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.

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.

The state does not require all new teachers to receive induction support. Individual school districts determine the extent and type of support new teachers receive in their first two years, including administrative and supervisory support, mentoring, peer assistance and professional development. [Idaho Statutes § 33-512(17)]

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

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 does not articulate specific mentor selection criteria. However, Idaho Mentor Program Standards outline a process for mentor recruitment and selection that involves a number of stakeholder groups. The Standards suggest that the process should include a written application with letters of recommendation and a formal interview process. They also suggest that selection be guided by a set of criteria and a rubric.

State policy does not require mentor training. However, Idaho Mentor Program Standards provide program guidance. Specifically, the Standards suggest that mentors should participate in a learning community that supports the development of their practice and their use of mentoring tools, protocols and formative assessment. Topics for consideration for professional development include: response to the diverse needs of beginning teachers; using formative assessment tools and processes; meeting in groups with other mentors to develop and refine mentor skills, problem-solve, assess and reflect on teaching and learning, develop leadership skills; and assessing quality of services provided by mentors.

State policy does not make specific requirements with regard to mentor assignment or caseload. Idaho Mentor Program Standards suggest that mentor assignment should take into account content, grade level, pedagogical needs and local context. In addition, the Standards provide more specific guidance that assignments should take into consideration including subject matter knowledge, orientation to learning, relevant experiences, current assignments and geographical proximity. They further suggest that full-time mentors have a caseload 15-16 beginning teachers. The Standards also suggest that clear procedures should be in place for reconsidering assignments when either the mentor or beginning teacher is dissatisfied with the pairing.

3. Time

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

There is no minimum time suggested for contact between mentors and new teachers, however, Idaho Mentor Program Standards suggest that “adequate time and compensation to meet with beginning teachers during and after school hours on a regular basis” be provided.

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.

The state does not require specific induction program elements. Idaho Mentor Program Standards provide significant detail on formative assessment of new teacher practice. The Standards suggest that formative assessments include a focus on professional teaching standards, a continuum of teacher development and reflection on evidence of practice, and also incorporate tools that support classroom observations. The Standards suggest that elements of professional development for new teachers include:

- Professional teaching standards or other expectations, such as state and district priorities, to form the basis for beginning teacher professional development activities;
- Formal professional development activities designed to meet the beginning teacher’s individualized, assessed learning needs;
- New learnings applied in the classroom with support from a trained mentor, including but not limited to one-on-one support by a mentor, classroom observations, teaching demonstrations, and reflection on practice; and
- Qualified presenters who model best teaching practices that foster success for a diverse student population, understand the developmental nature of teaching, and promote reflective practice.
5. Program Standards

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

The state has developed Idaho Mentor Program Standards for school districts that elect to operate teacher induction programs. These Standards are intended to help guide local mentor program design and development. They include a wide range of topics about mentoring and induction including: school and community context; program rationale; program administration; roles and responsibilities of education leaders; mentor selection; mentor professional development; formative assessment; beginning teacher professional development; classroom instruction; equity based mentoring (focusing on English Language Learners and Special Populations); resources and conditions to support new teachers; and program evaluation. In addition, they are structured in ways that support advancement of program leader knowledge, including the provision of specific elements of mentoring under each standard and questions that program leaders might consider to support an inquiry-based approach to program development.

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.

The state does not require new teachers to participate in an induction program in order to advance to a professional teaching license.

8. Program Accountability

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

The state does not assess or monitor induction program quality. However, Idaho Mentor Program Standards provide guidance for school districts that are interested in program evaluation. Specifically, they suggest that programs survey beginning teachers, mentors, and site administrators to capture information about program design, implementation and impact on beginning teacher practice. They suggest triangulating the data to share with individual mentors to help inform their own practice while allowing programs to improve program design and implementation. Additional data collection—including professional development evaluations, retention data, exit interviews, student achievement data, and focus groups with mentors, principals and beginning teachers—also is recommended.

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.

State policy does not address teaching and learning conditions.

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


State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators:
http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/equitable/id.html

The Idaho State Department of Education has reviewed this state summary.

This information is accurate as of February 2016.