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

**Massachusetts**

#### 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 requires all first-year teachers to receive induction support. It must include an orientation, a trained mentor assigned in the first two weeks of teaching, a support team, and release time allowing the mentor and new teacher to engage in classroom observations and other mentoring activities. The support team must include, at least, a mentor and an administrator qualified to evaluate teachers. [603 Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR) 7.12] School districts are required to provide an additional 50 hours of mentoring beyond the initial induction year. These additional hours of mentoring can be provided over a teacher’s second and/or third year of teaching. [Guidelines for Induction & Mentoring Programs]

In addition to supporting teachers who are new to teaching, mentors may assist experienced educators who are new to a school, subject area, or grade level. Mentors may also assist educators who are participating in a performance assessment or a district-based program for licensure. [603 CMR 7.02]

State policy requires school districts to provide an induction program for all first-year administrators (including Supervisors/Directors, Special Education Administrators, School Business Administrators, Principals, Assistant Principals, Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents). Induction programs for new administrators must include: (1) An orientation program for first-year administrators and all other administrators new to the district; (2) Assignment of first-year administrators to a trained mentor within the first two weeks of working; (3) Assignment of a support team that shall consist of, but not be limited to, the mentor and an administrator qualified to evaluate administrators; (4) Provision for adequate time for the mentor and beginning administrator to engage in professional conversations on learning and teaching as well as building leadership capacity within the school community and other appropriate mentoring activities; and (5) Provision for adequate time and resources to learn how to use effective methods of personnel selection, supervision, and evaluation that are included in the Professional Standards for Administrators. [603 CMR 7.13]

#### 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 Guidelines for Induction & Mentoring Programs define a mentor as “an educator who has at least three full years of experience under an Initial or Professional license and who has been trained to assist a beginning educator in the same professional role with his or her professional responsibilities and general school/district procedures.” The Guidelines suggest that effective teachers be recruited from all subject areas to serve as mentors. Districts should employ a criteria-based selection process that outlines the desired characteristics of mentors and use clearly stated criteria, including: (1) Three years of experience; (2) A rating of at least proficient on recent evaluations; (3) Demonstrated excellent content knowledge of the state’s Curriculum Frameworks; (4) Demonstrated student gains; (5) Knowledgeable about the Standards of Effective Teaching Practice and Educator Evaluation system; (6) Effective communicator and problem solver, especially when working with adults; (7) Aware of the merits of different teaching styles and able to demonstrate a variety of pedagogical strategies/methods; (8) Demonstrated ability to address the diverse learning styles of students; (9) Knowledgeable about the professional and community resources in the school and district; (10) Able to maintain a confidential relationship; and (11) Willingness and able to invest time to develop mentoring skills and participate in the program for the duration of the year (or duration of the program).

State policy requires mentors to have training in the skills needed to effectively support new teachers. [603 CMR 7.12] In choosing mentor trainers, Guidelines for Induction & Mentoring Programs encourage districts to look to their own teachers who are experienced mentors, to consultants, professional associations and other recognized professional development providers. The Guidelines suggest a number of topic areas that the training might address, including: (1) Role of a mentor; (2) Adult development; (3) Using data to improve practice; (4) Analysis of teaching strategies; (5) Observation skills; (6) Effective use of observation tools for capturing and translating observation data strategies for conferencing and feedback; (7) Diagnosing and analyzing classroom management issues; (8) Broad problem solving skills; (9) Designing portfolios and preparing for educator evaluation; (10) Reflective practice; (11) Identifying priorities for new educators using the evaluation rubric; (12) Using student work and feedback
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3. Time

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

State policy requires districts to provide release time for both the mentor and the beginning teacher to engage in regular classroom observations and other mentoring activities. [603 CMR 7.12] State Guidelines also recommend that the beginning teacher and the mentor have compatible schedules and classrooms located near one another.

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.

Guidelines for Induction & Mentoring Programs suggest basic mentoring activities. Programs should seek to help the beginning teacher improve upon practice and develop an understanding of the Standards of Effective Teaching Practice. Specifically, the activities may include: [1] Assistance in analyzing student data and reflecting on professional practice to propose Student Learning and Professional Practice Goals and a Developing Educator Plan as part of Educator Evaluation; (2) Meeting frequently during the school year to reflect on practice and plan curriculum and lessons; (3) Analyzing and assessing the beginning teacher’s practice in relation to evaluation criteria in order to help the beginning teacher reflect and improve; [4] Observing educator practice; and [5] Mentoring observations are encouraged to be frequent, short, targeted, and can be planned or unplanned. Possible observation activities include:

- Observing one another’s classroom;
- Observing the classrooms of other effective educators;
- Co-teaching the beginning teacher’s class;
- Teaching the beginning teacher’s class so the beginning teacher can observe; and
- Mentor-mentee analyzing the video recording of their own instruction and reflecting on best practices together.

5. Program Standards

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

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) first released Guidelines for Induction & Mentoring Programs in 2001 and revised them in 2015. They cover a range of topics addressing new teacher support, including: program planning, evaluation, and reporting; orientation; support structures for beginning teachers; and mentoring. They discuss a number of mentoring topics including: core mentoring activities; recruitment and selection; training; assignment; mentor peer support; compensation; and resources for new teachers and mentors. The Guidelines address the alignment of induction programs to educator effectiveness initiatives including educator preparation, licensure, evaluation, and professional development. The Guidelines also cover similar topics addressing new administrator support structures.

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.

Guidelines for Induction & Mentoring Programs encourage districts to provide compensation for mentors who are take on additional responsibilities. In addition, the state suggests other forms of compensation, including: tuition waivers; release time for professional development, observation and consultation; reduced teaching schedule; and other forms of professional recognition. The Guidelines also encourage districts to use federal Title II, Part A funds to support this work.

7. Educator Certification/Licensure

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

The state requires all beginning teachers and administrators to participate in a one-year induction program in order to advance to a professional license. Additionally, teachers must receive 50 hours of mentoring beyond the first year. [603 CMR 7.04 (2)(c)(4)]
8. Program Accountability

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

The state requires all local induction programs to submit an annual report that articulates program design, implementation, and outcomes including educator retention rates to determine program effectiveness and potential program improvements. [603 CMR 7.12(3)]

Guidelines for Induction & Mentoring Programs expect districts to:
- Collect feedback from their program participants—mentees, mentors, principals, and other members of support teams—to determine levels of satisfaction and to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the program in order to continuously improve the program. [603 CMR 7.12 (3) (g)]
- Maintain records of participants, program activities, and resources used for the program (including number of participants and the amount of time spent in induction/mentoring activities).

The Guidelines state that districts may use evaluation instruments such as surveys or questionnaires, individual and group interviews, observations, and retention data to determine the impact of the program. The Guidelines also suggest that the program steering committee should be responsible for conducting an annual evaluation of the program’s effectiveness.

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.

The state does not have discrete standards for teaching and learning conditions. However, most recently in 2014, the state worked with New Teacher Center to administer the Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) Massachusetts Survey, a statewide online survey of school based licensed-educators. The TELL Mass Survey included 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.

Further, schools and districts use the Conditions for School Effectiveness and District Standards and Indicators to inform the creation of school and district improvement plans. DESE monitors these plans and provides support through district reviews. Finally, collecting staff and student feedback is a required component of the statewide Educator Evaluation Framework.

Links


Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education – Induction and Mentoring: http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators/mentor

State Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval (603 Code of Massachusetts Regulations 7.00): http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr7.html

TELL Massachusetts Survey - www.tellmass.org

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has reviewed this state summary.

This information is accurate as of January 2016.