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. However, the Office of the Teacher Center within the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) provides access to online mentoring modules and additional resources to school districts across the state. These modules enable school districts to develop and implement a Beginning Teacher Support Program at the local level. Mentoring is also provided to educators who are in the process of completing an alternative route to certification program. [Mississippi Code § 37-9-209]

The state does not require new school administrators to receive induction support. A 1999 state law established the Beginning Principal Support Pilot Program “to provide eligible beginning principals in this state with continued and sustained support from a formally assigned mentor principal during the first full year of principal service.” Although the program was never extended statewide as envisioned by statute, various educational agencies currently provide trainings and workshops to administrators in the state. [Mississippi Code § 37-9-251]

The MDE also hosts a Superintendent Academy designed to enhance the leadership skills of practicing school superintendents.

### 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 law establishes teacher mentor selection criteria. To serve as a mentor, a teacher must: (1) Possess a standard teaching or administrative license; (2) Be a currently employed or retired classroom teacher; (3) Have taught for three or more years as a licensed public school principal; (4) Be selected and trained; and (5) Demonstrate mastery of teaching skills and subject matter knowledge. [Mississippi Code § 37-9-201]

The state allows the selection of teacher mentors to be “determined by the school district.” Additional guidelines include that mentors must be willing to perform that role, that they may not participate in the evaluation of new teachers, and that they complete mentor training. [Mississippi Code § 37-9-211]

The state allows school districts to compensate mentors for time spent after school hours, to provide mentor release time to support new teachers during the school day, and to employ and compensate substitute teachers for assuming the teaching duties of mentor teachers. [Mississippi Code § 37-9-211]

State law also establishes mentor principal selection criteria. To serve as a mentor, a principal must: (1) Possess a standard administrative license; (2) Be currently an employed or retired school principal; (3) Have successfully served as a licensed public school principal for three or more years; (4) Be selected and trained; and (5) Have demonstrated mastery of administrative skills. [Mississippi Code § 37-9-251]

### 3. Time

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

State law requires local programs to provide a minimum of 90 hours of direct contact time between mentors and beginning teachers, including observation of or assistance with classroom teaching, or both, during the school day. [Mississippi Code § 37-9-207] Districts may “grant additional release time to mentor teachers for additional duties to support a beginning teacher” and “employ and compensate substitute teachers... for assuming the regular teaching duties of mentor teachers.” [Mississippi Code § 37-9-211]

### 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; encouraging a reduced teaching load for beginning teachers; and encouraging participation of beginning educators in a learning community or peer network.

The MDE Office of the Teacher Center provides online mentoring modules and resources to all school districts in the state. Two or more districts may jointly operate the program and districts also may partner with institutions of higher education to support the design, implementation and evaluation of mentor programs. [Mississippi Code § 37-9-205] State law requires mentors to provide “formal assistance” to new teachers, defined as “direct classroom observation and consultation; assistance in instructional planning and preparation; support in implementation and delivery of classroom instruction; and other assistance intended to enhance the professional performance and development of the beginning teacher.” [Mississippi Code § 37-9-201]
5. Program Standards

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

Mississippi has not adopted formal induction program standards. The state has developed online mentoring modules for consistency of purpose and expectations, when districts employ mentors, in an effort to provide systematic, ongoing, and sustained support as per state law.

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.

There is currently no available state funding for new teacher induction.

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 all new teachers to participate in an induction program in order to advance to a professional teaching license. However, beginning teachers enrolled in an alternative route to certification program are mentored as they advance from the initial 3-year temporary license to the 5-year standard license.

8. Program Accountability

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

The MDE Office of the Teacher Center completes program evaluation through the implementation of the First-Year Teacher Survey. The survey includes specific questions about their mentoring and induction experience.

State law makes the MDE responsible for contracting for or carrying out evaluations of the Beginning Teacher Support Program. Evaluations must include, but are not limited to:

- Surveys of beginning teachers, mentors and district leaders to assess satisfaction;
- The amount and quality of contact time between mentors and teachers;
- The effectiveness of workshops and other training;
- The effectiveness of the mentor program in enhancing the professional development and retention of new teachers in the district;
- The desirability of extending program to students participating in graduate level teacher preparation programs; and
- The desirability of extending this assistance program to all probationary teachers. [Mississippi Code § 37-9-213]

9. Teaching Conditions

States 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 formal standards for teaching and learning conditions.

Links

Mississippi Department of Education — Office of the Teacher Center: [http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/OTC/TMP](http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/OTC/TMP)


The Mississippi Department of Education has reviewed this state summary.

This information is accurate as of February 2016.