



## Beginning Teacher Support Program Plan 2021-2022

### Introduction

In accordance with Policy TCED-016, the State requires that each LEA develop an annual plan and provide a comprehensive program of support for beginning teachers. The plan must have Board of Education approval and must meet the Beginning Teacher Support Program Standards. Additionally, the plan must demonstrate that it is aligned to the standards and assessed according to the continuum.

The Beginning Teacher Support Program includes initially licensed classroom teachers who hold an Initial license during their first, second and third years of the required induction period. All beginning teachers (BTs) receive a multi-layered system of support in Cabarrus County, including an assigned mentor, a Lead Mentor, administrators, the Beginning Teacher Coordinator and central office staff. The Cabarrus County School System holds a strong commitment to the support of our new teachers, and we believe that our Beginning Teacher Support program reflects this commitment. We know that it is vital for new teachers to feel honored, appreciated, and supported, and we have designed a plan that offers these things to our teachers. The plan design meets or exceeds all the current state and federal requirements, thereby facilitating the recurring audit process.

### A. Program Administration

The Department of Human Resources of Cabarrus County Schools is responsible for the Beginning Teacher Support Program. The Human Resources Director and Beginning Teacher Coordinator work together to ensure that all BTs receive the support needed throughout the year; however, our plan begins at the school level with core staff members who offer support on site.

1. When a BT is hired, the principal assigns a mentor to the BT based on licensure, proximity and state requirements. The mentor must display the qualities of an effective mentor. **(See Mentor Contract.)** The mentor is a crucial support for the BT because the mentor talks with the mentee daily/weekly and helps the BT to problem solve.
2. Another level of support is the Lead Mentor. The Lead Mentor provides support to BTs as well as mentors and serves as a liaison among BTs, mentors and administrators. At each school the Lead Mentor, in conjunction with the principal, plans a school orientation for the BTs' first days at the school. Additionally, the Lead Mentor may offer professional development for BTs if he/she recognizes the need among the mentees. **(See Lead Mentor Contract.)**
3. The final level of support is directly from administration. The principal or his/her designee is directly responsible for ensuring that BTs receive the necessary training and assistance to make them successful teachers. Therefore, at each school a BT has support from an assigned mentor, a Lead Mentor and an administrator.

### **B. Process for identifying and verifying all beginning teachers (BTs)**

The licensure specialists identify Beginning Teachers and verify that their teaching assignment is in the area of their licensure upon hiring approval. This information is then entered into our Human Resources Management System (HRMS). Teachers who do not have a clear license due to testing requirements or those who are residency/lateral entry are monitored by the licensure specialist. Teachers must follow the NCSBE requirements for all required licensure tests. Teachers who do not meet the state requirements based on state deadlines are not employed the following school year.

The Beginning Teacher Coordinator works with the licensure specialists to verify BT status. The Beginning Teacher Coordinator communicates with both the Lead Mentors and Principals at each school the status of Beginning Teachers.

When a beginning teacher resigns, he/she is asked to complete an exit survey to determine the reason for resigning. This information is compiled for the annual teacher turnover report by the Information Systems Administrator.

### **C. BT Orientation and Induction process**

Cabarrus County Schools provides a meaningful three-year induction process for our beginning teachers. This includes a thorough orientation, a commitment from our principals of required working conditions, mentor selection, mentor training and mentor assignment. Principals and mentors work with teachers to help them development purposeful professional development plans which help them grow as an educator. A variety of professional development opportunities are offered to beginning teachers.

The Cabarrus County School System offers a formal orientation for new teachers for three days prior to the first official teacher workday, planned and implemented by the Director of Human Resources, Beginning Teacher Coordinator and Curriculum and Instruction Personnel. Additional training requirements for BTs are delivered through Safe Schools. See 2021-2022 Orientation Schedule for details. The orientation consists of training which includes:

- an overview of procedures and policies for Cabarrus County Schools
- review of State Board of Education's Mission and Goals
- an overview of professional development opportunities offered
- discussions about the Code of Ethics for North Carolina Educators
- legal briefing and drug free workplace required modules
- technology and finance briefing required modules
- training in system-wide curriculum initiatives including but not limited to NC Standard Course of Study, Understanding by Design, curriculum documents and Professional Learning Communities
- classroom management sessions
- a review of the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards, information on teacher observations and evaluations, an introduction to the Professional Development Plan
- an overview of the BTSP and teacher licensure process in North Carolina, including the working conditions guidelines and process for achieving a continuing license
- review of the safe and appropriate use of seclusion and restraint of students
- an overview of the support services available to new teachers

All new teachers receive the following materials:

- A copy of the book *The First Days of School* by Harry Wong (if the BT does not own a copy of this book)
- A copy of the book *Teach Like a Champion 2.0* by Doug Lemov (if the BT does not own a copy of this book)
- A Cabarrus County Schools New Teacher Canvas Course and webpage which include: tips for new teachers, State and Local Policies, NC Professional Teaching Standards, the North Carolina Teacher Code of Ethics, and other supplementary materials

A school level orientation is held during the teacher workdays and time is designated for new teachers to work with their mentor and lead mentor.

New teacher orientation is highlighted by meals and gifts sponsored by organizations such as CCEF and other businesses and organizations in the community.

First year licensed teachers hired after the orientation are required to attend a make-up orientation. This orientation includes a brief overview of the topics covered in the three-day orientation. These teachers receive additional information in Safe Schools and Canvas. These teachers are then invited to come to the orientation the following August.

First year residency teachers hired after the orientation are required to attend a ten-day orientation, with a minimum of five days prior to beginning in the classroom. This ten-day orientation includes self-paced modules designed to cover the material in the August orientation, NCEES courses, multiple days of classroom observations, as well as meetings with a school level administrator, lead mentor, mentor and technology facilitator.

Attendees are required to submit an electronic attendance sheet for each session of orientation.

#### **D. Optimum Working Conditions for Beginning Teachers**

The administration of Cabarrus County Schools offers full support for our beginning teachers. Principals sign an agreement ensuring that new teachers will be given optimum working conditions, including limited non-instructional duties, a fair schedule, a qualified mentor assigned early and in close proximity, and adequate resources for teaching. In addition, the agreement ensures beginning teachers are given a limited number of exceptional or difficult students and no extracurricular assignments unless requested by the beginning teachers. As instructional leader, the principal assures that new teachers will also be given adequate assistance and support needed throughout the three-year licensure process. (See **Building Level Assurances and Extra-Curricular Activities Form**.)

#### **E. Mentor Teacher Selection, Training and Assignment**

Because of the integral role of the mentor in fostering the growth of new teachers and the importance of the mentor's role in teacher retention, exceptional care is given to the choice of mentors at each school.

To ensure mentors meet the state requirements according to TCED-016, teachers interested in serving as a mentor must first complete a mentor application. The application includes verification the mentor meets requirements from their most recent summative evaluation. Principals must sign off and submit the application to the Beginning Teacher Coordinator for final verification. Based upon the applications, school administrators select mentors meeting the criteria who will serve as great role models and mentors for the beginning teachers.

Mentors are asked to sign a contract stating they understand their position and the work and commitment associated with serving as a mentor. As much as possible, mentors are paired with new teachers who teach the same grade level and/or subject area. **(See Mentor Standards, Mentor Contracts, and Lead Mentor Contracts.)**

Mentors of first, second and third-year teachers receive support from the LEA and at their individual school site throughout their mentor tenure. All mentors are required to receive mentor training. Training is self-paced and offered virtually through the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System (NCEES). Mentor training focuses on an understanding of the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards and the North Carolina Mentor Standards and Mentor Continuum. Mentors are also invited to participate in on-going professional development through a Canvas Course.

Throughout the school year, information from the HR Department is disseminated to the lead mentor. Lead mentors serve as the school-based facilitator to beginning teachers, mentors, and administrators. The Beginning Teacher Coordinator meets annually with the lead mentors prior to the start of the school year. Lead Mentors then meet with mentors at the beginning of each school year to review guidelines and expectations. Additional meetings with mentors and beginning teachers are scheduled periodically during the year.

Lead Mentors are assigned at each school to offer additional training and support of mentors. Lead mentors work with school administration to determine the professional development needed for mentors and beginning teachers. Lead mentors hold meetings with mentors and beginning teachers.

Currently, no funding is appropriated through the state budget to compensate mentors. CCS has provided two days of flex time for our mentors and lead mentors to recognize their investment of time in training our beginning teachers.

#### **F. Principal Support**

Beginning teachers and their mentors receive continuous support from the principal and other school-based administrators. Each principal selects the lead mentor from his/her school, designates an administrator to work directly with the new teachers, and participates in the planning for the site-based orientation. The principal's signature is required on the contracts for mentors and the lead mentor as an acknowledgement of his/her support for the mentor program. The Beginning Teacher Coordinator and lead mentors dialogue with principals to ensure they are making the necessary arrangements for mentors to observe beginning teachers during the school year. The Beginning Teacher Coordinator also facilitates problem-solving for principals and lead mentors regarding any difficult mentor-mentee situations.

### **G. Process for observations and summative evaluations on all BTs**

In compliance with the SBE policy (Teacher Performance Appraisal process), General Statute and HB 1030 all beginning teachers are observed four times during each school year and evaluated annually. One of these is a peer observation, and three are by a qualified school administrator. The NC Rubric for Evaluating Teachers is used for observations and evaluation. Principals are required to complete the summative evaluation of all beginning teachers. Principals are encouraged to provide opportunities for new teachers to observe their mentor and other teachers, for each mentor to have release time to observe his/her mentee, and for peer observers to complete the official peer observations. Substitutes are provided to allow each beginning teacher the opportunity to observe his or her mentor (or another experienced teacher) for a minimum of one class period. An observation timeline is provided to school administrators to ensure that observations are completed and appropriately spaced throughout the school year (**See Teacher Evaluation Requirements**).

### **H. Beginning Teacher Professional Development Plans**

One session of New Teacher Orientation is devoted to training beginning teachers on the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation process including Professional Development Plans (PDPs). All school-based mentors and lead mentors also receive specific training in PDP preparation.

Mentors work with beginning teachers to develop SMART goals aligned with the teacher evaluation standards to include in the beginning teacher's PDP. Each teacher is required to have a minimum of two SMART goals aligned to two different teacher evaluation standards. These goals are reviewed by the mentor and a school administrator.

PDPs are maintained in the electronic teacher evaluation tool and are to be reviewed and discussed minimally at the beginning, middle, and end of the year with the teacher by both the mentor and school administrator. The beginning teacher, administrator, mentor, and central office administrators have access to the PDP in the electronic evaluation tool.

Both principals and mentors review and sign PDPs at the beginning of the year, mid-year and upon completion. At the end of the school year, the principal reviews the PDP with the beginning teacher during the summary evaluation conference.

The Beginning Teacher Coordinator reviews the PDPs for each beginning teacher to ensure mentors and administrators have reviewed and signed the PDP at the beginning of the year, mid-year and end-of-year. Principals and principal evaluators receive reports throughout the year from the Information Systems Administrator which include information regarding PDP requirements and completion.

### **I. Professional Development**

All beginning teachers are required to attend the professional development sessions during orientation. Based upon observations, PDP goals and growth areas, school administrators may choose to assign specific professional development to beginning teachers. School administrators may assign professional development modules in NCEES or professional development offered by the district.

In addition, the Curriculum and Instruction Department will provide professional development for first-year teachers in the areas of Math, English Language Arts, Science and Social Studies. The Exceptional Children's department will provide professional development for Exceptional Children BTs.

Cabarrus County Schools is also partnering with the NC New Teacher Support Program to provide additional support to first year residency teachers. Through this program, residency teachers will work with an instructional coach a minimum of once per week throughout the school year and will be provided with additional professional development designed specifically for their needs. Residency teachers receive a copy of the book *The First-Year Teacher's Survival Guide* by Julia G. Thompson which is referenced in the additional support sessions.

**J. Beginning Teacher Personnel File**

The Beginning Teacher Coordinator maintains an electronic file at the central office for each beginning teacher. Copies of required mentor applications, mentor contracts, orientation checklists, quarterly checklists, building level assurance forms, and extra-curricular forms are stored in this file during all three years of the teacher's initial licensure. Electronic files of observations, evaluations, and PDPs are maintained in the electronic evaluation tool. These files are made available to auditors during the LEA's Title II visit.

**K. Timely Transfer of BT File to Successive LEA**

Upon receiving a written request from a new employer, CCS copies and provides the requested and required documentation within ten business days to the new employer for the beginning teacher to continue and complete his/her induction period.

**L. Plan for participation in BTSP Monitoring and the Annual Peer Review Process**

The Beginning Teacher Coordinator ensures compliance with the BTSP Monitoring requirements and annual peer review process. The Beginning Teacher Coordinator provides the BTSP Monitoring Team and Regional Educational Facilitator with requested information for the five-year BTSP Monitoring visit. Under the leadership of the Regional Education Facilitator, the BTSP review process takes place during the ILCC Meetings for Beginning Teacher Coordinators.

**M. Completion of the Recent Graduate Survey**

The Beginning Teacher Coordinator ensures completion of the Recent Graduate Survey by the beginning teacher and completion of the Employer Survey by the principal during the BT's first year of teaching.

**N. Board of Education Approval**

The Cabarrus County Schools Board of Education approves the Beginning Teacher Support Program plan annually, and it is on file for review at the district office and the CCS website.

BTSP Coordinator:  Date: 8/9/2021  
School Board Chair:  Date: 8-9-21  
Approved by the local School Board Date: August 9, 2021  
Submitted to NCDPI Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Approved by NCDPI Date: \_\_\_\_\_