State Policy Review: New Educator Induction

New York

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.

New York requires teachers to receive induction support during their first year of employment. Employing districts are responsible for providing mentoring to new teachers and must incorporate the design and planning of such support into their professional development plan. [8 New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) §§ 80-3.4 and 100.2]

The state also facilitates the Mentor Teacher Internship Program. This program is a competitive grant process that provides funding to districts and instructional programs at Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) for supporting effective mentoring and induction of beginning teachers in their first or second year of teaching. (Regulations of the Commissioner of Education – Part 85)

The state requires new school building leaders to participate in a mentoring program during their first year of employment. [8 NYCRR §§ 80-3.10]

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 requires that each school district maintain a mentor selection procedure that is published and available upon request. [8 NYCRR § 100.2]

State regulations governing the Mentor Teacher Internship Program (MTIP) define as mentor a teacher who: (A) is permanently certified or licensed in the same certificate/license area as the intern; (B) has demonstrated his or her mastery of pedagogical and subject matter skills; (C) has given evidence of superior teaching abilities and interpersonal relationship qualities; and (D) has indicated willingness to participate by being a mentor in an approved mentor teacher-internship program. If a school district or BOCES certifies “that an appropriately certified mentor is not available, a teacher permanently certified or licensed in a different area…than that of the intern, may serve as a mentor.” Further, a teacher may not serve as a mentor in the MTIP program for more than two out of five consecutive school years. [8 NYCRR § 85.1] A district’s or BOCES’s MTIP application and plan must address “the process and criteria for the selection of mentors for interns, including the selection of persons eligible to serve as mentors from a list of eligible persons developed by a selection committee composed of certified or licensed personnel employed by the school district or BOCES, a majority of whom shall be classroom teachers. Such classroom teachers shall be chosen by the certified or recognized teachers employee organizations representing teachers in the school district or board of cooperative educational services whenever such organizations exist.” [8 NYCRR § 85.2]

Guidelines for Implementing District-Based Teacher Mentoring Programs, developed by the New York State Education Department (NYSED), provide some criteria and processes to support best practice in selecting mentors. They suggest that mentors be selected based on a number of skills and dispositions, including: (A) mastery of pedagogical skills; (B) content knowledge; (C) teaching experience; (D) interpersonal skills; and (E) a willingness to serve as a mentor. Particular consideration should be given to teachers with National Board certification, or locally recognized teachers of excellence. Further, the Guidelines suggest that districts that have experience with teacher mentoring can add other local criteria such as leadership qualities, organizational skills, experience with informal mentoring, and positive attitude toward professional growth. The Guidelines also suggest additional research-based attributes, including self-confidence, enthusiasm for teaching, and the ability to see many different ways to accomplish a purpose or goal. They also speak to the selection process, suggesting that it is often best conducted by a carefully balanced committee of experienced educators, with criteria and procedures that are clearly articulated to the public. They underscore the importance of ensuring an open and thoughtful process for selection.

State policy requires professional development for mentors, including but not limited to such topics as adult learning theory, teacher development theory, elements of a mentoring relationship, peer coaching, and time management. [8 NYCRR § 100.2]

A district’s or BOCES’s MTIP application and plan must provide “a description of the training to be provided to mentors including a description of the extent to which this training will be coordinated with the district staff development program.” [8 NYCRR § 85.2]

Guidelines for Implementing District-Based Teacher Mentoring Programs suggest specific methods to deliver required training. For example, it can be offered as formal courses of preparation (i.e. those offered by colleges, teacher centers, school districts, or consortia offerings). The Guidelines suggest that mentor support groups or monthly mentor meetings are important as ongoing sources of support for mentors. In addition, they suggest...
that mentors’ participation in such activities can partially fulfill the continuing professional development requirements for the maintenance of professional certification.

State policy restricts the teaching load of a mentor participating in the MTIP program to “no more than a 90 percent classroom instruction assignment but at least a 60 percent classroom instruction assignment.” [8 NYCRR § 85.1]

Guidelines for Implementing District-Based Teacher Mentoring Programs suggest a few things to consider in the new teacher/mentor relationship. They suggest that the relationship should be characterized as professional, flexible, trustful, mutually educational and entailing sustained, frequent contact. Districts should support the establishment of the mentoring relationship in a number of ways, including arranging for initiation of the relationship, e.g., joint orientation, common training or social events early in the school year; scheduling; and establishing a process to allow for adjustments in mentor/mentee pairing.

3. Time

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

The state requires programs to outline time allocation for mentoring activities, such as common planning time, release from instructional or non-instructional duties, before and after school, and summer orientation sessions. [8 NYCRR § 100.2] Guidelines for Implementing District-Based Teacher Mentoring Programs offer suggestions for how to ensure contact time between mentors and new teachers, including providing release time from instructional duties for both parties.

A district’s or BOCES’s MTIP application and plan must address “the portion of time each intern will have direct contact with the mentor.” [8 NYCRR § 85.2]

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.

State regulations provide that mentor activities may include but should not be limited to: modeling instruction, observation, and lesson planning with the new teacher; team teaching; peer coaching; and orientation of the new teacher to school culture. [8 NYCRR § 100.2]

Guidelines for Implementing District-Based Teacher Mentoring Programs suggest that time allotted for mentoring may include but shall not be limited to scheduling common planning sessions, releasing the mentor and the new teacher from a portion of their instructional and/or non-instructional duties, and providing time for mentoring during superintendent conference days, before and after the school day, and during summer orientation sessions.

A district’s or BOCES’s MTIP application and plan must address: (A) how the needs of the interns for training and support will be assessed; (B) the training and professional support to be provided to the interns, which may include, but shall not be limited to, participation in the district or BOCES staff development program, a teacher resource and computer training center or a post-secondary institution program; and (C) how the mentors will guide and support their interns, including the portion of time each intern will have direct contact with the mentor. The role of the mentor does not include supervision or evaluation of the intern, and information obtained by a mentor through interaction with an intern may not inform the intern’s evaluation. [8 NYCRR § 85.2]

5. Program Standards

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

The state’s Guidelines for Implementing District-Based Teacher Mentoring Programs articulate initial steps, program components, program design, and references. The Guidelines focus on a number of mentoring program components, including: (1) Program development; (2) Role of the mentor; (3) Mentor selection; (4) Mentoring activities; (5) Mentor preparation and development; (6) Time allocation; and (7) Record keeping requirements. In addition, they provide a number of suggestions for building effective relationships between the new teacher and the mentor, the principal and others within the school and educational community (i.e., universities, etc.). They also suggest other elements of program design, including program coordination, program evaluation, the role of teacher assessment, and adjustments to mentor-teacher pairings.

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 universal funding for local induction programs.

In 2013, the state provided $2 million in funding for a competitive grant called the Mentor Teacher Internship Program (MTIP). During the 2013-2014 school year, 29 school districts and BOCES were awarded MTIP funding. This funding is subject to annual appropriations by the State Legislature.
7. Educator Certification/Licensure

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

New teachers (holders of Initial and Conditional Initial certificates) must receive mentoring support during their first year in order to advance to the next level of licensure. An exception to this requirement is made for newly licensed educators who have at least two years of teaching or educational leadership service prior to receiving their certificate. [NYSED – Mentoring Requirement for Certification]

8. Program Accountability

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

The state does not assess or monitor induction program quality statewide. However, Guidelines for Implementing District-Based Teacher Mentoring Programs encourage and provide key questions to support local program evaluation. In addition, the Guidelines require district programs to maintain documentation of mentoring activities, including names and teacher certificate numbers of mentors and teachers served, type of mentoring activities, and the number of clock hours of mentoring provided to each new teacher.

A district’s or BOCES’s MTIP application and plan must contain “a program evaluation system,” including “criteria for assessment of mentor performance, and criteria for assessment of intern performance in areas including, but not limited to, instructional planning and management, classroom management, presentation of subject matter and communication skills.” MTIP programs must file an annual report with the NYSED that includes “the names of the interns who have successfully completed the mentor teacher-internship program and their areas of certification and licensure, the certificate titles or license areas and the number of years of teaching experience of the teachers who have served as mentors, a description of the teaching assignments of each mentor and intern, and copies of each intern’s summative evaluation form together with other evaluation and descriptive information as the commissioner may require.” [8 NYCRR § 85.2]

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

New York State Education Department — Guidelines for Implementing District-Based Teacher Mentoring Programs: http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/resteachers/guidemenprog.html

New York State Education Department—Mentor Teacher Internship Program Overview: http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/resteachers/mentorinternship.html

New York State Education Department—Mentoring Resources: http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/resteachers/teacherinduction.html

New York State Education Department—Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, Parts 80-3.3, 80-3.4, 80-3.10 and Part 100.2(dd): http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/regulations.html

The New York State Education Department reviewed an earlier version of this state summary.

This information is accurate as of January 2016.