

# METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT of NEW DURHAM TOWNSHIP

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Dear potential Westville Middle/High School mentor,

Wow! What a crazy time of our lives! Families, students, and educators are struggling to do their best during our pandemic, but it is all often very challenging to say the least. I am a strong believer and hope you are too, that communities and individuals can make a huge impact on kids' lives.

I am reaching out to you as someone who would be a great role model and potential mentor. You have been identified as an *extremely impactful* community member who could help **inspire, challenge, and support** one of our secondary students. Did you know that currently 52% of Westville Middle/High School students live in a single parent or divorced household? Statistics show that these students are more likely to have lower attendance, lower GPAs, and more discipline issues. During the current challenging times we find ourselves in, many students especially need someone to connect with for their mental, emotional, and social health.

After several months of hard work including brainstorming why, who, and how to get a program like this, Westville Middle/High School has been blessed to receive a grant through the Healthcare Foundation of La Porte to begin a mentoring program called "Building Blackhawks." We plan to implement the program in January of 2021.

So, what will the Building Blackhawks Mentoring Program look like? Potential mentors and mentees will be matched by interests and personalities. Due to the pandemic, all mentoring sessions will be virtual this school year. We are asking our mentors to meet virtually with their mentee at least once a week for 45 minutes. This time would be arranged by the mentor and mentee to best fit both individuals' schedule; however, it would need to be outside of academic time (before or after school or on weekends). Our school will provide a plethora of ideas to discuss and participate in with your mentee, although it is strongly encouraged for mentors (and mentees too!) to be creative and come up with ideas. Some suggestions may be discussing the student's current struggles and offering advice, playing games, engaging in activities through various apps, having a virtual drawing contest, etc. The ideas to build a relationship with a student and be an inspiration in their life are endless!

All mentors will be required to complete an application and background check that will be funded by the school. Mentors would then complete a brief training program through the La Porte County Mentoring Collaborative and United Way, as well as an in-house training program with Westville Schools. A mentor folder including log sheets for each time you meet with your mentee will be provided. I will also complete check-ins with both you and your mentee once a month to ensure program effectiveness.

Your willingness to participate in this exciting, new program *is the change we need in the world right now*. We have so many wonderful young people at our school who need and deserve to connect with positive role models. Our request is sincere and we truly hope you will consider this opportunity to make a difference.

If you are interested or have questions, please email me at [aschnick@westville.k12.in.us](mailto:aschnick@westville.k12.in.us) or call me at (219) 785-2531 ext 3043. We plan to work with mentors throughout December and early January so that the virtual mentoring sessions can begin once students return from winter break.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,

Alissa Schnick