University of Phoenix: College of Education- Online in collaboration with the ground campuses in Arizona, Hawaii, and Nevada identifies College of Education faculty who have demonstrated professional expertise and would enjoy mentoring a beginning educator in a Project REACH approved high-need school.

Each of these beginning educators is teaching under a United States Department of Education Project REACH: Transition-to-Teaching grant. The University of Phoenix: College of Education is unique in that it is one of only seven teacher preparation institutions in the United States to be initially awarded this grant. In return for a tuition stipend that each recipient under the grant receives for either our MAED/TED or MAED/SPE programs at the University, the recipient agrees to teach for three years in a high-need District/Complex. We anticipate that 310 new teachers will be trained under this grant.

Once the recipient graduates from our program or is a lead teacher of record under emergency certification, a mentorship in one of our Project REACH identified District/Complex schools begins. Because the mentorship is facilitated online, we call it an E-Mentorship.

The E-Mentorship is a culminating Project REACH professional development activity that complements/supplements existing district/complex and school mentorship programs for our Project REACH recipients (now called E-Mentees). The goal of mentoring is to make a difference in the professional development of beginning teachers. We support E-Mentees in ways that they identify- including advisement, resources, and pedagogical support. The value of mentorship and collegial coaching has been well documented in professional research and is an important component of the Project REACH Transition-to-Teaching Grant.

The E-Mentorship is unique to Project REACH; the University of Phoenix does not provide this support for any other College of Education graduates. Our most important goal of the mentorship experience is for E-Mentees to feel that they have the professional support they need as they work with students in a high-need setting. A second goal is for E-Mentees to set their own professional goals and to have opportunities to accomplish these goals through sharing experiences and networking with other professionals. Regardless of whether the E-Mentee is a first year teacher or has many experiences in the professional setting, we want to provide opportunities for their continued professional growth in areas of personal interest.
The 1-school-year E-Mentorship begins once the E-Mentee graduates or becomes a lead teacher of record; submits credentials and mentorship forms, which include an online application and a profile; and completes an orientation to E-Mentorship processes and outcomes. Then I match the E-Mentee with an E-Mentor (you) based on the area of professional training (elementary, secondary, or special education) and the personal interests the recipient identifies on their mentorship forms. As E-Mentor, you receive a copy of the E-Mentee’s application and profile so that you know the E-Mentee’s professional interests and goals.

Because our E-Mentor/E-Mentee pairings take place throughout the year, you would be able to accept an E-Mentee at a time that you would be able to make the one year professional commitment we are asking. (This might cover parts of two school years depending upon the date of student graduation and employment.) You are compensated $500 for each Project REACH E-Mentee you mentor.

There are no school visits or direct contacts required. All communication is facilitated through asynchronous Outlook Express newsgroups. This means that you can communicate with your E-Mentee as your time permits, but at least weekly.

You will be able to communicate privately with your E-Mentee and discuss best practices/round-table topics publicly with other Project REACH mentors and E-Mentees through the vehicle of online newsgroups. I like to think of these as dynamic forums for you to discuss teaching/school outcomes with your E-Mentee and share ideas, resources, pedagogy, etc. with all participants. Professionals often want to consult with others who are outside the school environment. This is their opportunity. There are no assigned E-Mentee tasks; however, weekly communication is expected. We should also encourage our E-Mentees to archive their activities and accomplishments in a format (journal, portfolio, etc.) that enables them to privately review their professional growth over time.

I will contact you with all the information you will need to become an E-Mentor, including participation in an E-Mentor Orientation. E-Mentor materials follow. Please contact me anytime if you have any questions regarding the E-Mentor requirements or process. You can e-mail me at Melanie.Burgess@phoenix.edu or call me locally in Phoenix, AZ at 602-387-1744 or toll free at 1-800-366-9699, ext. 71744.

Thank you for taking your time to consider being part of this very important professional activity.

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