State Policy Review: New Educator Induction

Nebraska

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 new teachers or school 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 law requires local mentor teacher programs to “identify criteria for selecting excellent, experienced, and qualified teachers to be participants.” [N.R.S. 79-761]. The state’s Mentor Teacher Program Requirements defines basic requirements to qualify as a mentor. [NAC 92-26 §§ 002.12, 004.01-03]. However, currently no state funds are appropriated so the program and its requirements are not in effect.

Nebraska Mentor Teacher Program Requirements include a written plan that contains, among other elements, “provisions for mentor preparation and support.” [NAC 92-26 § 003.04]. However, currently no state funds are appropriated so the program and its requirements are not in effect.

The program requirements do not specifically address caseload of beginning teachers to mentor.

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

Nebraska Mentor Teacher Program Requirements require “structured and planned contacts between the mentor and the first-year teacher [NAC 92-26 § 003.03]. More specifically, they require the provision of time for the mentor and first year teacher to meet, observe one another’s classroom teaching as well as the teaching of other teachers, and analyze and discuss the teaching of students [NAC 92-26 § 003.05]. However, currently no state funds are appropriated, so the program and its requirements are not in effect.

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.

Nebraska Mentor Teacher Program Requirements include a needs assessment to determine the needs of the first-year teachers [NAC 92-26 § 003.06]. However, currently no state funds are appropriated, so the program and its requirements are not in effect.

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

Nebraska does not have formal induction program standards, but state law requires the State Board of Education to “develop guidelines for mentor teacher programs in local systems in order to provide ongoing support for individuals entering the teaching profession.” [Nebraska Revised Statute (N.R.S.) 79-761]. The state’s Mentor Teacher Program Requirements and Mentor Teacher Program Promising Practices Guidelines articulate certain program design requirements and suggested best practices. [92 Nebraska Administrative Code (NAC) Chapter 26]. However, because no state funds are appropriated to the program, its requirements are not in effect.

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 have dedicated state 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 make participation in an induction program a requirement 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.

Nebraska Mentor Teacher Program Requirements include a program evaluation component to measure the effectiveness of the mentoring program [NAC 92-26 § 003.07]. However, currently no state funds are appropriated, so the program and its requirements are not in effect.

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 Nebraska Department of Education has reviewed this state summary.

This information is accurate as of February 2016.