

Grand Area Mentoring 2010/2011 Annual Report

Executive Summary

Grand Area Mentoring exceeded three major goals in the 2010/2011 school year, its sixth year of service. Grand Area Mentoring served a total of sixty-two at-risk students (or 4.4% of the student population) with more than fifty volunteers.

Measure >>	Sustain relationships >12 months	Increase core academic performance	Reduce number of disciplinary actions
Goal	55%	35%	40%
Actual Performance	58%	52%	71%

ADMINISTRATION SURVEY QUESTION: WAYS THAT GRAND AREA MENTORING COULD IMPROVE...

“The mentoring program is excellent in its current state. I believe that it should be considered the model program for the state of Utah.”

–Grand County School District Administrator

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

I. Sustained Relationships_____	Page 3.
II. Student Academic Performance_____	Page 4.
III. Student Unexcused Absences_____	Page 5.
IV. Number of Matches_____	Page 6.
V. Student Behavior_____	Page 7.
VI. Administrative Performance/Successes_____	Page 9.
VII. Opportunities_____	Page 10.

The Effects of Long-Term Mentoring

Research shows that mentoring relationships that last less than six months can have detrimental effects on student performance. Studies have found that matches that last longer have more positive impacts on the mentee. Therefore, Grand Area Mentoring asks volunteers to commit to relationships that last at least 12 months.

As illustrated in the following sections, students that have been mentored for more than one year have often performed better than their peers mentored for fewer months.

For the first time in GrandAM's six-year history, more than 46% of matches have lasted longer than one and a half years. Ongoing mentor orientations brought new volunteers into the schools to serve as mentors. These orientations focused on providing a framework for new volunteers to understand effective mentoring practices, namely engaging students in *developmental relationships*.

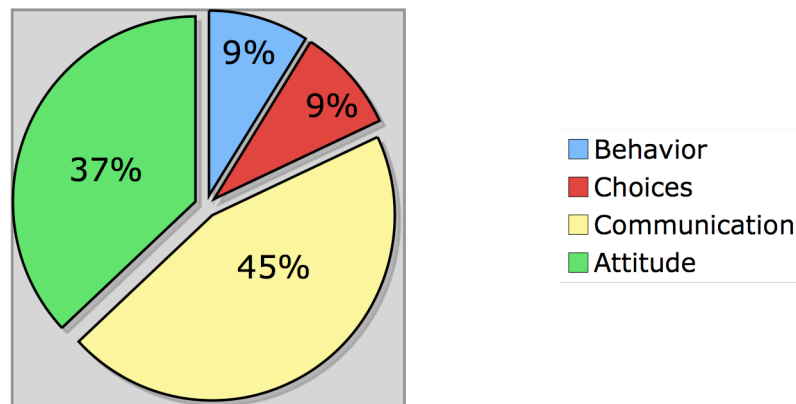
IMPORTANT: Developmental Mentoring

Developmental relationships focus on trust, fun and reciprocity, understanding, and slowly building toward setting goals or pursuing projects. Developmental mentoring and activities lead to increased student confidence, higher attachment to school, better grades, and longer lasting matches.

Mentors' Perceived Impact on Students

Surveys show that Grand Area Mentoring volunteers believe their mentoring time positively impacts students in four primary ways:

Changes in Students as Perceived by Mentors



Forty-five percent of volunteers believe mentoring improved the attitude of mentored students. Our finding backs this belief, showing 71% of students reduced their number of discipline problems, and 87% of teachers agree that mentoring improved student relations with peers and adults.

MENTOR SURVEY QUESTION: DO YOU THINK MENTORING HAS IMPACTED YOUR MENTEE? IF SO, HOW?

"She has become much more social with other kids." (GrandAM Mentor)

"My mentee has come to trust me and feel valued." (GrandAM Mentor)

"She has been talking more." (GrandAM Mentor)

"She has grown more secure, has learned to share, and is very loving." (Mentor)

"My mentee seems to be better adjusted, is more communicative and gets along with others better. Also, he is willing to try new things instead of repeating the same thing over and over." (GrandAM Mentor)

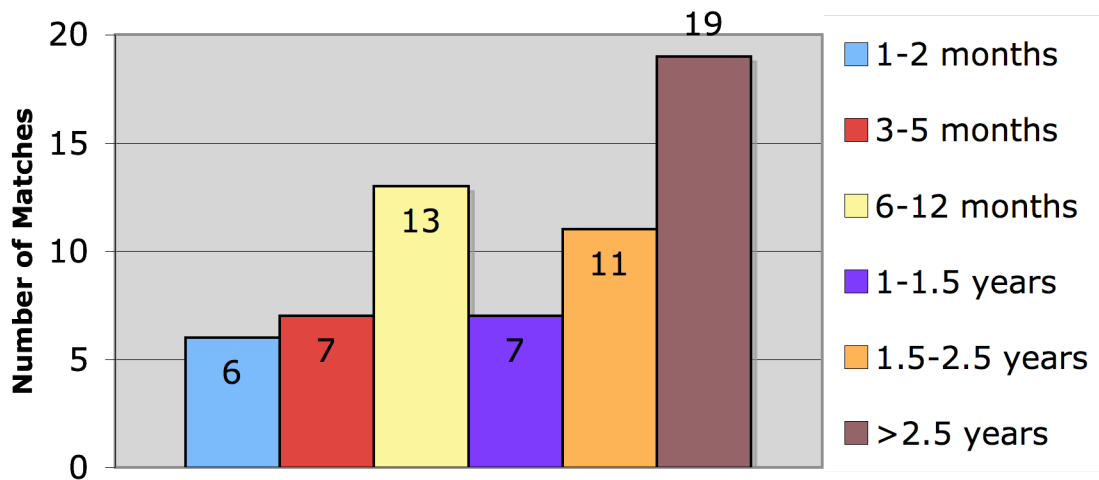
"My mentee is more cheerful and confident. He seems calmer and more focused."

Sustained Relationships

Grand Area Mentoring surpassed the key goal of 55% of relationships sustained for more than 12 months. A sustained relationship is defined as a match of student and mentor that meets consistently for 12 consecutive months, not including June, July, and August. Students that are immediately re-matched after a match closure or switch to another mentor are counted as sustained because their service was uninterrupted.

Of all 62 matches in the 2010/2011 school year (including those closed and those expected to continue), 36 or **58% of Grand Area Mentoring matches were sustained for more than 12 months**. 11 or 17% were sustained between 18 months and 2.5 years, and 19 or 29% were sustained for more than 2.5 years. The longest match has lasted 5 years.

Sustained Matches by Duration, 2010/2011



15 or 24% of GrandAM matches were closed during the 2010/2011 school year. Of these, 9 lasted more than 12 months, which means that these students met the program goal of 12 months participation. 6 matches lasted less than 12 months.

Of the 15 closed matches, 5 were closed due to student or mentor emigration from Grand County School District. 4 matches were closed due to a mutual mentor/student decision after a successful duration. 6 closed due to low student commitment.

MENTEE INTERVIEW QUESTION: WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT HAVING A MENTOR?

"My mom still says every time I come home from mentoring I'm more active. And I feel less left out because I've had fun." (5th grader)

"To hang out with somebody that isn't working because usually my mom and dad are working and don't have time. And going to the pool because I love swimming." (5th grader)

"They help you with homework and you get to play with them." (5th grader)

"How you always play games with them and how you get some new friends." (6th grader)

"He's really nice and cares about what I want to do. He treats me with a lot of respect which is cool because I'm a little kid and he's an adult." (5th grader)

"It's awesome and fun." (3rd grader)

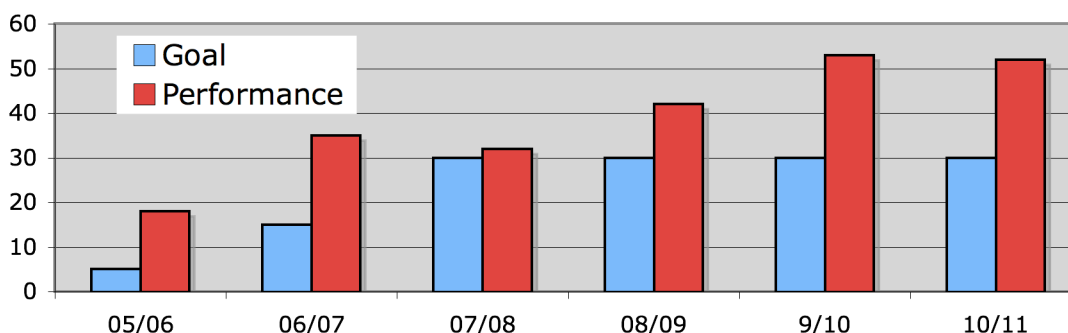
"I like just having somebody to talk to." (6th grader)

"I like everything about mentoring." (4th grader)

Student Academic Performance

Improvements in student academic performance are based on report card scores from this year compared to last year.. Grand Area Mentoring met the goal of 35% of mentored students improving their academic score over the 2010/2011 school year. Of the students for which baseline academic data was available, **52% improved their overall academic score.**

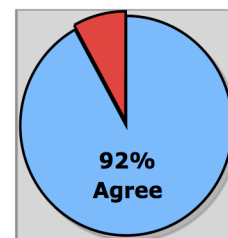
Percentage of Students with Improved Academic Performance **(Goals vs. Performance) 2005-2011**



Unlike other measures (absences and discipline problems), where a consistent zero score is considered a positive outcome, flat academic performance is not counted as improvement. If a student's academic score was 75% last year and remained at 75% this year, the student is not tallied as a mentee with improved performance.

Teacher Survey – Academics:

Many teachers also felt that mentoring had a significant impact on student academic performance. In an end-of-year survey of educators in kindergarten through eighth grade, ***more than three quarters of teachers felt that mentored students had improved grades.***



93% of surveyed teachers believed that mentored students in their classes had higher self-confidence.

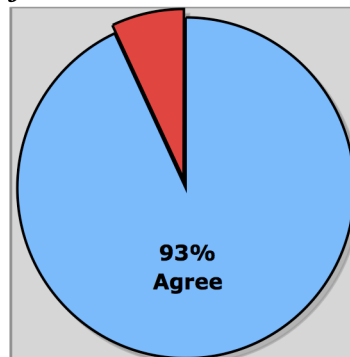
Numerous studies have found a positive correlation between student efficacy (belief in one's own ability) and academic performance. Mentoring supports the growth and performance of its student participants by bolstering self-confidence.

QUESTION: DO YOU FEEL MENTORING HAS CHANGED HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT YOURSELF? IF SO, HOW?

"I used to feel dumb and not know anything to do. I used to feel dumb and write in my diary 'I'm dumb.' But now, I feel like an outstanding, intelligent girl...I've actually been getting better grades." (3rd grade girl)

TEACHER SURVEY

"Since being matched with a mentor, the ***mentored students in my class have greater self confidence.***"



Student Unexcused Absences

The 2010/2011 goal for the percentage of students that reduced their unexcused absences was 35%. Grand Area Mentoring student data shows that ***13% of mentored students had fewer unexcused absences this year compared with student attendance in 2009/2010.***

This is 22% lower than our objective. Grand Area Mentoring proposes to improve this measure in 2011/2012 by: 1) re-training returning mentors in the fall in program policy, developmental mentoring, and promoting school attachment, 2) increasing supervision of on campus matches to ensure use of best practices.

Despite this measure not achieving its goal, qualitative improvements in enthusiasm for school were noted by teachers, students, and parents.

Teacher Survey – Attachment to School:

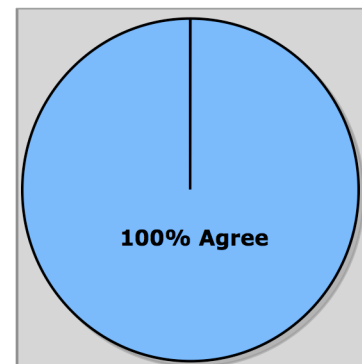
100% of teachers surveyed believe that mentoring helps students like school more. Higher school attachment has been shown to yield better attendance records, especially for at-risk children.

Parent Survey – Enthusiasm for School:

75% of parents surveyed believe that they have seen a positive change in their son or daughter's enthusiasm for school.

TEACHER SURVEY

“Since being matched with a mentor, the ***mentored students in my class have seemed to like school better, especially on mentoring days.***”



MENTEE INTERVIEW QUESTION: DOES HAVING A MENTOR MAKE YOU FEEL ANY DIFFERENT ABOUT SCHOOL?

“Mentoring makes me want to come to school more often.” (4th grader)

“Mentoring makes me feel so happy on Thursday. I’m like ‘I can’t wait until Thursday.’” (4th grader)

“Ever since I got my mentor, I want to come to school more because it’s fun to meet with him.” (6th grader)

“I actually like coming to school now because I know every Wednesday I’ll have something fun to do. I like coming to school a lot better.” (5th grader)

“It’s a great day on mentoring days.” (3rd grader)

“Mentoring makes me feel happy on Thursdays.” (3rd grader)

“Every Thursday I’m so happy because we do fun things.” (3rd grader)

“I want to come to school more.” (5th grader)

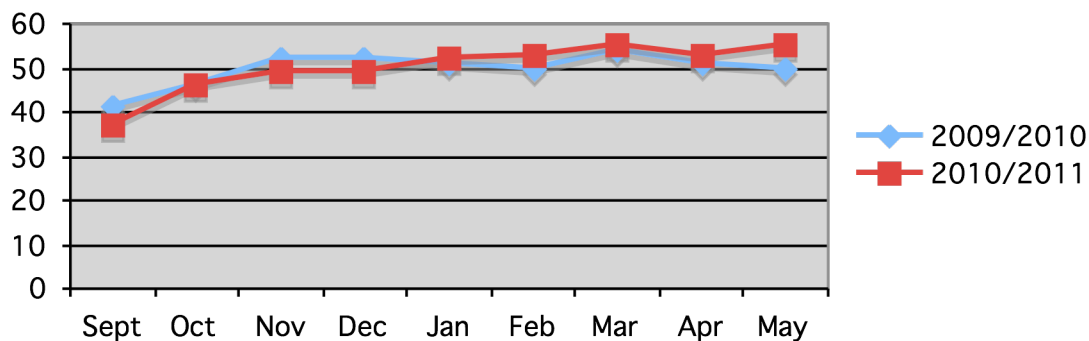
“I think I’m going to have a fun time after school.” (3rd grader)

“You get to hang out, and it makes you feel comfortable and they’re not rude to you. Your mentor is a good sport and a good person.” (5th grader)

Number of Matches

Grand Area Mentoring's 2010/2011 school year saw the program size remain stable at approximately 52 matches. Over the course of the year, GrandAM supported 62 matches in total. Maintaining this size gives the program optimal support for its mentors while serving a significant portion of the district's at-risk students. Keeping fewer than sixty matches allows closer contact with each mentor and student, which assists in relationship oversight and troubleshooting.

Number of Matches, 2009/2010 vs. 2010/2011



During the summer of 2010, GrandAM lost a total of twelve matches. This is slightly higher than the number of matches lost in the summer of 2009, which totaled nine.

Teacher Survey – More Mentors:

Far and away the most common request noted in teacher surveys was the need for more mentors. One teacher wrote, “Get more mentors! There are so many students who could benefit from having mentors in our community.” Another said, “More mentors, please.” This is both testament to the need for mentoring in Grand County and the worth of Grand Area Mentoring’s volunteers.

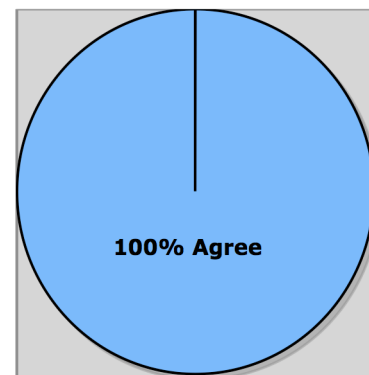
Mentor Survey – Mentor Support:

Mentor support is crucial in maintaining relationships over the long term. If too many matches close in a year, Grand Area Mentoring cannot operate at capacity or support the district’s at-risk students. Therefore, mentor support is the most important predictor of the number of matches Grand Area Mentoring can sustain.

On average, surveyed *GrandAM* volunteers rated match support as a ten on a scale of one to ten, ten being highest.

TEACHER SURVEY

“I am supportive of the mentoring program, and mentors are well trained and effective.”



MENTOR SURVEY QUESTION: WHAT COULD BE DONE TO MAKE GRAND AREA MENTORING BETTER?

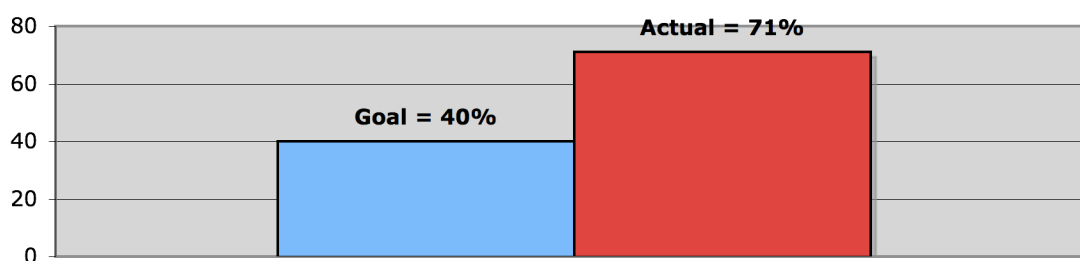
“Grand Area Mentoring is by far the best volunteer organization I’ve been in, in terms of organization, training, and ongoing support.”
(GrandAM Volunteer)

Student Behavior

Grand Area Mentoring aimed to reduce the number of disciplinary actions for 40% of mentored students. Students that maintain a zero balance of office referrals or other corrective actions since the previous year are counted in this number.

Of Grand Area Mentoring's student participants for which GrandAM had baseline discipline data, **71% decreased their discipline referral rate or maintained it at zero.** This betters 2009/2010's results by 32%. The chart below illustrates the success GrandAM has achieved in reducing discipline problems for mentored students:

Percentage of Students with Reduced Discipline Referrals (Goals vs. Performance) 2010/2011



Parent surveys also support the link between mentoring and improved behavior. **50% of surveyed parents selected behavior as a positive change seen in their son or daughter** since beginning with mentoring. Parents note, "My daughter is able to get more help where needed, and mentoring has helped her grow as a person." Another said, "Mentoring helps kids with day-to-day choices." 100% of parents also said that mentoring has helped their son or daughter improve in communication.

Student surveys give some insight into how mentoring impacts feelings of positive change, levels of self-confidence, and use of social skills. Studies suggest that there is a link between improved social skills and a reduction in discipline problems at school and in the community. Here is a selection of direct quotes:

QUESTION: DO YOU FEEL MENTORING HAS CHANGED HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT YOURSELF? IF SO, HOW?

ANSWER: A selection of student responses:

"Usually I'm having problems at home and whenever I'm with my mentor, my mentor takes all that off my mind." (5th grader)

"Yeah, it makes me feel happier and when I'm with my mentor, she makes me laugh so hard. The most fun I ever have is on Thursday when we have mentoring." (6th grader)

"Yes, I used to think that I was a nobody and nobody liked me. But after I had my mentor she made me feel like I was somebody. She made me feel good about myself." (5th grader)

"Yeah, it makes me feel like I actually have someone here." (4th grader)

"It makes me feel more social." (5th grader)

"It makes me happy." (6th grader)

"She's like a best friend." (5th grader)

"Yes, I'm always sad because no one wants to play with me. She's always there when I want someone to talk to me." (3rd grader)

"It makes me feel happier." (4th grader)

"Yes, it makes me feel like when I'm grounded it's not hopeless, because sometimes I'll go to school and get to have fun at mentoring". (5th grader)

"It helps build my self-esteem." (7th grader)

"I'm starting to get along better with more people." (6th grader)

"I play more outside and don't feel bored." (6th grader)

Teacher Survey – Social Competency:

77% of Grand County School District teachers surveyed agreed that mentored students have improved social competency. Additionally, 87% believe that mentored students get fewer behavioral referrals since meeting with a mentor.

Student Interview – Behavior & Communication:

Students had insight into how their own behavior has been impacted by mentoring. They were asked, **WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED OR GAINED THROUGH YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR MENTOR?**

"I learned to do a little better on not talking in class. My mentor checks in with my teacher about how I'm doing." (5th grader)

"I get better grades with homework because she'll help me." (4th grader)

"When I meet a new mentor, it makes me not as afraid to meet new people." (5th grader)

"I've learned it's important to have a friend beside you." (5th grader)

"I've learned that being nice will get you friends." (5th grader)

"To never give up on yourself because you'll always have someone to rely on if you're sad or in trouble." (4th grader)

"I've learned self respect and to respect my mom." (6th grader)

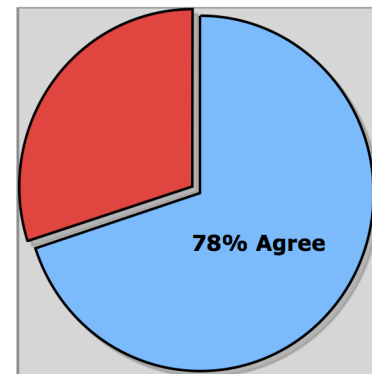
"That having a friend is special, that it's someone who cares for you and doesn't do anything bad to you. They're someone who can help you with anything, like missing work and you get to do really fun stuff." (5th grader)

"I talk to people more." (6th grader)

"How to have fun." (6th grader)

TEACHER SURVEY

"Since being matched with a mentor, the mentored students in my class have improved social competency."



Administrative Performance

Teacher, administrator, parent, and mentor surveys each addressed the question of program execution. Questions relating to staff performance were collected from each source to provide guidance for program improvement and staff professional development. A mean response of 8 is the goal for each question.

PROGRAM SURVEYS (2010/2011)	AVERAGE SCORE on a scale of one to ten (ten being highest):
Communication with parents :	9.5
Response to parent questions or concerns:	9.5
Mentor support:	9.5
Response to mentor calls and concerns:	10
Teachers and administration believes that staff are easy to reach and knowledgeable:	10
Teachers and administration supportive of the program:	10
Teachers and administrators believe that mentors are well trained and effective:	9.5
Teachers and administrators feel comfortable referring students to the program:	10

Teachers, administrators, and parents noted:

"Grand Area Mentoring is a well executed, effective program."

"Thanks for a great program."

"I am a mentor. I love the program. I have felt very supported."

"Thanks for your continued hard work to maintain funding for this valuable program!"

"A much used and needed program for the many students who need an adult who cares and consistently supports them."

"Thanks for all the time the mentor has offered my child. She is making a lot of progress."

Successes

Social Skills – Mentor, teacher, parent surveys, and data on discipline rates all confirmed a marked improvement in student social skills this year. 63% of mentors believe that their mentees showed improved communication, behavior, or choices since starting mentoring. Parents and teachers agreed, and our discipline data this year showed **a staggering 71% of mentees with decreased office referrals.**

Academic Performance – Mentored students continue to show strong improvement in academic performance. 52% of mentored students improved their academic score. Parents most frequently chose academic performance as a positive change in their son or daughter as a result of mentoring, equal only to communication improvement.

Mentor Space – The new HMK Mentoring Room was warmly received by mentors and students. Approximately 106 people used the mentoring room each week. On average, 16

people meet there at the same time every day of the week after school. 24 other individuals meet there during the school day throughout the week. Many volunteers expressed how grateful they were for the new space.

“I love the mentoring room. It is bright and cheerful and full of choices of ways to spend our mentoring hour. Since there is so much more room there is no longer a need to compete for space to conduct an activity, which interfered with the mentor/mentee relationship. This year I have seen a marked change in my mentee who has really appeared much more relaxed and confident and now initiates how she wants us to spend the time as she has room to express, herself like doing Yoga, which would have been out of the question last year. Without the mentor room it would be difficult to mentor at 8am when there are fewer opportunities outside.”

–GrandAM Volunteer

“Spending time in the new HMK Mentoring Room is an excellent experience. My mentee and I love this space so much that we rarely even leave the room during our mentoring sessions. Beyond the fact that it is a lovely, calm, spacious room full of games and crafts – I see that it gives all of the mentees and mentors a sense of PLACE and a place to gather. When we are in the Mentoring Room it feels like we belong to a group. It is a social and happy place. Things are happening. There is much activity and excitement. My mentee and I feel an enormous sense of community in this room. I have spent time mentoring at the Middle School, Red Rock Elementary and the old HMK and there is no comparison to the pure energy that is generated from our new space. Now we are part of something much bigger than ourselves. It is a gathering spot full of action. How can that not be exciting and rewarding? Feeling a sense of community and having a sense of place is a big deal – a place where it feels right to belong.”

–GrandAM Volunteer

Opportunities

Recruitment – This year’s recruitment strategies provided adequate supplemental volunteers to combat the natural effects of attrition. However, this is an area that will always be a struggle. Next year the program will focus heavily on setting up booths at the local farmer’s market, running ads in the Times Independent and Ad-Vertiser, and making presentations to venues like the Alpha Rho Sorority, the Lions Club, the Grand Senior Center, and any other appropriate meeting. The recruitment drive will begin with a summer ad campaign while school is out of session, and this will crescendo as the school year begins in early September.

Pilot Program – GrandAM is designing a project that would add up to twelve additional mentees to the program roster if funding becomes available. This project would include adding a professional mentor to the GrandAM staff. The project director is searching for funding sources to help expand quality mentoring to higher risk students without adding an additional burden to the mentor coordinator’s case load. This strategy would also address the abovementioned need cited by teachers: more mentors.