State Policy Review: New Educator Induction

**Utah**

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’s Entry Years Enhancement (EYE) in Quality Teaching program provides all new teachers induction support during their first three years in the profession. Utah state law authorizes “a well defined program of evaluation and mentoring for beginning teachers” as part of a statewide teacher career ladder system. [Utah Code 53A-9-103(5)]

State policy requires first-year school administrators to “complete a one school year mentoring experience established and supervised by the employing school district or charter school.” [Utah Administrative Code (UAC) Rule R277-505-4.C]

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 that, where possible, a mentor be a career educator with at least three years of educational experience. [Utah Code 53A-10-108] Utah Administrative Code R277-522 requires that mentors hold a Utah Professional Educator’s Level 2 or 3 license and have completed a mentor training program including continuing professional development.

State law requires principals (or immediate supervisors) to assign new teachers a mentor who “performs substantially the same duties” in the first semester of teaching. The mentor may not serve as an evaluator of the new teacher. Mentor teachers “teach in the same school, and where feasible, in the same subject area” as the new teacher. [Utah Code 53A-10-108] State policy does not address the issue of mentor caseload.

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 release time for teacher mentors or mentor-new teacher contact time.

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.

State law requires teacher mentors to assist new teachers “to become effective and competent in the teaching profession and school system.” [Utah Code 53A-10-108] Utah Administrative Code R277-522 prescribes specific duties for a teacher mentor: (1) Guide new teachers to meet the procedural demands of the school and school district; (2) Provide moral and emotional support; (3) Arrange for opportunities for the new teacher to observe teachers who use various models of teaching; (4) Share personal knowledge and expertise about new materials, planning strategies, curriculum development and teaching methods; (5) Assist the new teacher with classroom management and discipline; (6) Support new teachers on an ongoing basis; (7) Help new teachers understand the implications of student diversity for teaching and learning; (8) Engage the new teacher in self-assessment and reflection; and (9) Assist with development of new teacher’s portfolio.

5. **Program Standards**

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

The EYE Mentor Standards and Continuum of Mentor Development provides a framework for mentors and promotes beginning teacher and mentor learning. The five mentor standards are: (1) Develops positive relationships and networks that support the beginning teacher in the learning community; (2) Articulates and models best practices in content and pedagogy; (3) Responds to the unique and diverse needs of the beginning teacher; (4) Consults, collaborates, and coaches to promote reflective practice; and (5) Guides development of the beginning teacher’s professionalism and ethical standards.
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 the state’s Entry Years Enhancement program or 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 requires all new teachers to fulfill the requirements of the Entry Years Enhancement program to advance from a Level 1 to a Level 2 professional license. Specifically, all new teachers must satisfactorily collaborate with a trained mentor, pass a required pedagogical exam (Praxis II), complete three years of employment and evaluation, and compile a working portfolio. In addition, school districts are required to evaluate all beginning teachers two times per year and provide feedback, and assistance with any deficiencies. A full evaluation is conducted including multiple observations, measures of student growth, and stakeholder input. Beginning teachers are expected to attain the ‘Effective’ level of performance by the end of their third year of service. [UAC Rule R277-522-3]

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 conduct a formal evaluation of the Entry Years Enhancement (EYE) program, although informal program monitoring does occur during regular EYE coordinator meetings.

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, and the state has not fielded a survey of teaching and learning conditions.

Links


The Utah State Office of Education has reviewed this state summary.

This information is accurate as of January 2016.