



Mentoring & Induction Plan

Kerri Nelson

SHENANDOAH COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

2016-17 Mentoring and Induction Plan

281—83.3(284) Mentoring and induction program for beginning teachers.

District Shenandoah CSD

District Facilitator Marcia Johnson & Monte Munsinger

Mentoring and Induction Program goals

1. To promote excellence in teaching as described in the Iowa Teaching Standards
2. To enhance student achievement
3. To build a supportive environment for beginning educators
4. To increase the retention of promising beginning educators
5. To promote the personal and professional well being of classroom teachers
6. To support continuous improvement and growth of beginning educators and mentors.
7. To prepare experienced educators to serve as mentors

Please provide a description of each of these required components of the district or AEA M & I plan:

1. **A two year sequence of content and activities designed to support a beginning teacher’s professional and personal needs by**
 - Developing and enhancing competencies for the Iowa Teaching Standards, and
 - Providing research-based instructional strategies, and
 - Reflecting the needs of the beginning teacher employed by the district or area education agency.
- **Developing and enhancing competencies in the Iowa Teaching Standards** The conversations and work of the beginning educator and mentor focus on the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria by examining and reflecting student and teacher performance. The Journey to Excellence Professional Learning Projects develop and enhance competencies for future practice by examining performance and providing a path for growth and improvement. Each professional learning opportunity encourages beginning educators to identify current levels of performance prior to and upon completion of the learning project. The levels of performance found in *A Framework for Understanding the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria* are defined by Charlotte Danielson’s *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*. The flexibility of the learning project allows the beginning educator to shape her/his learning and growth. These learning projects assist beginning educators in improving and enhancing instructional decision making based on student results. They are designed to allow each beginning educator and mentor to apply the process through consultation, collaboration, or coaching to meet beginning educator’s needs.
- **Providing research-based instructional strategies** The action research process in the Learning Projects sets the path for growth through examining instructional connections to student learning. “Mentoring conversations provide a focus on internal and external data that are individually and collaboratively interpreted and translated into meaningful and thoughtful classroom activity.” (Lipton & Wellman, 2003). A mentoring program works with other district initiatives. Through planning, observing, collecting data and reflecting the beginning teacher implements research-based instructional strategies linked to the Iowa Teaching Standards (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6) and examine outcomes.
- **Reflecting the needs of the beginning teacher employed by the district or area education agency.** *Mentoring Matters/Journey to Excellence* training for mentors addresses the personal and professional needs of the beginning educator as described in the research of Ellen Moir as the Phases of First Year Teaching. The interactions with beginning teachers are ongoing and focus on the [Phases of a New Teacher](#): Anticipation (August), Survival (September & October), Disillusionment (November to January), Rejuvenation (February – March), Reflection (April – May) and Anticipation. In their first year beginning teachers will receive an overview to Journey to Excellence including program expectations for the beginning educator, an introduction to the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria, and a presentation of the Iowa Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics developed by the Board of Educational Examiners. A successful program will be integral to the implementation of other district initiatives. Additionally, the

district will inform the beginning teacher on district procedures, professional development initiatives and other support for beginning educators included in the TLC Plan. Throughout this two year sequence beginning teachers are becoming reflective practitioners and continuing professional learning.

2. Mentor training that is designed to reflect effective staff development practices and adult professional needs and includes, at a minimum

- Research that describes the personal and professional needs of beginning teachers,
 - A clear description of the roles and responsibilities of the mentor,
 - Strategies to enhance the mentor’s ability to provide guidance and support to beginning teachers,
 - Skills needed for classroom demonstration and coaching, and
 - District expectations for beginning teacher competence in Iowa teaching standards.
- **Research that describes the personal and professional needs of beginning teachers** The interactions with mentors are ongoing and focus on the [Phases of a New Teacher](#): Anticipation (August), Survival (September & October), Disillusionment (November to January), Rejuvenation (February – March), Reflection (April – May) and Anticipation. Mentors are provided with additional resources to recognize and meet beginning teacher’s needs, including a Calendar of Options that offers a menu of activities correlated with the developmental phases (Moir) and Frances Fuller’s stages of concern. Also included is a generational overview and the impact of various demographics in the workplace.
 - **A clear description of the roles and responsibilities of the mentor**, Journey to Excellence training addresses the roles of mentor as consultant, collaborator, coach and growth-agent. Mentors are expected to:
 - Complete the Mentoring Matters/Journey to Excellence mentor training and preparation
 - Guide the beginning educator through the Professional Learning Projects
 - Provide assistance to the beginning educator as needed
 - Meet with the beginning educator at least weekly
 - Attend District mentor support meetings
 - Complete program evaluation surveys and progress reports
 - Develop a trusting relationship with the beginning educator and keep beginning educator’s concerns and issues confidential. (Except child abuse or other criminal-type of behavior)
 - Inform and help prepare the beginning educator for upcoming events such as open-house, parent-teacher conferences, grade reports, and etc.
 - **Strategies to enhance the mentor’s ability to provide guidance and support to beginning teachers.** Each mentor needs extensive, ongoing training and support. To prepare mentors, *Mentoring Matters: Learning-focused Conversations* and the accompanying *Learning-focused Mentoring, A Professional Development Resource Kit* are used. The eight modules provide awareness and skill development for mentors, including:
 - The Mentor as Growth Agent: Developing Learning-Focused Relationships
 - A Continuum of Learning–Focused Interaction
 - Maximizing Time and Attention by Attending Fully
 - Purposeful Paraphrasing
 - Crafting Mediational Questions
 - Planning, Reflecting and Problem-Solving ConversationsAlso included are Strategies for Success, extensions and enhancements of the mentoring relationship and Structured Tools and Forms.

Six days of training are held over two years for the mentor, four days the first year and two days the second year. Using best teaching practices, mentors are trained for their role of supporting and guiding beginning teachers. Interactive and in-depth, the training also offers opportunities for mentors to reflect on their own practice as they provide guidance to beginning teachers. Mentors leave with a set of materials and skills designed to effectively structure conversations about teaching practice related to the

Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria. An annual renewal learning experience, an Update Day, will be provided to experienced mentors.

- **Skills needed for classroom demonstration and coaching,** Mentor training develops skills in teacher observation, adult learning, classroom management; practice for reflective questioning and coaching; an understanding of the change process and phases of development; and strategies for guiding and supporting beginning teachers including social and emotional support. The skills for coaching, collaboration and consulting are the centerpiece of the training of mentors. The conversation templates (goal-setting, planning, problem-solving) are guidelines for purposeful interactions based on theories of learning (Marzano, 2000; Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 1999; Lipton & Wellman, 2003). Opportunities for video observation, practice and feedback are included in the mentor training.
- **District expectations for beginning teacher competence in Iowa teaching standards.** Assisting the mentor in clarifying, communicating and reinforcing district expectations of performance for the beginning educator to show competency in the Iowa teaching standards and ultimately achieve a Standard license in the state of Iowa. Throughout the training mentors explore the depth of the Iowa teaching standards and criteria by identifying examples, connections, applications, pitfalls, and resources available to the support the beginning educators growth and competency.

3. A process for mentor application and selection.

The selection of the mentor is an important component in developing a quality mentoring and induction program. A mentor is a leader and should be an exemplary teacher. The district will publicize the application and selection process. Anyone eligible may apply. All candidates who meet the requirements and complete the application will be interviewed.

Mentors must meet the following requirements:

- An individual must be employed by a school district or area education agency as a teacher or a retired teacher who holds a valid license issued under Iowa Code chapter 272.
- The individual must have a record of three years of successful teaching practice in one school district
- Must be a non-probationary employee of the district
- Must demonstrate professional commitment to both the improvement of teaching and learning and the development of beginning teachers

The mentor application includes:

- Current assignment
- Teaching history
- Educational background
- Describe your professional commitment to both the improvement of teaching and learning and the development of beginning teachers
- Other relevant information

Expectations of Mentors

- Mentors are to maintain a confidential role and act in a supporting fashion for the beginning educator.
- Mentors are not evaluators.
- New mentors are expected to attend six (6) days of mentor training over the two years:
 - Intro Day – Jointly with beginning educator
 - Year 1 Mentor Training Days 1 – 4
 - Year 2 Mentor Training Days 5 & 6
- Trained mentors are expected to attend an Update Day each year they begin the Induction Program with a new beginning educator.

4. Describe the placement of beginning teachers and mentors. Criteria for placing mentors with beginning teachers include teaching assignment and location. Mentors will be in a 1:1 match.

5. The process for dissolving mentor and beginning teacher partnerships.

In the event that a beginning teacher / mentor relationship is not successful, it is recommended that the beginning teacher and/or mentor seek intervention through the District M/I facilitator. The District facilitator can provide the support or mediation to ensure the success or dissolution of this mentoring partnership.

Realizing that mentoring relationships that are not successful may be a reflection of a difference in style, the mentor/beginning teacher relationship may be changed or dissolved at the request of either party. If it is determined that a different mentor should be assigned, the building administrator will make that final decision and selection after consulting with the District facilitator. A ‘pool’ of mentors at the district level would provide the flexibility if a need for reassignment occurs.

6. Organizational support for release time and activities for mentors and beginning teachers that allows access and opportunities for (this description should include any additional supports provided by instructional coaches, collaborative teams, etc.)

- **Planning**
- **Demonstration of classroom practices**
- **Observation of teaching, and**
- **Constructive feedback**

“The ways in which an organization initiates new members is an important aspect of its culture. Growth-oriented, learning-focused school cultures provide time and resources to welcome and nurture novices. Mentoring creates cohesive and collaborative instructional teams, and establishes the norm of ongoing learning about and from teaching.” (Lipton & Wellman, 2000) Support for beginning teachers has two different components.

- The Professional Learning Projects provide the first component the mentoring and induction plan. Mentors and beginning teachers engage in on-going professional conversations with a focus on effective teaching using the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria. Professional Learning Projects provide a curriculum for use by the mentors and beginning educators. The flexibility of the learning project allows the beginning educator to shape her/his learning to meet his/her needs.
 - Mentors and Beginning Educators are provided time to meet, plan, conference, observe, collaborate reflect, and learn. It is some of this occurs before, after, and during the contract day. To provide enough time for observation, the equivalent of two days of released time are provided to each mentor/ beginning educator pair per each semester. These times must be approved by the principal. Released time might be used:
 - By the mentor to observe the beginning educator teaching and provide feedback
 - By the beginning educator to observe the mentor teaching
 - By the beginning educator to observe successful/effective practice of other teachers
 - The Beginning Educator also attends the Introduction to Mentoring and Induction Day with their mentor. And is invited to attend the Mid-Year Day for 1st and 2nd year new teachers.
- The **second** component includes additional supports provided through the District’s TLC program.
 - The District strives to improve teachers’ entry into the profession and has established TLC goals.
 1. Increase **student achievement** by increasing the capacity of teachers to deliver high quality instruction
 2. Foster effective collaboration between classroom teachers, teacher leaders, and administrators providing **individualized professional development** toward improved instruction in every classroom
 3. Develop **teacher leaders** empowered to coach, mentor, and support their peers in the process of delivering high quality instruction

4. Provide **career advancement opportunities**, aligning leadership roles with appropriate compensation
 5. **Attract and retain** high quality teachers by consistently valuing leadership and supporting individual growth
- Beginning educators are part of a collegial system of support, and working toward well-defined goals. They have rich learning and reflection opportunities around the Iowa Professional Teaching Standards. The beginning educator develops and shares their electronic portfolio demonstrating implementation of the Iowa Professional Teaching Standards. They also have the opportunity as they develop to take on leadership roles themselves, providing a motivation for them to remain in the profession. The mentoring process helps staff better understand the connection between their own practice and their students' achievement, supporting our district efforts to emphasize a growth mindset.
 - Our TLC plan address three deficiencies in induction programs noted in research: 1) a lack of ongoing training or compensation for training, 2) limited or no release time to observe high quality teaching in other classrooms or to engage in instructionally focused collaboration, and 3) a lack of identified experts within the district to provide intensive support for beginning educators. The district's TLC system, with support from NIET, addresses these gaps for the purposes of improving the entry of beginning educators into the profession.
 - Beginning educators receive substantial and intensive training. This training provides beginning educators with a deeper understanding of their practice and content knowledge, and a systems approach to analyzing and reflecting on their practice. In addition, new and veteran teachers will gain an understanding of the power of professional collaboration and the importance of knowing their students. These standards define expectations for quality classroom instruction accompanied with a rubric and support from TLC Mentor and Master teachers help beginning educators meet these expectations. Each teacher receives weekly follow-up support from TLC Mentor or Master teachers to help implement new learning. New and veteran teachers also have the opportunity to receive individual support that is specific to instructional needs and student learning data.
 - TLC Master and Mentor Teachers will provide release time to first and second year teachers so they may observe teaching in other classrooms and engage in instructionally focused collaboration. The plan provides career teachers the opportunity to participate in release time as necessary to refine areas of practice identified through the process of peer review.
 - TLC Master Teacher release time is available for demonstration or model lessons, peer review, observation of teachers, team teaching and planning professional development, and to help create the academic achievement plan for the school.
 - TLC Mentor Teachers serve as a liaison between the TLC Master and Career Teachers to ensure all teachers are receiving the support necessary to improve their instruction and increase student achievement. TLC Master and Mentor Teachers will provide release time to initial teachers to observe model teachers and collaborate with their mentors. This model ensures that initial teachers will be guided and supported in their practice.
 - TLC Mentor Teacher release time is available for coaching and modeling for their mentees, observations and peer review.
 - Funding from the district's TLC model will ensure all TLC Master and Mentor teachers, and principals attend an extensive core training during the summer before initial implementation.

This initial core training includes an overview of leadership team protocols, effective cluster group trainings and research-based field-testing procedures.

- The district's TLC plan emphasizes experts in the district by identifying them as TLC Master and Mentor teachers. In order to retain beginning educators, they must gain confidence in their practice, choose to continue teaching as a career and view their profession as one that offers opportunities for advancement. To support this goal, it is critical for these beginning educators to have access to an array of highly qualified and experienced teachers to support them in the development of teaching techniques and pedagogy. The TLC plan improves teacher induction into the teaching profession by providing intensive support, meaningful, formative peer review of the beginning educator's performance, scheduled time for beginning teachers and mentors to work together, and increased relevant opportunities to go deeper into the Iowa Teaching Standards.
- Beginning educators are part of the data team process with Teacher Leaders and study, practice and reflect upon professional responsibilities, lesson plan development and instruction. The TLC system creates a powerful, self-sustaining approach to building leadership and expertise within the District- a "train the trainer model". Teacher leaders can help beginning educators take an active role in their continuous improvement and put emphasis on student achievement. In addition, career teachers see there is an opportunity to grow and advance in the teaching profession as a Teacher leader.

7. Evaluation process for the program to include an evaluation of the district or AEA program goals.

The program evaluation process will evaluate district success in meeting program goals, provide for program revisions, and include a procedure for how information will be shared with stakeholders. Beginning educators, mentors, and principals will complete a questionnaire annually. Feedback will be gathered at all trainings, each mentor meeting and each beginning educator session with results analyzed by the program facilitator. Questionnaire and feedback results will be analyzed by the Facilitator in preparation for training/meetings and to determine program revisions.

Goal #1: To promote excellence in teachers as described in the Iowa Teaching Standards.

At the end of the year, beginning educators will be asked to complete an open-ended survey, about each Iowa Teaching Standard addressed in a learning project this year.

Goal #2: To enhance student achievement

The district and school monitor student learning and achievement data, but may have difficulty linking academic progress directly to the mentoring and induction program. However, samples of formative data used to inform instruction and discussed during learning focused conversations may provide snapshots of student achievement gains within units of study. These samples could provide some insight into the impact of mentoring efforts on student achievement.

Goal #3: To build a supporting environment for beginning educators.

This topic will be addressed in the annual program questionnaire given to mentors, beginning educators, and principals.

Goal #4: To increase retention of promising beginning educators.

Retention data will be collected annually with a report showing the retention pattern over time.

Participant interviews will provide data about program effectiveness and determine reasons for transfers or resignations.

Goal #5: To promote the personal and professional well-being of classroom teachers.

This topic will be addressed in the annual program questionnaire given to mentors, beginning educators, and principals.

Goal #6: To support continuous improvement and growth of beginning educators and mentors.

This topic will be addressed in the annual program questionnaire given to mentors, beginning educators, and principals.

Using the evaluation, changes will be made as needed. Additionally, an annual Mentoring and Induction report based on participant and program data will be prepared and shared with District Administration, SIAC Committee,

and the Board of Directors and others upon request. Program adjustments will be based on the results of program evaluation data.