New Teacher Center’s 2016 Review of State Policies on New Educator Induction provides comprehensive summaries for all 50 states. For each state, NTC reviews the presence or absence of policies related to nine key criteria that are most critical to the provision of universal, high-quality induction and mentoring support for beginning educators. The state summaries capture all relevant policies, statutes, regulations, induction program standards, and other guidance.

State Policy Review: New Educator Induction

Colorado

1. Educators Served

State policy should require that all beginning teachers, principals, and administrators receive induction support during their first two years in the profession.

All teachers who hold an initial or special services license must receive induction support. The state does not require a minimum number of years that new teachers must participate in an induction program; school districts can determine the length of induction, up to three years. State-approved induction programs may include, but shall not be limited to, supervision by mentor special services providers and ongoing professional development and training, including ethics and performance evaluations. [Colorado Revised Statutes (CRS) §§22-60.5-201, §§ 22-60.5-204 and 22-60.5-213]

All new school principals and administrators are expected to participate in an induction process. The state does not require a minimum number of years that new administrators must participate in an induction program; school districts can determine the length of induction, up to three years. [CRS §§ 22-60.5-304 and 22-60.5-309]

2. Mentor Quality

State policy should require a rigorous mentor selection process and foundational training and ongoing professional development for mentors. State policy should also establish criteria for how and when mentors are assigned to beginning educators and allow for a manageable caseload of beginning educators and the use of full-time teacher mentors.

Teachers

State policy requires school districts to establish standards and a process for the selection of mentors. The state provides guidance as to mentor attributes, including that the mentor: (1) agrees to serve in that role; (2) is an experienced professional who models state standards and demonstrates excellence in practice; (3) works well with adults and is sensitive to others’ viewpoints; (4) is an active and open learner; and (5) is competent in interpersonal and public relations skills. [1 Colorado Code of Regulations (CCR 301-37: 2260.5-R-13.01 (1)(c) and (2)(c)]

State policy requires school districts to establish standards and a process for mentor training. However, the state does not make any specific requirements with regard to the design or content of that training. It also requires local induction programs to provide “ongoing professional development and training... for both new teachers and mentors.” [1 CCR 301-37: 2260.5-R-13.01 (1)(b) and (1)(c)]

State policy requires school districts to establish a process for “the matching of mentors with inductees.” State program rules also suggest that “effective induction programs should consider” the following program elements related to mentor assignments: (1) a close match between the teaching assignment of the mentor and inductee; (2) proximity between the two parties; and (3) personal styles not in conflict. [1 CCR 301-37: 2260.5-R-13.01 (1)(b); and (2)(d)]

Administrators

State administrative rules for the Educator Licensing Act of 1991 state that mentors must have experience as a school principal or district administrator and “should be regarded as effective by their peers.” In addition, they must have demonstrated commitment to professional standards, well-developed interpersonal skills, effective oral and written communication, and an awareness of the political, social and practical realities of the context of the inductee.

Induction programs are required to provide mentor training in orientation to mentoring, development of professional knowledge and skills, cognitive coaching, and writing professional growth and improvement plans. [1 CCR 301-37: 2260.5-R-14.00]

3. Time

State policy should encourage programs to provide release time for teacher mentors and dedicated mentor-new teacher contact time.

State policy encourages, but does not require, induction programs to “consider providing release time for both mentors and new teachers.” [1 CCR 301-37: 2260.5-R-13.01 (2)(a)]
4. Program Quality

State policy should address the overall quality of induction programs by requiring regular observation of new teachers by mentors, the provision of instructional feedback based on those observations, and opportunities for new teachers to observe experienced teachers’ classrooms. It should encourage a reduced teaching load for beginning teachers; and encourage the participation of beginning educators in a learning community or peer network.

Teachers

State policy does not require – but does encourage – specific induction program elements. The state encourages local induction programs to engage in collaborative efforts with higher education institutions, to provide release time for both mentors and new teachers, to provide mentor compensation, and to provide sufficient planning time for new teachers. Requirements about classroom observation are not specifically addressed within the state’s policies. However, the state allows local programs to commit to guiding new teachers in “the development of an induction portfolio… to encourage self-reflection and self-evaluation of educational practice… and to document improved performance related to the [professional teaching] standards.”

State policy specifies the general elements of professional support that programs must provide to new teachers: (1) information related to school and district policies and procedures; (2) local district goals and local content standards; (3) educator roles and responsibilities; (4) information about the school community; (5) substantive feedback to the inductee about performance; and (6) provisions for the extension of the induction program if deemed necessary by the district. The state also requires local program site administrators to receive training in the induction process. [1 CCR 301-37: 2260.5-R-13.01 (1)(c); (1)(d); (2)(a); (2)(b); and (2)(d)]

Administrators

State administrative rules for the Educator Licensing Act of 1991 provide specific guidance to school districts with regard to induction programs for principals and administrators. First, induction programs must assign a mentor to every new school principal and administrator. Such programs must be designed to meet four purposes: (1) orientation; (2) socialization and transition; (3) technical skill development; and (4) continuous formative assessment. [1 CCR 301-37: 2260.5-R-14.00]

5. Program Standards

The state should adopt formal program standards that govern the design and operation of local educator induction programs.

Teachers

The state does not have formal induction program standards, but it has outlined minimum requirements for induction programs and offers suggested guidelines to support more robust design elements in the administrative rules for the Educator Licensing Act of 1991. State guidelines require that district programs establish: (1) standards for mentor selection, training and release time; (2) an assessment model to review, evaluate and guide the induction program; (3) a process for the matching of mentors with inductees; (4) the primary role of the mentor as teacher, coach, advocate, supporter, guide and nurturer of new teachers; and (5) whether mentors will be included in the evaluation of inductees. If mentors are to be involved in such evaluations, programs must state the specific roles and responsibilities of the mentor in evaluations.

Additionally, state guidelines require program activities to encourage professionalism and enhanced teacher performance (via demonstrations of improved instructional practices; improvement of educational experiences for all students; and adapting curriculum and instruction to accommodate populations of diverse students). [1 CCR 301-37: 2260.5-R-13.01]

Administrators

The state does not have formal induction program standards for principal and administrator induction. However, state regulations provide guidelines for such programs, including mentor selection and training, professional development for mentors and inductees, performance evaluation of inductees, and program duration and evaluation. [1 CCR 301-37: 2260.5-R-14.00]

6. Funding

The state should authorize and appropriate dedicated funding for local educator induction programs; and/or establish competitive innovation funding to support high-quality, standards-based programs.

The state does not provide dedicated funding for local induction programs.

7. Educator Certification/Licensure

The state should require beginning educators to complete an induction program to move from an initial teaching license.

Teachers

All teachers who hold an initial or special services license must successfully complete an induction program in order to advance to a professional teaching license. The induction process is based on a growth plan, as determined by the teacher, which incorporates a number of potential sources of support (i.e. mentoring, college coursework, conferences, projects, etc.). Mentors provide input into the growth plan before being submitted to the state to be provided the next level of licensure. [1 CCR 301-37: 2260.5-R-13.00]

Administrators

At the inception of the induction period, the mentor and inductee must jointly develop a professional growth plan based on the inductee’s pre-service portfolio, the assessments required for the initial license, and professional standards. Each inductee must maintain a portfolio of induction activities. Each induction program must include a summative performance evaluation of inductees and specify the role of the mentor, if any, in that evaluation. The district shall recommend an inductee for a professional license based, in part, on that performance evaluation. [1 CCR 301-37: 2260.5-R-14.00]
8. Program Accountability

The state should assess and monitor induction programs through strategies such as program evaluation, program surveys, and peer review.

**Teachers**

Local school districts are expected to "establish an assessment model to review, evaluate and guide the induction program." Each induction program is expected to conduct a self-evaluation every five years. The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) may conduct visits to induction sites and survey participants regarding the effectiveness of the program. The evaluation information is submitted to the state for use in recommending program renewal. [1 CCR 301-37: 2260.5-R-13.01 (1)(c) and 13.02]

**Administrators**

Each induction program shall conduct a self-evaluation every five years that includes data regarding the success of inductees on the state assessment for the Professional License. The CDE may conduct visits to induction sites and survey participants regarding the effectiveness of the program. The evaluation information shall be submitted to the state for its use in considering renewal of the induction program. [1 CCR 301-37: 2260.5-R-14.00]

9. Teaching Conditions

The state should adopt formal standards for teaching and learning conditions; conduct regular assessments of such conditions; and incorporate the improvement of such conditions in school improvement plans.

Colorado does not have formal standards for teaching and learning conditions. However, the state has worked with New Teacher Center (NTC) to administer the Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) Colorado survey, a statewide online survey of school-based, licensed educators. The survey includes questions regarding community engagement and support, teacher leadership, school leadership, managing student conduct, use of time, professional development, facilities and resources, instructional practices and support, and new teacher support.

In 2014, Colorado contracted with NTC to administer the fourth TELL Colorado survey in Spring 2015. Data from this survey will be used to make improvements in Colorado’s schools and classrooms, to identify differentiated support for schools, and inform professional development opportunities. TELL data is now incorporated into the design and evaluation of school and district improvement plans and is also used to evaluate new teacher supports systems. Funding for the statewide survey is codified in the state budget.

The state’s teacher-equity plan, approved by the U.S. Department of Education in 2015, includes various strategies to improve teaching and learning conditions.

Links

- Colorado Department of Education - Induction: [https://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/induction](https://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/induction)
- Colorado Code of Regulations: [https://www.sos.state.co.us/CCR/Welcome.do](https://www.sos.state.co.us/CCR/Welcome.do)
- State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators: [http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/equitable/co.html](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/equitable/co.html)
- TELL Colorado: [http://www.tellcolorado.org](http://www.tellcolorado.org)

The Colorado Department of Education has reviewed this state summary.

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