State Policy Review: New Educator Induction

**Oregon**

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.

A 2007 state law established the Beginning Teacher and Administrator Mentoring Program, but school districts are not required to participate. The Program currently serves a minority of the state’s school districts and new teachers and administrators, with funding awarded on a competitive basis. [Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) § 329.795]

In July 2013, the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 3233 which established the Network of Quality Teaching and Learning. Among its responsibilities, the Network serves as an umbrella of support for teachers, funding key educator development initiatives state-wide, including:

- Providing educators with professional learning opportunities such as peer-to-peer training, mentoring and leadership groups;
- Supporting efforts to recruit and prepare a highly effective and diverse educator workforce;
- Forming a shared virtual space where educators can work together to learn, create and gather resources;
- Scaling up effective practices and removing barriers to implementation; and
- Providing insight on the local networks to help steer implementation.

### 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 allows districts to establish their own mentor selection process. It restricts mentors from participating in the evaluation of a beginning teacher or administrator assigned to them. [ORS § 329.815]

State law requires the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to approve training for mentors and beginning teachers and administrators in programs awarded competitive state funding. It requires the mentor training curriculum to be based on research and knowledge of the needs of beginning teachers and administrators, requires mentors to be trained to build collaborative and trusting relationships with beginning educators, and requires mentors to receive professional development before the school year begins and throughout the school year. [ORS § 329.810]

The ODE provides professional development for beginning teacher mentors and mentors of beginning administrators and project directors. The trainings focus on the New Teacher Center’s (NTC) models for teacher and school leader induction. This professional development training is provided by NTC-authorized Oregon State Presenters as well as co-presented with NTC staff.

Additionally, Oregon Mentoring Program Standards state that quality mentor programs carefully select and assign mentor/mentee partners reflective of diverse cultural characteristics and clearly defined roles. The standards state that quality mentor programs:

- Incorporate formal, rigorous and timely processes for recruitment and selection of mentors “based on culturally responsive criteria consistent with the roles and responsibilities of mentoring;”
- Define and communicate “mentor roles and responsibilities that are focused on the continuous development of teacher and administrator practice;” and
- Utilize “a standards based system of ongoing assessment for mentor growth and accountability.”

### 3. Time

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

School districts that wish to participate in the Beginning Teacher and Administrator Mentoring Program must submit a formal application that includes a description of the program outlining frequent contact, totaling a minimum of 75-90 hours, between the mentors and beginning teachers and administrators throughout the school year. [ORS § 329.800.1(b)]

### 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.

“Mentorship program” is defined in state law as “a program ... that includes, but is not limited to, direct classroom observation and consultation, assistance in instructional planning and preparation, support in implementation and delivery of classroom
instruction, development of school leadership skills and other assistance intended to assist the beginning teacher or administrator to become a confident and competent professional educator who makes a positive impact on student learning.” [ORS § 329.788]

Additionally, Oregon Mentoring Program Standards, state that quality mentor programs:

- Establish learning communities engaged in professional learning, problem-solving, and evidenced based collaborative inquiry for mentors, as well as teacher and administrator mentees;
- Ensure participants apply new learning to mentoring practice through engaging in goal-setting and reflection, implementing inquiry action plans, and analyzing data; and
- Facilitate professional learning that is guided by research, standards, culturally responsive practices, local priorities and the developmental needs of mentors, as well as teacher and administrator mentees.

5. Program Standards

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

The State Board of Education adopted Oregon Mentoring Program Standards in August 2014. The Standards describe the structures and functions, processes, and effective practices necessary for a quality program. The standards state that quality mentor programs:

- Provide structures to assure a cohesive, culturally competent system for mentoring that is supported at all levels;
- Require involved, informed and culturally responsive leaders;
- Collect data to evaluate and improve program effectiveness;
- Carefully select and assign mentor/mentee partners reflective of diverse cultural characteristics and clearly defined roles;
- Expand the knowledge and refine the practice of mentors and mentees through a collaborative, culturally responsive process, supported by research;
- Utilize a data based cycle of inquiry to assess effective, appropriate and culturally responsive instructional and leadership practices;
- Accelerate the professional practice of beginning educators to positively impact student achievement for each and every learner no matter what their national origin, race, gender, sexual orientation, differently abled, first language, or other distinguishing characteristic; and
- Foster and develop culturally competent educators.

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.

State policy stipulates that the ODE shall distribute grants-in-aid to qualifying school districts to offset the costs of beginning teacher and administrator mentorship programs. A qualifying district shall receive annually “an amount that is aligned with evidence-based best practices for beginning teachers and administrators.” If the funds are insufficient for all eligible proposals, the ODE shall award grants on a competitive basis, taking into consideration successful or promising efforts to increase the number of culturally and linguistically diverse educators hired, closing the cultural and linguistic gap between demographics of the district’s teachers and administrators and the demographics of students served by of the school district, and whether the school district is a small school district or serves a rural community, geographic and demographic diversity. [ORS § 329.805 and OAR 581-18-148]

In the 2015-2017 biennium, the Network of Quality Teaching and Learning will distribute more than $37 million in strategic investments statewide, reaching educators at all career stages. This investment includes $10 million dedicated to educator mentoring, $18 million for professional growth and development, and $8.7 million for school leadership development.

7. Education 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 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.

State law holds the ODE responsible for the regular and ongoing evaluation of educator mentoring programs. The law reserves 2.5 percent of program funding for evaluation. It may include assessments of: (1) The effectiveness of the mentorship program in the retention of beginning teachers and administrators in the school district and in the profession; and (2) Student performance on statewide and other assessments. [ORS § 329.820]

Additionally, Oregon Mentoring Program Standards state that quality mentor programs purposefully and systematically collects data, using multiple measures, to demonstrate implementation, impact, and areas for continuous improvement. These programs also continuously and systematically share evaluation findings with stakeholders to inform decision-making and accountability.
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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 formal standards for teaching and learning conditions. However, in 2014, Oregon worked with the New Teacher Center to administer the first Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) Oregon Survey, a statewide online survey of school-based, licensed surveys includes 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. NTC’s Teaching and Learning Conditions Initiative consists of two parts: 1) the anonymous, online survey about teaching conditions in year one, and 2) working with the client in year two to utilize results from the survey in school improvement planning and policies.

Schools and districts that reached determined participation thresholds in the survey received school- and district-level data and used it to inform school improvement plans. TELL data is also used to evaluate new teacher support in the state. NTC continues to work with the ODE and the Chief Education Office to continue the state’s efforts on improving teaching conditions, including through the administration of the 2016 TELL Oregon Survey. The 2015-2017 biennial state budget provides ongoing funding for the TELL Survey.

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

Chalkboard Project—Oregon Mentoring Program: http://chalkboardproject.org/what-we-do/oregon-mentoring-program

House Bill 3233—https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2013R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB3233/Enrolled

Oregon Department of Education—Mentoring: http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=2218

Oregon Mentoring Program Standards—http://www.ode.state.or.us/opportunities/grants/nclb/title_ii/a_teacherquality/oregon-mentoring-program-standards.pdf


Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) Oregon—www.telloregon.org


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

The Oregon Department of Education has reviewed this state summary.

This information is accurate as of January 2016.