**Section 35.20 Annual Program Planning; Fiscal Provisions**

a) No later than June 1 of each year, each district superintendent shall report to the State Superintendent of Education, or to the State Superintendent's designee, the following information:

1) the names, professional educator license numbers, and assigned schools of first-year principals, as defined in Section 35.10(a), who are expected to be working in the district in the coming school year and required to participate in the mentoring program; and

2) the names, professional educator license numbers, and assigned schools of second-year principals, as defined in Section 35.10(b), who are expected to be working in the district in the coming school year and for whom a second year of mentoring is being requested.

b) Each district superintendent shall continue to submit this information in a timely way for any first or second-year principal whose information was not included in the initial submission. Submissions after June 1 shall occur either immediately after the individual's employment begins or a contract is signed, but no later than December 30.

c) The State Board shall operate a principal mentoring program under this Part in any year where funding is appropriated for such purposes by the Illinois General Assembly. Based on the number of first-year principals expected statewide and the level of available funding foreseen, the State Superintendent shall determine whether the appropriation is likely to be sufficient to serve all first-year principals. This calculation shall be based on a cost figure determined annually by the State Superintendent of the reasonable costs of mentoring for each first-year principal in the program, plus the cost of delivering the required training, coordinating the mentors' assignments, and providing the other necessary structure and support for the program. If the State Superintendent determines that appropriations are not likely to be sufficient to serve all anticipated first year principals in any given year, then the new principal mentoring program shall be voluntary and priority access to mentoring services shall be given to first year principals in the highest-need schools, ranked in descending order, based upon how much their low-income student population exceeds the statewide average.

d) The new principal mentoring program shall only be available to second year principals if the State Superintendent first determines under subsection (c) that appropriations are likely sufficient to serve all anticipated first year principals.

1) If mentoring services are extended to second year principals, the State Superintendent shall establish the reasonable costs for mentoring a second-year principal and determine if appropriations are sufficient to serve all second-year principals who wish to participate in the new principal mentoring program. If appropriations are not sufficient, priority access to mentoring services shall be given to second year principals who are in the highest-need schools.

2) Second-year principals not able to participate in a second year of mentoring in the year immediately following their first year of mentoring shall be ineligible for further participation in the mentoring program.

e) As soon as possible after the level of the appropriation for a given year has been established, the State Superintendent shall notify all districts and the entities approved under Section 35.60 regarding whether mentoring will be provided for first-year principals only or for both first-year and second-year principals. If the appropriation is not likely to be sufficient to serve all first-year or all second-year principals, the State Superintendent will prioritize principals from high-need schools.

f) Each experienced principal who desires to serve as a mentor shall submit an application to an approved entity under Section 35.60, supply the required documentation of eligibility (see Section 35.40), and, if employed in a school or in a regional office of education, provide verification in a format specified by the State Superintendent of supervisory approval for participation. The State Superintendent or designee shall publicize the list of entities approved under Section 35.60 so that experienced principals can make application to the entity and complete the required training to be included in the pool of available mentors.

g) When verification is received in accordance with the requirements of Section 35.30(f) that a mentor has provided the service required under this Part, the State Superintendent of Education or designee shall make a payment for each first-year principal or second-year principal served in the amounts established by the State Superintendent pursuant to subsections (c) and (d)(1), respectively. Payment shall be made to the approved entity that facilitated the mentoring relationship for disbursement to the mentor.

h) *Using funds from the new principal mentoring program, the State Board may contract with an independent party to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the program* as required by Section 2-3.53a(e) of the School Code. (Section 2-3.53a(m) of the School Code)

(Source: Amended at 46 Ill. Reg. 13192, effective July 13, 2022)