



NATIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT ACCELERATOR

equalizing access to quality tutoring

Tutor Training - Part 1: Tutor Types & Training

In this National Student Support Accelerator video, we'll be covering the next step of your program's development: tutor training. This video is the first of a two-part series that will discuss the expectations, methods, and relationships that come with training your tutors.

As the first part of this series, this video will focus on tutor types, pre-service training, training topics, in-service training, and your tutor expectations. We'll then cover effective facilitation guidelines as well as how to build strong tutor-student relationships in the second video of this series.

When first considering the types of tutors that your program will be working with, note that the less pedagogical training a tutor already has, and the greater the responsibilities given to tutors, the more training that tutors will require. For example, if your tutors will come from teachers or paraprofessionals, you may only need to train them in your program's specific requirements.

On the other hand, if you will be relying more on people like volunteers and college students for your tutoring base, more rigorous training may be needed that not only covers your program's requirements, but more basic pedagogical practices as well. Tutors who receive more training will be significantly better equipped to handle their roles and responsibilities – but it is important to also consider your program's training capacity and the return you will be getting on your investment. For example, year-round in-school paraprofessionals should receive more thorough training than part-timers at an 8-week summer program, as the benefits of training will compound over time.

Your program's pre-service training is the best way to set tutors up for success even before their very first tutoring session. During this time, it is important to map out knowledge, skills, and mindsets that coordinate with your training sessions' objectives, and to combine asynchronous and synchronous components. Additionally, make sure to ground your training in diversity, equity, and inclusion. During your training, universal training topics can include tutor expectations, content proficiency, program-specific pedagogy, effective facilitation, data practices, supporting students with learning and thinking difficulties, and tutor-tutor team building and networking activities. The time that you choose to spend on each topic can depend on your program model.

In addition to these more universal focus areas, model-specific training topics can include virtual and blended instruction methods, as well as tutor-student relationships. Make sure that tutors understand how to use your program's online platforms, can troubleshoot on these systems, and know who to contact if they need extra support.

Tutors should also understand what effective professional relationships look like, and how to prioritize healthy relationship-building in student interactions.

Finally, include sessions on small-group facilitation that tackle topics like how to run groups effectively while redirecting off-track student behavior, and keeping discussions productive.

During tutors' service, your program should also incorporate in-service training to ensure that your tutors are equipped to provide the best instruction possible. In-service training can incorporate the following areas: Keeping prior knowledge alive for tutors by refreshing and building on what was covered during Pre-Service Training. Establishing some sort of cadence for your in-service training. Determining training dates ahead of time and sharing them with tutors as soon as possible. (Send reminders, as well.) Developing a scope and sequence for your training. Considering gradual skill building by introducing more advanced content or facilitation strategies as tutors progress throughout the year and master Pre-Service training skills.

Additionally, during your in-service training, your program should do the following: Be flexible based on what your tutors need. Just like your tutors, you should use your observations to identify and meet individual learning needs. If you notice common struggles across tutors, consider addressing these via training. Incorporate sessions where tutors learn from one another. Giving tutors an opportunity to learn from each other and to problem-solve together is a powerful training approach. Gather feedback from all stakeholders. Ask tutors what they want from training, of course, but also reach out to school administrators, teachers, students, and families, and use their insights to adjust the design of your training. Lastly, think outside the box. In-Service Training does not need to take place inside a traditional classroom in order for it to be successful. Online modules, workshops, professional learning communities, and meetings with consultants are all additional options, some of which current tutors could take the lead in organizing with program staff support.

When setting your expectations for tutors, setting clear guidelines at the beginning of tutor training can help tutors to understand their commitments – and makes it easier for supervisors to enforce them. Tutors should see both examples of what success looks like in their role and receive guidance on what not to do and why. It is important to clearly outline program expectations, policies, and procedures in a tutor handbook in addition to verbally explaining these areas. Make sure to consult an attorney to avoid leaving out anything critical required by law, get advisory board approval, and update your policies regularly.

Also included in your tutor expectations should be those around tutor time commitment, session locations, and job duties such as roles, professionalism, technology use, and session structures. Make sure to clearly explain student safety expectations as well, including mandated reporting requirements, media release restrictions, student confidentiality requirements, and data privacy.

Finally, in addition to outlining what the program expects of tutors, you should also outline what tutors can expect of the program. What are the tutors' rights as employees? What training and support will be provided to them?

Thank you for watching this National Student Support Accelerator Video on tutor types and training. Be sure to check out the Accelerator website for part 2 of this webinar series, and to find the complete collection of Accelerator tutoring tools, including those utilized in this video, please visit the link here. Thank you!