# Parent Mentor Project 2025-2026 Scope of Work

## **Goal**

Ohio’s Parent Mentor Project supports families of students with disabilities by partnering with Educational Agencies to promote educational success. The project aligns with DEW priorities by advancing literacy, accelerating learning, preparing students for the workforce, and supporting student wellness. The goal is to help families navigate services and resources within Educational Agencies and communities, particularly for children with disabilities and those in the pre-referral and referral process. Through effective communication with families, school staff, and the community, the project fosters partnerships and alliances that positively impact student outcomes.

## **Context**

The Parent Mentor Project plays a vital role in Ohio’s efforts to implement the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) by fostering strong, informed partnerships between families and schools. Parent Mentors—who are themselves parents of children with disabilities—serve as trusted guides, helping families navigate special education systems, understand their rights, and actively participate in their child’s education.

By building these relationships, Parent Mentors help ensure that IDEA’s core principles—such as family engagement, individualized planning, and access to appropriate services—are realized at the local level. Their work can positively impact student outcomes related to the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) priorities in the areas of literacy, accelerated learning, student wellness, and workforce readiness.

## **Parent Mentor Defined**

The Parent Mentor must meet the following criteria:

* Is a parent of a child with a disability (see definition of “parent” from Ohio Operating Standards for the Education of Children with Disabilities 3301-51-01(B)(44),);
* Is employed at a minimum of .5 full time equivalency (FTE);
* Is a member of the community or has knowledge of the community served by the project;
* Has experience with leadership in the parent community;
* Has experience in and knowledge of special education systems and processes;
* Demonstrates excellent verbal and written communication skills; and
* Knows about support systems in the community.

## **Relationship to DEW Priorities**

Parent Mentors provide support and resources to families of children with disabilities and school staff members. Parent Mentors typically work within designated schools and Educational Agencies’ areas.

Parent Mentors provide information and resources to families to support advancement of student outcomes in DEW priority areas including:

* **Literacy**: Many students who are “at-risk” or identified as having a disability have needs in literacy. Parent Mentor support for families may include but is not limited to:
  + Guide parents on the significance of Science of Reading approaches and help them understand how schools can support their children's learning
  + Provide tools and resources for interventions and reading routines at home
  + Bridge communication between school and family related to reading goals
* **Accelerating Learning**: In addition to literacy, students with disabilities or students who are “at-risk” may also need support in other academic areas. Parent Mentor support for families may include but is not limited to:
  + Help families navigate the ETR process, including attending meetings and discussing results related to academic needs from a parent perspective
  + Help families navigate the IEP process and understand appropriate interventions related to all academic areas from a parent perspective
  + Support families in understanding progress monitoring and assessment from a parent perspective for all academic areas
* **Student Wellness**: In addition to academics, students with disabilities or students who are “at-risk” may also need support in other areas, such as behavior, attendance, or social emotional learning. Parent Mentor support for families may include but is not limited to:
  + Help families navigate and understand Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs), and Behavior Intervention Plans based on the parent perspective
  + Support the messaging from the school regarding the importance of attendance and the impact on student outcomes
  + Discuss social emotional learning related to the school approach and the importance of these skills from a parent perspective and how it applies to the home setting
* **Workforce Readiness**: The transition requirements of IDEA are critical to supporting students with disabilities as they prepare for post-secondary education or employment settings. Transition planning should be based on students’ preferences, interests, needs, and strengths. Parent Mentor support for families may include but is not limited to:
  + Help families navigate and understand age-appropriate transition assessment and planning; specifically, the importance of considering student preferences, interests, needs, and strengths
  + Connect families to agencies, such as Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD), to support successful post-secondary employment outcomes
  + Support parents in understanding the importance of student ownership and involvement in transition planning and programming

## **Partnerships**

The Office for Exceptional Children (OEC) at the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) provides ongoing support and oversight of the project to ensure continuity and program development through annual reviews. In addition, members of the Office for Exceptional Children participate in statewide Parent Mentor programming and make site visits to Parent Mentor projects.

The Center on Education and Training for Employment (CETE) at the Ohio State University (OSU) holds the contract to support Parent Mentors with professional development, resources, technology, and technical assistance. This helps Parent Mentors as they connect families and school staff to local resources, highlight the importance of literacy, and pave the way to post-secondary success for students with disabilities.

## **Implementation-Scope of Work Requirements**

Educational Agency work in collaboration with the Parent Mentor(s) to meet project objectives as identified below. Working within the Scope of Work ensures alignment with the mission of the Office for Exceptional Children.

1. **Parent Mentor expected duties:**
   * Provide input on the project budget with the Educational Agency Representative;
   * Implement services as outlined in the Scope of Work with emphasis on time spent with families of students with disabilities related to DEW priorities (see previous section);
   * Collaborates with various professionals and school officials to meet the needs of families of children with disabilities;
   * Submit project evaluation data by the provided deadlines to the OSU team at CETE for reporting to the Office for Exceptional Children
     + Submit additional project data as requested by the Educational Agency;
   * Attend the following:
     + Ongoing professional development offered through CETE. The calendar of events is developed well in advance and available on the private side of the Parent Mentor website;
     + OCALICON Parent Mentor session(s);
     + Parent Mentor Spring Conference;
     + New Parent Mentor Orientation (if new);
     + Community of Practice (CoP) meetings – 3 times annually as scheduled and led by CETE.
   * Establish with the Educational Agency Representative a plan for professional development aligned with the needs of the district (see question 7 below) and DEW priorities (previous section);
   * With the Educational Agency Representative, screen and distribute materials/resources to families of preschool and school-age children with disabilities and district personnel to improve student outcomes related to DEW priorities and other areas of identified needs;
   * With Educational Agency Representative, provide, organize and/or conduct workshops or training aligned with DEW priorities (see previous section);
   * Provide ongoing technical assistance related to DEW priorities and IDEA to families, district personnel, and community members;
   * Promote Parent Mentor services within school district(s) and the community (e.g., establish parent/family support groups and/or support family networking as needed, help families find and access community resources, connect with school staff by attending regular district and building-level meetings);
   * Attend evaluation team report (ETR) /Individualized Education Program (IEP)- related meetings at family or district request (may be face-to-face, virtual, by phone, etc.);
   * With Educational Agency Representative, promote a program of compliance with current IDEA regulatory requirements, Ohio Operating Standards for the Education of Children with Disabilities, and local policy relating to student services; and
   * Develop and maintain parent/family and professional partnerships, including serving as a liaison with other Parent Mentor associations and related organizations to promote collaboration and improve student achievement.
2. **Roles and responsibilities of the Educational Agency receiving a Parent Mentor grant must include:**
   * Provide an Educational Agency Representative who will provide regular and ongoing supervision and support to the Parent Mentor(s) and inform the Office for Exceptional Children of any changes to the Educational Agency Representative if changes occur throughout the year;
   * Inform the Office for Exceptional Children of the contact information for the Parent Mentor(s), including office location and hours if changes occur throughout the year;
   * If a project serves multiple Educational Agencies, list them in the application below and identify a contact person from each Educational Agency;
   * Ensure that the Parent Mentor is involved in educational agency activities (e.g., attend staff meetings, participate in training, serve on committees);
   * Work with the Parent Mentor through regular and ongoing communication to implement services;
   * Develop, manage the budget, and submit revisions as needed;
   * Make Educational Agency facilities and resources available to the Parent Mentor(s), including access to appropriate office equipment, clerical support, telephone, and private meeting space;
   * Make available hard copies of laws and regulations, including a copy of Federal Regulations, Ohio’s Operating standards for Serving Children with Disabilities, and A Guide to Parents Rights in Special Education;
   * Attend the following (or ensure that an alternate designee attend):
     + OCALICON Parent Mentor session;
     + Parent Mentor Spring Conference – full day;
     + New Parent Mentor Orientation session (only if Parent Mentor is new).
   * Work with the Parent Mentor to develop a plan for the Parent Mentor’s professional development aligned with the needs of the district (see question 7 below); and
   * Submit project evaluation data to the Office for Exceptional Children and/or the OSU team at CETE upon request.

## **Impact and Outcomes**

Various strategies used to measure project impact and data collection, and analysis will be managed in partnership with The Center on Education and Training for Employment (CETE) at the Ohio State University (OSU) and The Office for Exceptional Children (OEC) at the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW). Impact should be linked to student outcomes and DEW priorities to the maximum extent appropriate and at varying points of time throughout the project year.

**Formative Outcomes**:

* Increased family understanding of special education rights and processes
* Improved collaboration between families and school staff
* Greater awareness of community resources
* Enhanced district capacity to support students with disabilities

**Summative Outcomes**:

* Improved student academic, social, and behavioral outcomes
* Stronger family and school partnerships
* Increased compliance with IDEA and Ohio Operating Standards

**Big Picture Outcomes**:

* Literacy, Accelerated Learning, and Student Wellness- Improved student academic, social, and behavioral outcomes
* Workforce Readiness- Improved post-secondary planning and transition outcomes (graduation, post-secondary education, and/or employment)

# Required Responses

Educational Agencies must complete the budget grid in CCIP and answer the questions below on this template and attach to CCIP as well. Applications will be reviewed by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce for approval.

Educational Agency:

Educational Agencies served:

Educational Agency Representative(s):

Role:

Phone:

Email:

Is this Educational Agency Representative new to this role in working with the Parent

Mentor? Yes/No

If No, number of years as an Educational Agency Representative to a Parent Mentor:

Parent Mentor(s):

Location name **and** address:

Phone (list the best number for reaching the Parent Mentor):

Email:

Is this a new Parent Mentor? Yes/No

If No, number of years as a Parent Mentor:

Number of Hours Worked Per Week:

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| 1. Does the Parent Mentor have a designated office space? Please describe. |
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| If Parent Mentor does not have a designated office space, describe how the Parent Mentor has access to needed office space for meeting with families and/or holding confidential phone calls and access to needed office supplies and technology. |
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| 1. If the Educational Agency participated in the Parent Mentor Project during the 2024-2025 school year, please provide an explanation of how the Educational Agency met the expectations of the Parent Mentor Project, including Project requirements and the details of the project application as contained in the 2024-2025 Scope of Work and the accompanying budget. If the Educational Agency did not participate, indicate N/A. |
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| What were the biggest successes? |
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| What were areas of concern? |
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| 1. In alignment with each of the DEW priorities as identified above and the local needs of the Educational Agency describe with detail the specific projects and activities in which the Parent Mentor will engage with school staff, families of students with disabilities, and the community. The Parent Mentor’s time should allow for families to readily access them for information and resources and encourage connections with families new to the Educational Agency and/or to special education. |
| Response for **Literacy**: |
| Response for **Accelerating Learning**:  *Example: Host a monthly parent night focused on cultivating relationships and special education.* |
| Response for **Student Wellness**: |
| Response for **Workforce Readiness**: |

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| 1. Based on your response in question #2, explain the plan for regular and ongoing support of the Parent Mentor across the 4 priorities, including through funding and program support. Only complete the 2nd and 3rd column of the chart below. | | |
| **Grant/Project Activities (refer to question #2 above)** | **Funding** | **Regular/Ongoing Support Plan** |
| ***Example:*** *Accelerating Learning* | ***Example:*** *Grant funds for materials; District funds for refreshments* | ***Example:*** *Quarterly review meetings with District Representative and Special Education Director* |
| Literacy |  |  |
| Accelerating Learning |  |  |
| Student Wellness |  |  |
| Workforce Readiness |  |  |

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| 1. Describe anticipated student-level impact that will occur *this year* as a result of the specific proposed project work for this school year. Include formative and summative outcomes as defined above. |
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| Describe anticipated family impact that will occur *this year* as a result of the specific proposed project work this year. Include formative and summative outcomes as defined above. |
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| Describe anticipated big picture outcomes as defined above. |
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| 1. How will the Educational Agency build sustainability for this project? |
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| Outline the steps the Educational Agency would take to sustain the Parent Mentor Project beyond the availability of project grant funding. |
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| Describe how Parent Mentor services will be advertised and made available to families and educators across the Educational Agency. | | |
| **Method of Advertisement** | **Targeted Population (Families or Educators)** | **Time Period of Disbursement** |
| ***Example:*** *District Newsletter* | ***Example:*** *Educators and Families* | ***Example:*** *Monthly via email* |
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| 1. Describe the plan for professional development to ensure support of the Parent Mentor(s) in carrying out the activities in this Scope of Work, aligned to the needs of the particular Educational Agency. Professional development for the Parent Mentor may include but is not limited to: in-person or virtual training offered by the Educational Agency, regional supports such as the State Support Team or Educational Service Center, and state-level training by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. This should be in addition to the training required for all Parent Mentors through the Ohio State University Center on Training and Education for Employment. |
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