



# State Policy Review: New Educator Induction South Dakota

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 new teachers to receive induction support. A 2002 state law established a program to provide for mentor teachers in school districts that elect to participate. "Participation in the program is discretionary with each school district according to a mentor teacher plan adopted by the school board for the school district." [South Dakota Codified Laws 13-43-55.1] Such programs may serve beginning teachers who have "taught fewer than 90 consecutive days, or 180 days total." [South Dakota Administrative Rules (SDAR) 24:41:01:01]

The South Dakota Department of Education also operates the WoLakota Mentoring Program, a statewide mentoring program that allows for both face-to-face and virtual mentoring. It serves a limited number of schools and districts with priority given to remote districts on and near the state's Indian Reservations, or with large proportions of Native American students. The state also operates a mentoring program for teachers engaged in the National Board certification process. A limited number of schools and districts are served, with a priority given to those districts without mentoring programs.

The state does not require new 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.

The state requires mentor teachers to have a minimum amount of teaching experience and a teaching license. Specifically, state policy requires that a mentor teacher must: (1) Have at least five years verified teaching experience with at least one of those years being within the past seven years, or have at least five years teaching experience and can document experience within the past seven years in an educational field relative to the five Core Propositions of the National Board Professional Teaching Standards; and (2) a valid or expired teaching certificate or license. [SDAR 24:41:01:01] In addition, state policy requires assigned mentors to have "demonstrated mastery of teaching skills and subject matter knowledge." [SDAR 24:41:02:01]

State policy does not require training or ongoing professional development for mentors nor does it address mentor assignment or caseload.

The state uses a rigorous process to select mentors in state-sponsored mentoring programs, and requires mentor teachers to complete three college courses to become a state qualified mentor. Mentors and mentees participating in the state's WoLakota program receive ongoing support and training and are carefully matched up to ensure no one caseload is too heavy.

## 3. Time

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

State policy does not address time for mentoring activities at the local level.

For teachers participating in state-sponsored mentoring programs, school districts are reimbursed the cost of substitute to allow for release time of participating teachers.

## 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.

The state mentor teacher program offers "formal assistance ... provided by a mentor teacher to a beginning teacher that includes 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." [SDAR 24:41:01:01] State policy requires that any participating school district must have "a plan for a mentoring program," but does not specify required components of that plan. [SDAR 24:41:03:01]

## 5. Program Standards

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

The state does not have formal program standards for teacher induction programs.

## 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 teacher induction or mentoring.

## 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 participation in an induction program for the purposes of teacher licensure.

## 8. Program Accountability

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

The state does not assess or evaluate induction program quality.

## 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.

### Links

South Dakota Administrative Rules, Article 24:41, Mentoring: <http://legis.sd.gov/Rules/DisplayRule.aspx?Rule=24:41>

South Dakota Codified Laws, Title 13, Education: [http://legis.sd.gov/Statutes/Codified\\_Laws/default.aspx](http://legis.sd.gov/Statutes/Codified_Laws/default.aspx)

South Dakota Department of Education WoLakota Mentoring Program: <http://www.wolakotaproject.org/wolakota-mentoring-program/>

*The South Dakota Department of Education has reviewed this state summary.*

*This information is accurate as of February 2016. It is important to note that pending legislation and certification changes may significantly impact the way that mentoring and support look in the state.*

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