**State Policy Review: New Educator Induction**

**Georgia**

**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.

State policy does not require all new teachers to receive induction or mentoring support. State Education Rule 160-3-3.07 establishes a Mentor Teacher Program, but districts are not required to participate.

The state does not require new school administrators to receive induction or mentoring support.

Georgia’s Race to the Top (RT3) initiative included the development and establishment of teacher and principal induction programs. In the fall of 2011, a cross-disciplinary team was convened to review research and draft teacher and principal induction program guidance. All 26 districts participating in the initiative were required to establish teacher and principal induction programs aligned to Georgia’s Teacher and Principal Induction Guidance.

**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.

State policy articulates minimum criteria for mentor selection. It defines a mentor as "a peer" who holds a Teacher Support Specialist endorsement and who has been chosen by a school-based selection committee. State policy defines a school-based committee as one "whose majority is comprised of teachers." [State Education Rule 160-3-3.07]

The Georgia Teacher Induction Guidance defines a mentor as someone who is highly committed to supporting the new teacher, provides guidance, shares knowledge and experiences, and supports the new teacher in making a positive impact on student growth and achievement. The Guidance states that mentors are required to provide instructional, professional, and personal support, utilize effective communication and collaboration skills, assist with coordination/facilitation of interventions and professional learning experiences to guide growth and development, and serve on the Teacher Induction Support Team. The Support Team is comprised of the immediate supervisor or designee, a mentor, and when possible, an external support agency representative (i.e. higher education, regional educational service agency, or district specialist).

While state policy does not address mentor training, the Teacher Induction Guidance establishes the expectation that mentors "will complete the following professional learning as needed: program overview and roles and responsibilities; needs of beginning teachers; teaching classroom management; response to intervention for staff; teaching adult learners; Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS); and methods of mentoring (peer observation, modeling observing, co-teaching, conferencing, coaching)."

State policy does not address mentor assignment and caseload apart from a requirement for local programs to prioritize the assignment of mentors to "first-year teachers" and "second- and third-year teachers who have needs," are "at risk of leaving the profession," who are "returning to the profession after extended absence," or who are "from out-of-state." [State Education Rule 160-3-3.07]

**3. Time**

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

Rules for the optional Mentor Teacher Program define a "mentoring unit" as a minimum of 15 hours of work completed by a mentor teacher with one or more protégé teachers. [State Education Rule 160-3-3.07] The Teacher Induction Guidance states that districts are to provide beginning teachers with appropriate materials and resources including "sufficient and regular time for mentoring interactions to occur." Additionally, the Guidance states that quality mentoring programs "provide mentors with appropriate release time to attend training" and provide mentors "schedules that allow for the attendance of training and support for new teachers."

**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.

While state law and regulations do not address key induction program elements, the Teacher Induction Guidance outlines state-, district-, and school-level program components. The Guidance requires the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) to work closely with the 26 RT3 districts to: support and monitor the implementation of the induction guidance; provide guidance for the
recruitment and selection of mentors; identify and disseminate best district practices for induction, coordinate regional information sessions; and coordinate data collection to support evaluation of induction programs.

Districts are required to: establish a culture that supports an effective teacher induction program; create a vision, mission, and goals for the district’s induction program; develop a comprehensive teacher induction program; clearly communicate goals and expectations of an effective induction program; provide and support on-going professional learning aligned to beginning teachers; evaluate program effectiveness; provided needed resources to sustain an effective program; and provide criteria for the recruitment and selection of mentors.

School administrators are required to: establish a school culture that supports professional collaboration; commit to the vision, mission, and goals of the district’s induction program; ensure implementation of the district induction program; ensure working conditions that allow time/support for the growth and development of new teachers; create conditions that support new teacher–mentor relationship; coordinate mentor recruitment, selection, and assignment based on district criteria; regularly communicate with beginning teachers; and create and lead the Induction Phase Teacher Support Team.

5. Program Standards

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

The state does not have formal induction program standards. However, State Education Rule 160-3-3.07 (3) provides some specific requirements for districts that choose to operate a Mentor Teacher Program. These include submission of an annual program application to the GaDOE that details the number of new teachers served, the number of mentor teachers utilized, additional mentor selection criteria, and summative evaluation results regarding program effectiveness.

Also, in 2011, the GaDOE, in partnership with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC), convened a cross-disciplinary team—including teachers, instructional coaches, early career and experienced principals, district leaders, university faculty, education organization staff, and state agency leaders—to review research and draft Teacher Induction Guidance. This work was part of Georgia’s RT3 initiative. The Guidance addresses seven domains of high-quality teacher induction: 1) Roles and Responsibilities; 2) Leadership and Organizational Structures; 3) Orientation; 4) Mentoring; 5) Ongoing Performance Assessment; 6) Professional Learning; and 7) Program Evaluation. A similar process was followed to draft Principal Induction Guidance.

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 teacher induction programs. State policy allows for the provision of stipends to mentors who provide up to three units of mentoring support (15 hours each) annually. However, there is no current state funding for such mentor stipends. [State Education Rule 160-3-3.07]

7. Educator Certification/Licensure

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

The Teacher Induction Guidance states that teachers who have been hired into a new permanent position in any Georgia school are considered “induction phase teachers” until they successfully complete the district induction program. The GaPSC adopted a 4-tiered teacher certification system on July 1, 2014. The initial tier is intended for teachers with fewer than 3 years of experience within the last 5 years. The Induction certificate period—which generally lasts 3 years—is designed to ensure that early-career teachers are fully prepared for the profession while providing opportunities for professional growth. Induction teachers must meet additional qualifications in order to qualify for a Professional certificate. There are multiple pathways to Induction certification, and each has specific qualifications. You must be employed by a Georgia local unit of administration at the time that you apply for your first Georgia certificate in order to be eligible for full certification. However, if you meet all requirements for Induction Pathway 1, 2, or 3, except for employment, you will be issued a Certificate of Eligibility that may be converted to an educator certificate upon employment.

8. Program Accountability

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

State policy requires local mentor teacher programs to submit an annual program application to the GaDOE and to have a plan on file locally. The application and plan must include “summative evaluation results regarding program effectiveness and any proposed program changes to increase program effectiveness in succeeding years.” [State Education Rule 160-3-3.07]

Program evaluation is one of the seven domains of a high-quality teacher induction program addressed in the Teacher Induction Guidance. This domain requires districts to establish a systematic approach to evaluate the effectiveness of all aspects of teacher induction programs and the impact on student growth and achievement. Data collected in the evaluation process should
assess program quality and support continuous program improvement. The Guidance also requires districts to systematically share evaluation findings with stakeholders for the purpose of accountability, decision-making, and continuous improvement.

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.

Though state policy does not specifically address teaching and learning conditions, the Teacher Induction Guidance state that school administrators are required to: establish a school culture that supports professional collaboration; commit to the vision, mission, and goals of the district’s induction program; ensure implementation of the district’s induction program; ensure working conditions that allow time/support for the growth and development of new teachers; create conditions that support new teacher-mentor relationship; coordinate mentor recruitment, selection, and assignment based on district criteria; regularly communicate with beginning teachers; and create and lead the Induction Phase Teacher Support Team.

Links


The Georgia Department of Education has reviewed this state summary.

This information is accurate as of January 2016.