



INFORMATION BULLETIN

DISTRICT-BASED TEACHER MENTORING PROGRAMS

The information in this bulletin provides guidance to local leaders, staff and labor relations specialists in the development of district-based teacher mentoring programs. Under Part 80-3.4 of the Commissioner's Regulations related to the revised teacher certification regulations, districts are required to provide a one-year mentored experience to new teachers, beginning September 2004. Candidates seeking a professional certificate *shall be* required to participate in a mentored program in their first year of employment, as prescribed in Part 100, unless the candidate has successfully completed two years of teaching experience prior to such teaching in the public schools.

Mentoring programs should be developed and implemented consistent with any collective bargaining obligation negotiated under Article 14 of the Civil Service Law. The mentoring program must also be described in the district's Professional Development Plan (PDP). In a January 2004 memo, the State Education Department recommended that districts re-convene the district professional development committee in order to amend the professional development plan to include the mentoring program component and submit the revised plans to boards of education for approval by June 1, 2004. By requiring that mentoring programs be collectively bargained and part of the PDP, which is developed by a committee consisting of a majority of teachers appointed by the teacher's union, the Board of Regents have determined that the teacher's union will have a significant voice in the induction of and continuing development of teaching professionals.

Successful mentoring programs must be thoughtfully planned, require dedicated resources, and collaboration between the district and local union to ensure that the needs of beginning teachers are being met. According to the Commissioner's regulations, the goal of mentoring in New York State *shall be to provide support for new teachers in the classroom teaching service in order to ease the transition from teacher preparation to practice, thereby increasing retention of teachers in the public schools, and to increase the skills of new teachers in order to improve student achievement in accordance with State learning standards.* In order to realize these goals, the mentoring experience must be of sufficient quality, rigor and relevance, and provide ample time for mentoring to occur.

Attachments:

- A. Commissioner's Regulations 100.2 (dd) (iv) of Mentoring Programs
- B. Section 100.2 (dd) of Commissioner's Regulations governing Professional Development Plans
- C. SED Draft Guidelines for Implementing District – Based Teacher Mentoring Programs
- D. SED Frequently Asked Questions – Mentoring Requirement

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Overview of Amendments to Section 100.2 (dd) of the Mentoring Regulations

- Mentoring Programs** – mentoring programs are part of the district’s Professional Development Plan (PDP). The PDP *shall describe* how the district or BOCES will provide a mentoring program, which includes the following:
 - ◆ the procedure for selecting mentors which *shall* be published and made available to staff;
 - ◆ the role of the mentors which *shall* include but *not be limited* to providing guidance and support;
 - ◆ the preparation of mentors, which *may* include but *shall not be limited* to adult learning theory, teacher development, mentoring relationships, peer coaching and time management etc.;
 - ◆ types of mentoring activities, which *may* include but *shall not be limited* to modeling instruction, observing, planning, peer coaching, and orienting the teacher to the new school; and
 - ◆ time allotted for mentoring, which *may* include but *shall not be limited* to scheduling common planning sessions, release time from instructional and or noninstructional duties, use of superintendent’s conference days, and time before and after the school day and during summer orientation sessions.
- Collective Bargaining** – The mentoring program *shall be* developed and implemented consistent with any collective bargaining obligation required by Article 14 of the Civil Service Law.
- Confidentiality** – Information obtained through mentoring *shall not be used for evaluative purposes, unless* the district or BOCES has an agreement under Article 14 stipulating otherwise.
- Recordkeeping** – The district *shall* maintain documentation of the implementation of the mentoring program for at least seven years. The documentation for each individual receiving mentoring should include their name, his or her teacher certificate identification number, the type of mentoring activity, the number of clock hours successfully completed in the mentoring activity, and the name and the teacher certificate identification number of the individual who provided the mentoring.

The Professional Development Plan—The Umbrella for All Professional Development

Under the new mentoring regulations, mentoring programs are part of the district’s professional development plan or PDP, which is intended to guide *all* professional development in a district or BOCES. NYSUT believes that the PDP should be a comprehensive document inclusive of all mentoring programs or models (NYS Mentor Teacher-Intern Program or MTIP, No Child Left Behind mentoring programs required for schools in need of improvement, alternative certification mentoring programs, and district-based mentoring programs developed under Section 100.2 (dd) of the Commissioner’s Regulations) implemented in the district. If the PDP committee is inactive or if the PDP plan is sitting on the shelf, now is the time to reactivate the committee and refocus the committee’s efforts toward developing and implementing a meaningful professional development program that now must include a mentoring component. If the district’s mentoring program is already in place, then the PDP committee should determine the degree of alignment between the current mentoring program and the provisions outlined in the district-based mentoring regulations.

Local leaders should consider the following when developing the mentoring program:

- ◆ The mentoring program will be part of the district’s overall PDP.
- ◆ Members appointed to the PDP committee must consist of a majority of teachers appointed by the teacher’s union.
- ◆ The mentoring program can be developed by the PDP committee or by a sub-committee of the PDP planning committee. The sub-committee should also consist of a majority of teachers.
- ◆ The union should negotiate the key elements/features (program goals, release time, compensation, etc) of mentoring that will guide the design/implementation of the mentoring program.

- ◆ The local teacher’s union should establish ongoing communications with the teacher members of the PDP committee and/or the mentor sub-committee.
- ◆ The union and district should agree on the final product to be implemented.
- ◆ The union should document its efforts to work with the district to develop the mentoring program. In a letter to a NYSUT local president on efforts to implement the professional development plan, SED advised a NYSUT local president that, “if the district refuses to implement the professional development plan, and when issues cannot be resolved at the local level, you can file a written complaint to the superintendent. When issues cannot be resolved at the local level that involves the compliance with the Commissioner’s Regulations, an appeal may be filed under Section 310 of the State Education Law.”

The New York State Mentor Teacher Internship Program—Best Practices in Mentoring

The New York State Mentor Teacher Intern Program (MTIP) was initiated in 1986 and reflects best practices in mentoring. A competitive grant program, the MTIP is funded by the state. Due to NYSUT’s lobbying efforts, the legislature provided \$10 million in funding in 2007-08. Eighty-seven districts developed and implemented mentoring programs in collaboration with the teachers’ union. MTIP grant applications require union sign-off and are usually available in early spring.

The MTIP is a prescriptive model that contains key elements (collective bargaining, confidentiality, guidance and support, mentor training, release time from the instructional day, program coordination, evaluation, and funding) that research suggests are essential to a high quality program. MTIP grant recipients are required to evaluate the impact mentoring has had on new teacher retention. State data supports that districts implementing MTIP programs from 1986-1996 for three consecutive years found that districts had drastically higher teacher retention rates and that teachers reported higher confidence in their teaching abilities.

Under the Commissioner’s regulations for district-based mentoring, many decisions about the mentoring program are negotiable. Local leaders should review Section 3033 of New York State Education Law and Part 85 of Commissioner’s Regulations (attached) and consider including MTIP elements/features into the district based mentoring plan.

No Child Left Behind and Mentoring

In the *No Child Left Behind Act* Sec. 1116, (b), (3), (x), for schools receiving Title I funds, and “*each school identified for school improvement shall, not later than 3 months after being so identified, develop or revise a school plan.*” The school *shall* develop a school improvement plan for professional development that *incorporates a teacher mentor program* (see below Sec. 9101, (42), for a definition of teacher mentoring). Under NCLB, the school improvement effort must:

- ◆ Address problems with instruction and identify solutions in order to help teachers develop instructional strategies using methods that are based on scientific research, and that have been proven to be effective in addressing the specific instructional issues that caused the school to be identified for school improvement; and
- ◆ Increase academic achievement in order to remove the school from school improvement status.

Several provisions in NCLB identify teacher mentoring as an effective means to improve teacher quality, retain teachers, and aid in the school improvement effort (Title I, Part A, Section 1116). Teacher mentoring for school improvement is intended to help both beginning and veteran teachers develop the instructional skills necessary to improve the academic achievement of all student groups in the school. Given the purposes of teacher mentoring under NCLB, mentoring activities must focus on improving teaching practice.

Funds from Title I and Title II can be used to support the mentoring program. Under NCLB rules, the union can call on the district to obtain “technical assistance in analyzing and revising the school’s budget so that the school’s resources are more effectively allocated to the activities more likely to remove the school from school improvement status.”

NCLB also encourages the creation of partnerships that involve higher education institutions, teacher centers, BOCES, and other educational organizations such as the NYSUT Education and Learning Trust to provide high quality professional development and research based mentoring.

NCLB defines the term “TEACHER MENTORING” as activities that:

“(A) consist of structured guidance and regular and ongoing support for teachers, especially beginning teachers, that:

(i) are designed to help the teachers continue to improve their practice of teaching and to develop part of an ongoing developmental induction process;

(I) involve the assistance of an exemplary teacher and other appropriate individuals from a school, local educational agency, or institution of higher education; and

(II) may include coaching, classroom observation, team teaching, and reduced teaching loads; and

(B) may include the establishment of a partnership by a local educational agency with an institution of higher education, another local educational agency, a teacher organization, or another organization.”

The following is a chart that outlines how the NCLB definition of teacher mentoring can be applied to a mentoring program for school improvement in a New York State.

Application of NCLB definition of teacher mentoring to a local district’s mentoring program for school improvement.

Key Elements of “teacher mentoring” activities defined in NCLB section 1116, (b) (3), (x)	Application in NYS to a local district’s mentoring program for school improvement
(A) Structured guidance and ongoing support.	Through a coordinated and structured mentoring program provide daily/weekly mentoring activities.
(A). Especially beginning teachers.	Provide mentoring to beginning and veteran teachers at various stages and levels of teaching experience.
(I) Improve their practice.	Mentoring and professional development should focus on developing instructional skills and teaching capacity in order to improve academic achievement for identified student sub-groups. Since mentoring is linked to school improvement efforts, activities should be research based and mentor activities should be evaluated to determine the effect on teacher improvement practice.
(I) Part of on-going developmental induction process.	Multi year induction program, which includes orientation, research based mentoring and scientifically based professional development. The mentoring program is described in the district’s comprehensive professional development plan (PDP).
(II) Involve the assistance of an exemplary teacher.	Master teachers who have demonstrated excellence in the classroom, for example National Board Certified teachers.
(II) Involve other appropriate individuals.	Utilize and involve staff developers, teacher centers, higher education faculty and consultants to provide a team approach to mentoring.
(III). Coaching.	Provide formal and informal feedback on teaching skills during the instructional day.
(III) Classroom observation.	Mentor and mentee have time during the instructional day to observe classroom teaching.
(III) Team teaching.	Mentors and mentees have common time for team teaching activities.
(III) Reduced teaching loads.	Release time is provided from full-time teaching for both the mentor and mentee. Mentor serves full-time or part-time.
(B). Establish partnership by the local education agency (LEA) with an institution of higher education (IHE), another local education agency, another teacher organization, or another education organization.	Create formal arrangement with a college or university, a teacher center, or a profit or non-profit education organization. For example, a partnership could involve faculty from the mathematics department of an IHE that help teachers learn how to analyze student’s math data help teachers evaluate the scientifically based research in order to differentiate instruction based on students learning styles.

Funding the Mentoring Program

Districts should seek supplemental funding through state grants (New York State Mentor Teacher-Internship Program) and federal programs (No Child Left Behind Title I and II) or other local, state or federal grants earmarked for teacher induction and improving teacher quality initiatives. NYSUT will continue to lobby the State Legislature for increased funding to support mentoring and induction programs.

Developing a Quality Mentoring Program

Now that the mentoring is linked to teacher certification requirements, the district and union should *work collaboratively* to create a quality mentoring experience that will allow beginning teachers to become effective teaching professionals. The regulations do not prescribe a single mentoring model for all districts to follow, but rather allow for local flexibility in the design of the mentoring program. As a result, many decisions will be made at the local level about the various aspects and elements of the program. Open for discussion is the purpose, scope, intended outcomes, implementation strategy, compensation, incentives, time to perform mentoring activities, and creating an oversight or mechanism for resolving problems. In a January 2004 memo, SED asked local districts and BOCES to “ascertain the degree of alignment between the current teacher mentoring program and the provisions of the new regulation and make adjustments accordingly, and if no mentoring program currently exists to begin efforts to develop a mentoring program.” SED also reminded districts that “revised district professional development plans, including the mentoring program component, should be submitted to boards of education for approval by June 1st.”

The following are important aspects of the development of a quality mentor program.

1. Statement of Purpose and Intended Outcomes for the Mentoring Program

The mentoring program should be viewed as more than an orientation program designed to help the intern learn the “nuts and bolts” of working in the school or district. The best mentoring programs have clear and measurable goals, are multi-faceted, and multi-year. Collectively, the union and district should determine the purpose of the mentoring program committee. The following are some goals usually attributed with mentoring programs:

- ◆ Help beginning teachers transition from preparation to practice;
- ◆ Provide guidance and support;
- ◆ Develop and improve instructional skills in order to improve student achievement;
- ◆ Help transmit the culture of the organization;
- ◆ Increase the retention rate for good beginning teachers;
- ◆ Help transmit the school’s culture;
- ◆ Increase an individual’s commitment to a particular school and public education in general;
- ◆ Create a professional learning culture that crosses experience lines; and
- ◆ Promote school reform.

2. A Description of the Mentor Program Committee to be Formed

According to regulation, the mentoring committee can serve as a subcommittee of the Professional Development committee, responsible for developing a mentoring program. Various duties can be assigned to the committee depending on how the committee is structured. Whatever duties are assigned to the subcommittee, it is important to have a clear understanding of the following:

- ◆ Purpose – who will design the mentor program, select the pool of teachers, make the matches, provide general oversight, and/or undertake the program evaluation.
- ◆ Composition – who and how many persons will serve on the committee (teachers, administrators, staff developers, teacher center representatives, and higher education institution or teacher education faculty) and who appoints. The *majority* of the members should be tenured classroom teachers or other certified professionals in the district who are appointed by the teacher’s union.
- ◆ Length of service – is this a rotating assignment and how many consecutive years of service, etc?
- ◆ Decision-making- what procedures will be used to make decisions (majority vote)?

3. The Role of the Mentor

The mentor’s role will be to guide and support their interns . . . provided that the role of the mentor “*shall not be construed as limiting or supplanting the authority of school administrators or supervisors to supervise or evaluate the performance of the interns.*” Information obtained by a mentor through interaction with an intern *shall not* be made available to supervisors or used in the evaluation of such intern. The language signifies that the relationship between the mentor and the intern is to be advisory, *not* evaluative. *However, the local district and union can negotiate otherwise.* If the mentor’s role is supervisory and/or evaluative, for the purpose of evaluating or contributing information that *will be used to evaluate* the performance of the intern, and/or if information (about moral or criminal activity) obtained through the interaction of the mentor and intern will be used to make employment decisions, *be sure the contractual language clearly defines the process, conditions, and parameters for evaluation to occur.*

- ◆ Ensure that mentor selection criteria reflects the skills necessary to function in a supervisory or evaluative capacity.
- ◆ Negotiate specific and appropriate training to help individuals perform the functions related to supervisory and evaluative mentoring roles.

See NYSUT Bulletin No. 200512 – The Role of the Mentor in District-Based Mentoring Programs.

4. The Formal Procedure for Mentor Selection

Regulations require that the procedures for selecting mentors should be publicized and made available to staff. The procedure for mentor selection should be based on a criteria and an equitable selection. Suggestions for mentor selection criteria are:

- ◆ Consider the following criteria when making selections for mentors, for example:
 - willingness and time to serve as a mentor;
 - demonstrated mastery of pedagogical and subject matter skills;
 - evidence of superior teaching abilities and excellence in teaching;
 - demonstrated commitment to their own professional learning growth; and
 - ability to allow the intern to develop his or her own effective teaching style.
- ◆ Develop a process for publishing the criteria and process for mentor selection and ensure the process is widely published, and ensure there is ample time for interested candidates to apply.
- ◆ Determine the process for the final selection of mentor – secret ballot, unanimous vote, etc.

5. The Preparation of Mentors

Effective mentoring requires training. The most outstanding teacher is not automatically suited to guide the development of an adult learner and their colleague. How well mentors are trained relates directly to the achievement of program goals and outcomes. The most effective mentor training will focus on the development of coaching skills, how to engage beginning teachers in critical reflection on their teaching practice, and the mentor's skill in collecting and interpreting evidence of effective teaching. Following are some considerations for preparing educators to mentor:

- ◆ Determine the scope (initial and ongoing) and depth (extent of topics to be covered) of the training to be provided.
- ◆ Identify the internal (staff developers, superintendent's conference days, etc.) and the external (NYS Teacher Centers, NYSUT's Education & Learning Trust, Higher Education, etc.) and any other training resources you will utilize (on-line training programs). (NYSUT's ELT mentoring and peer coaching programs have been found to be highly effective and can be presented in modules according to the needs of your district.)
- ◆ Determine when the training will occur and the amount of compensation, if any, offered for participating in training outside of the normal workday.
- ◆ Include prospective mentor, who will not be assigned an intern in the training.

6. Types of Mentoring Activities

Mentoring activities are at the core of the work that occurs between the mentor and intern. Activities should be developed consistent with program goals and intended outcomes. Give consideration to needs *common to the group* (awareness of the district's policies and procedures); *individual* needs (develop a particular teaching skill), and needs *specific to a category of teachers* (bilingual, special education, career and technical education, and speech therapists etc.). Most importantly, mentoring activities should be research-based in the areas of instructional strategies and classroom management. The plan should address the following:

- ◆ Type and frequency of activities in which the mentor and intern will engage;
- ◆ Activities that will require training prior to being delivered by the mentor;
- ◆ How the delivery of the mentoring activities will be documented; and
- ◆ Costs—staff, equipment, and materials, etc. — associated with the agreed upon activities.

7. Time Allotted for Mentoring

In order to achieve the program's goals and outcomes, sufficient time must be allotted for mentoring to occur. Some mentoring activities — planning, reflecting, commenting, and record-keeping — can occur during non-instructional periods, while other activities—team teaching, modeling instructional strategies, role playing, etc. will need to occur during the instructional day. Activities designed to lead to development and/or improvement of instructional capacity will require common time for mentor/intern meetings. Some percentage of release time during the instructional day is necessary for constructive and productive mentoring to occur. Whatever percentage of release time or time for mentoring activities you negotiate, ensure that mentors and interns are not solely responsible for making time outside of the workday to implement the state's mentoring mandate. Address the following during the negotiation process:

- ◆ When will the mentoring activities occur—before, during, or after the instructional day?
- ◆ What compensation will be provided for time outside of the normal workday or workweek?

More Mentoring Program Details to Discuss

8. Mentor/Intern Matches or Teams

A district may choose to negotiate an agreement whereby the teacher's union creates the mentor/intern teams. The best mentor/intern matches are based on certification title and subject area and that match interns with mentors who have been properly trained to mentor.

9. Full and Part-time Mentors

Full- and part-time mentors may be needed to make the appropriate mentor/intern matches. Under the MTIP program the full-time mentor ratio is 1:10 and part-time is 1:4. Mentoring is, by regulation, service in a teacher's tenure area. Therefore, both part-time and full-time mentor teachers accrue seniority in their tenure area, in the same way they would if they were teaching in their certificate area.

10. A Program Evaluation System

The program evaluation system is essential to determine program effectiveness and guide program improvements. The evaluation system is subject to negotiations. The plan should include a program evaluation system, which is to have at least the following:

- ◆ Sources of data to be used;
- ◆ Who is responsible for evaluating the program;
- ◆ How the information will be used to make program improvements;
- ◆ Criteria for assessment of mentor performance; and
- ◆ Criteria for assessment of intern performance including instructional planning and management, classroom management, presentation of subject matter, and communication skills.

11. Develop an Operational Budget

Identify those expenditures that will be supported, including incentives, compensation, release time, fringe benefits, training, supplies and materials, travel, program coordinator salary, replacement or substitute teacher, evaluation, and any other expenses associated with the program. As part of the negotiated plan, the operational budget is subject to negotiations consistent with the Taylor Law.

Other Issues

- ◆ **Professional Development** – Service as a mentor may satisfy requirements for *substantial* professional development required as part of the Commissioner's Regulations (100.2(dd)) that govern the district's professional development plan. Ask the PDP committee to allow mentoring to satisfy some portion of the 175 hours of professional development required for teachers certified as of September 2004.
- ◆ **Peer Assistance and Peer Review, an AFT/NEA Handbook.** Local leaders should obtain a copy of this publication. It provides an overview of peer mentoring/assistance/evaluation programs, a discussion of legal protections for employment, a guide to contract language, and sample guidelines. Contact the AFT at www.aft.org or call 1-800-238-1133.
- ◆ **Roles for Retirees**
 - State law allows for the re-employment of retirees, for periods not exceeding two years, when other persons are not readily available to perform the duties of such a position (see Article 7, Section 210 for specific details).
 - In the absence of staff to perform important duties associated with the mentoring program, you may need to look to retirees for help. Two roles that are appropriate for retirees are program coordinator and replacement teacher. Due to the shrinking pool of veteran teachers available to serve as mentors and to supervise the student teaching experiences, some districts have also hired retirees as mentors. By hiring

retirees, districts were able to make appropriate mentor/intern matches with regard to same area of certificate title or subject area. Retirees can also be part of the mentoring team and serve as a secondary mentor who provides additional emotional support to a group of beginning teachers from a single building or from across the district.

- However, if you choose to utilize retirees in the mentoring program, be clear about their role, expectations, relationship boundaries, selection criteria, work hours and compensation, length of service etc.
- Finally, consider that the needs of the beginning teachers are best served by mentors who are connected to and understand the current school culture, are readily accessible, and can respond to the intern's needs for mentoring during the normal school day.

Advice to Local Leaders

NYSUT believes that service as a mentor should be voluntary and individuals should not be compelled to take on the duties of a mentor. NYSUT recommends that you negotiate a mentoring program that contains elements that are critical to the success of the mentoring program:

- Release time for mentoring activities to occur
- High quality mentor training and preparation
- A role for the union in the mentor selection process, and
- Adequate compensation for service as a mentor

It is recommended that local leaders do the following with regard to negotiating and developing district-based teacher mentoring programs.

1. Consult with your Labor Relations Specialist **prior** to any discussions or meeting with your district's administration or negotiations team about the mentoring program.
2. Ensure contract agreements **contain clearly formulated provisions that address the time necessary to perform mentoring responsibilities**, including payment of stipends, if warranted, for mentoring duties performed prior to the start of the school year and before or after the normal work day.
3. Encourage your district/BOCES to apply for a grant from the NYS Mentor Teacher-Internship Program. Grant applications are usually issued in the spring of each year. In addition to the grant award, districts must contribute a portion of their local funds/resources to support this mentoring model. Recipients of this grant award must adhere to the release time requirement, currently 10% release time from instructional duties for both the mentor and intern.
4. Determine if the relationship of the mentor and intern will remain confidential. The regulations state that the relationship "shall not be used for evaluative purposes, unless your district or BOCES has negotiated an agreement under Article 14 of the Civil Service Law."
5. Negotiate a program coordinator who is a union officer or union member.
6. Negotiate a governance structure that requires union participation in program oversight, problem solving and conflict resolution, making sure your contract language is clear about the issues that will be addressed by this group and process for resolving them.
7. Work closely with your teacher center, higher education institution, and NYSUT's Education and Learning Trust (ELT) to develop initial and ongoing mentor/mentee preparation and training programs.

8. Establish a reporting system by which the union's board is regularly kept aware of developments regarding the mentoring program.
9. Obtain the support of teachers in buildings/departments with interns and mentors by giving the appropriate building representative the assignment to:
 - ◆ educate teachers to the objectives and success of the mentoring program (e.g., newsletters, web sites, faculty meetings) and informal channels;
 - ◆ support the mentoring program by resolving conflicts and clearing up misunderstandings about the program;
 - ◆ report ongoing developments to the appropriate union officials; and
 - ◆ obtain support for the mentoring program from the union's membership by including the reports on the program on the agenda of regular union meetings.
10. Contact other locals in your area as you develop your mentor program. Remember that some districts have had extensive experience with mentor programs funded by the state's grant program (MTIP) and other funding sources.
11. Take every opportunity to educate the broader community to the benefits of the mentoring program, its role in improving teaching and student learning outcomes, and the union's role in supporting excellence in the teaching profession.

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Amendment to the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education

100.2(dd) (iv)

- (iv) for plans covering the time period, February 2, 2004 and thereafter, provision for a mentoring program.
- (a) The purpose of the mentoring program shall be to provide support for new teachers in the classroom teaching service in order to ease the transition from teacher preparation to practice, thereby increasing retention of teachers in the public schools, and to increase the skills of new teachers in order to improve student achievement in accordance with the State learning standards.
- (b) The professional development plan shall describe how the school district or BOCES will provide a mentoring program for teachers in the classroom teaching service who must participate in a mentoring program to meet the teaching experience requirement for the professional certificate, as prescribed in section 80-3.4 of this Title.
- (c) The mentoring program shall be developed and implemented consistent with any collective bargaining obligation required by Article 14 of the Civil Service Law, provided that nothing herein shall be construed to impose a collective bargaining obligation that is not required by Article 14 of the Civil Service Law.
- (d) The information obtained by a mentor through interaction with the new teacher while engaged in the mentoring activities of the program shall not be used for evaluating or disciplining the new teacher; unless withholding such information poses a danger to the life, health, or safety of an individual, including but not limited to students and staff of the school; or unless such information indicates that the new teacher has been convicted of a crime, or has committed an act which raises a reasonable question as to the new teacher's moral character; or unless the school district or BOCES has entered into an agreement, negotiated pursuant to Article 14 of the Civil Service Law whose terms are in effect, that provides that the information obtained by the mentor through interaction with the new teacher while engaged in the mentoring activities of the program may be used for evaluating or disciplining the new teacher.
- (e) The professional development plan shall describe the following elements of the mentoring program:
- (1) the procedure for selecting mentors, which shall be published and made available to staff of the school district or BOCES and upon request to members of the public;
 - (2) the role of mentors, which shall include but not be limited to providing guidance and support to the new teacher;
 - (3) the preparation of mentors, which may include but shall not be limited to the study of the theory of adult learning, the theory of teacher development, the elements of a mentoring relationship, peer coaching techniques, and time management methodology;
 - (4) types of mentoring activities, which may include but shall not be limited to modeling instruction for the new teacher, observing instruction, instructional planning with the new teacher, peer coaching, team teaching, and orienting the new teacher to the school culture; and
 - (5) time allotted for mentoring, which may include but shall not be limited to scheduling common planning sessions, releasing the mentor and the new teacher from a portion of their instructional and/or non-instructional duties, and providing time for mentoring during superintendent conference days, before and after the school day, and during summer orientation sessions.

2. Paragraph (5) of subdivision (dd) of section 100.2 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education is amended, effective December 4, 2003, as follows:

Recordkeeping [requirement] requirements.

- (i) School districts and BOCES shall be required to maintain a record of professional development successfully completed by certificate holders, who are subject to the professional development offered by the school district or BOCES or by entities on behalf of the school district or BOCES. Such record shall include; the name of the professional certificate holder, his or her teacher certification identification number, the title of the program, the number of hours completed, and the date and location of the program. Such record shall be retained by the school district or BOCES for at least seven years from the date of completion of the professional development by the professional certificate holder and shall be available for review by the department.
- (ii) School districts and BOCES shall maintain documentation shall include for each individual receiving mentoring pursuant to the mentoring program; the name of that individual, his or her teacher certificate identification number, the type of mentoring activity, and the name and the teacher certificate identification number of the individual who provided the mentoring. Such record shall be maintained by the school district or BOCES for at least seven years from the date of completion of the mentoring activity and shall be available for review by the department.

100.2 General school requirements.

(dd) Professional development plan.

(1) Requirement.

(i) By September 1, 2000, and annually by September 1 of each school year thereafter, each school district and Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) shall adopt a professional development plan that meets the content requirements prescribed in paragraph (2) of this subdivision. The purpose of the plan shall be to improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that teachers participate in substantial professional development in order that they remain current with their profession and meet the learning needs of their students.

(ii) Such professional development plan may be a part of a comprehensive education plan of the district or BOCES, provided that the professional development plan meets all of the requirements of this subdivision, including the requirements related to collaboration with the professional development team in the development of the plan as prescribed in paragraph (3) of this subdivision, or may be a free-standing plan of the district or BOCES.

(iii) A school district or BOCES may include the local special education comprehensive system of personnel development (CSPD) plan, developed pursuant to 34 CFR 300.221, as part of its professional development plan, provided that such professional development plan meets all requirements set forth in this subdivision and provided that such local CSPD plan meets all other requirements of Federal or state statute, regulation or policy.

(2) Content of the plan. The professional development plan shall be structured in a format consistent with commissioner's guidelines and shall include:

(i) a needs analysis, and goals, objectives, strategies, activities and evaluation standards for professional development in the school district or BOCES;

(ii) a description of:

(a) how the school districts or BOCES provide all teachers they employ substantial professional development opportunities directly related to student learning needs as identified in the school district or BOCES report card and other sources as determined by the school district or BOCES. For plans covering the time period, February 2, 2004 and thereafter, each school district or BOCES shall describe in its plan how it will provide teachers it employs holding a professional certificate with opportunities to maintain such certificates in good standing based upon successfully completing 175 hours of professional development every five years as prescribed in Part 80 of this Title;

(b) teachers' expected participation in professional development, including but not limited to an estimate of the average number of hours each teacher is expected to participate in professional development in the school year covered by the plan;

(c) the alignment of professional development with New York standards and assessments, student needs, including but not limited to linguistic, cultural diversity and special needs, and teacher capacities;

(d) the articulation of professional development across grade levels;

(e) the efforts made to ensure that professional development is continuous and sustained and that the methods and approaches for delivering professional development have been shown to be effective;

(f) the manner in which the school district or BOCES will measure the impact of professional development on student achievement and teachers' practices; and

(iii) provision for the **training** of employees holding a teaching certificate or license in the classroom teaching service, school service, or administrative and supervisory service in **school violence** prevention and intervention. Each such employee shall be required to complete at least one training course in school violence prevention and intervention, which shall consist of at least two clock hours of training that includes but is not limited to, study in the warning signs within a developmental and social context that relate to violence and other troubling behaviors in children; the statutes, regulations, and policies relating to a safe nonviolent school climate; effective classroom management techniques and other academic supports that promote a nonviolent school climate and enhance learning; the integration of social and

problem solving skill development for students within the regular curriculum; intervention techniques designed to address a school violence situation; and how to participate in an effective school/community referral process for students exhibiting violent behavior. Upon request of the employee who successfully completes such training course, the school district or board of cooperative educational services shall provide the employee with a certificate of completion attesting to the completion of the two clock hours of training in school violence prevention and intervention.

(3) Development and adoption of the plan.

(i) The requirement in this subparagraph shall be applicable to all BOCES and school districts, except the City School District of the City of New York. The requirements of subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph shall be applicable to the City School District of the City of New York.

(a) The plan shall be developed through collaboration with a professional development team. The team members shall be designated for appointment in the manner prescribed in this clause, except as prescribed in clause (b) of this subparagraph. The board of education or BOCES shall appoint the members of the team, a majority of which shall be teachers, which shall include the superintendent of schools or his or her designee in the case of school districts or the district superintendent or his or her designee in the case of BOCES; school administrators upon designation by the administrators' collective bargaining organization; teachers upon designation by the teachers' collective bargaining organization; at least one parent upon designation by the established parent groups in the district or in their absence, by the superintendent in the case of a school district or district superintendent in the case of a BOCES; and one or more curriculum specialists, meaning a teacher or administrator whose primary job responsibility involves the development or evaluation of curricula, upon designation by the district or teachers' collective bargaining organization or both. In addition, the team shall include at least one representative of a higher education institution, provided that the board of education or BOCES determines that a qualified candidate is available to serve after conducting a reasonable search. The team may include other individuals, such as representatives of professional development organizations or the community at large. In school districts or BOCES in which teachers or administrators are not represented by a collective bargaining organization, teachers or administrators shall be designated by their peers in a manner prescribed by the Board of Education or BOCES.

(b) Notwithstanding the requirements of clause (a) of this subparagraph, members of the professional development team employed in or representing a school under registration review, pursuant to section 100.2(p) of this Title, including but not limited to teachers, administrators, curriculum specialists and parents, shall not be designated for appointment as prescribed in clause (a) of this subparagraph but shall instead be recommended by the superintendent of the school district for appointment by the board of education.

(c) The board of education or BOCES shall permit the professional development team a period of at least 180 days to develop its recommended professional development plan and shall convene such team on or before October 1, except that for the 1999-2000 school years, such team shall be convened by October 8, 1999.

(d) Such team shall submit to the board of education or to the BOCES a recommended professional development plan by a date specified by the board of education or BOCES. The board of education or BOCES may accept or reject the recommendations of the team in whole or part. Components of the plan not approved by the board of education or BOCES shall be returned to the team for further consideration. Any subsequent modification in the professional development team's recommendation to the board of education or BOCES shall be presented to the board of education or BOCES on or before June 1, and the board of education or BOCES shall act on the plan by June 30. The final determination on the content of the professional development plan shall be the determination of the board of education or BOCES.

(e) The professional development plan shall be adopted by the board of education or BOCES at a public meeting. Each year, the board of education or BOCES shall evaluate the effectiveness of the plan. The board of education or BOCES may adopt a multi-year plan or an annual plan, provided that in the case of a multi-year plan the professional development team shall be required to review the plan on an annual basis, and submit to the board of education or BOCES recommended revisions, if necessary. The Board of Education or BOCES shall determine whether to approve the recommended revisions.

(ii) The requirements of this subparagraph shall be applicable to the City School District of the City of New York.

(a) Each community school district, high school division, special education division and the Chancellor's district shall have a professional development plan.

(b) Each plan shall be developed through collaboration with a professional development team. The team members shall be designated for appointment in the manner prescribed in this clause, except as prescribed in clause (c) of this subparagraph. In the case of a community school district, the board of education of the community school district shall appoint the members of the team for the community school district. In the case of a high school division, special education division, and the Chancellor's district, the Chancellor of the City School District of the City of New York shall appoint the members of the team. The team, a majority of which shall be teachers, shall include the superintendent of the district for which the team was formed or his or her designee; school administrators upon designation by the administrators' collective bargaining organization; teachers upon designation by the teachers' collective bargaining organization; at least one parent upon designation by the established parent groups in the district, or, in their absence, by the Chancellor in the case of a high school division, a special education division or a Chancellor's district, or by the board of education of the community school district in the case of a community school district; one or more curriculum specialists, meaning a teacher or administrator whose primary job responsibility involves the development or evaluation of curricula, upon designation by either or both the teachers' collective bargaining organization, or by the Chancellor in the case of a high school division, a special education division or a Chancellor's district, or by the board of education of the community school district in the case of a community school district. In addition, the team shall include at least one representative of a higher education institution, provided a qualified candidate is available to serve after conducting a reasonable search. The team may include other individuals, such as representatives of professional development organizations or the community at large.

(c) Notwithstanding the requirements of clause (b) of this subparagraph, members of the professional development team employed in or representing a school under registration review, pursuant to section 100.2(p) of this Title, including but not limited to teachers, administrators, curriculum specialists and parents, shall not be designated for appointment as prescribed in clause (b) of this subparagraph but shall instead be recommended by the Chancellor for appointment by the board of education of the community school district in the case of community school districts, and appointed by the Chancellor without being designated by any other party in the case of high school divisions, special education divisions and the Chancellor's district.

(d) In the case of high school divisions, special education divisions and the Chancellor's district, the Chancellor shall convene the professional development team on or before October 1, except for the 1999-2000 school years when such team shall be convened by October 8, 1999. The Chancellor shall permit the team a period of 180 days to develop its recommended professional development plan. Such team shall submit to the Chancellor a recommended professional development plan by a date specified by the Chancellor. The Chancellor may accept or reject the recommendations of the team in whole or part. Components of the plan not approved by the Chancellor shall be returned to the team for further consideration. Any subsequent modification in the professional development team's recommendation to the Chancellor shall be presented to the Chancellor on or before June 1, and the Chancellor shall act on the plan by June 30. The final determination on the content of the professional development plan shall be the determination of the Chancellor, in accordance with Education Law section 2590-h(14). In the event that the team does not make a recommendation to the Chancellor by the date specified by the Chancellor, the Chancellor may promulgate a professional development plan without such recommendation.

(e) In the case of community school districts, each board of education of the community school district shall submit to the Chancellor of the City School District of the City of New York a recommended professional development plan by a date specified by the Chancellor. Such professional development plan shall be developed through collaboration with the community school district's professional development team. Each board of education of a community school district shall convene its professional development team on or before October 1, except for the 1999-2000 school years when such team shall be convened by October 8, 1999. The board of education of the community school district shall permit its professional development team a period of at least 180 days to develop its recommendations for the professional development plan. Such team shall submit

to the board its recommended professional development plan by a date specified by the board. Components of the plan not accepted by the board of education of the community school district shall be returned to the team for further consideration and submitted to the board by a date specified by the board. The board of education of the community school district may accept or reject the recommendations in whole or part. The board shall adopt final recommendations for the district's professional development plan for submission to the Chancellor. The Chancellor may accept or reject the recommendations of the board of education of the community school district in whole or part. Components of the plan not approved by the Chancellor shall be returned to the board of education of the community school district for further consideration. Any subsequent modification in the board's recommendation to the Chancellor shall be presented to the Chancellor on or before June 1, and the Chancellor shall act on the plan by June 30. The final determination on the content of the professional development plan shall be the determination of the Chancellor, in accordance with Education Law section 2590-h(14). In the event that the board of education of the community school district does not make a recommendation to the Chancellor by the date specified by the Chancellor, the Chancellor may promulgate a professional development plan without such recommendation.

(f) Each year, the Chancellor shall evaluate the effectiveness of the plan for each district. The Chancellor shall promulgate a multi-year or an annual plan for each district, provided that in the case of a multi-year plan for a high school division, special education division and the Chancellor's district, such district's professional development team shall be required to review the plan on an annual basis; and in the case of a multi-year plan for a community school district, the board of education of the community school district shall be required to review the plan on an annual basis in collaboration with its professional development team. Such districts shall submit to the Chancellor recommended revisions, if necessary. The Chancellor shall determine whether to approve the recommended revisions.

(4) Reporting requirement.

(i) Each year, the superintendent of a school district, the district superintendent of a BOCES, and in the case of the City School District of the City of New York, the Chancellor, shall be required to certify to the commissioner, in a form and on a timetable prescribed by the commissioner, that:

(a) the requirements of this subdivision to have a professional development plan for the succeeding school year have been met; and

(b) the school district or BOCES has complied with the professional development plan applicable to the current school year.

(ii) The commissioner may request a copy of the professional development plan for review and may recommend changes to the plan to meet the learning needs of the students in the school district or BOCES.

(5) Notwithstanding the requirements of this subdivision, participation in professional development outside the regular school day or regularly scheduled working days of the school year shall be volitional for teachers, unless otherwise agreed upon as a term or condition of employment pursuant to collective bargaining under Article 14 of the Civil Service Law.

(6) Variance. A variance shall be granted from a requirement of this subdivision, upon a finding by the commissioner that a school district or BOCES has executed prior to October 7, 1999 an agreement negotiated pursuant to Article 14 of the Civil Service Law, whose terms continue in effect and are inconsistent with such requirement.

New York State Education Department

Office of Higher Education Johanna Duncan-Poitier, Sr. Deputy Commissioner

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Guidelines for Implementing District - Based Teacher Mentoring Programs

- [Initial Steps](#)
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These guidelines are offered to assist school districts and teachers in understanding their responsibilities under the new teacher mentoring regulation. Under previously revised provisions of Section 100.2(dd) of the Commissioner's Regulations, effective February 2, 2004, new teachers must complete a mentored experience in their first year of teaching. Likewise, under the new provisions of Section 80-3 of the Commissioner's Regulations, employing districts are now responsible to provide such mentoring to new teachers and must incorporate the design and planning of such mentored experiences into the district's professional development plan.

Key Provisions of the new mentoring regulation:

The purpose of the mentoring experience is to improve the skill and retention of new teachers as they transition from academic preparation to their first professional appointment.

- The mentoring program must be developed consistent with Article XIV of the Civil Service Law. Any mentoring program components that fall within the purview of contractual negotiations should be addressed accordingly.
- The mentor's role is one of guidance and support. However, the mentor may have an evaluative role as well as guidance and support, if this stipulation has been negotiated and agreed upon in the local teachers' contract. If the mentor's role is solely that of guidance and support, information emerging from mentoring activities and the mentoring relationship is confidential.
- Required elements of the mentoring program include:
 - A mentor selection procedure -- published and available to district staff and the public upon request
 - Mentor training and preparation
 - Defined set of mentor activities
 - Allocation of time for mentoring activities to take place
- The district must maintain documentation of mentoring activities. Items to be recorded: names and teacher certificate numbers of mentors and teachers served, type of mentoring activities, and the number of clock hours of mentoring provided to each new teacher.

The amendment provides a framework and direction for districts designing mentoring experiences required for first-year teachers. It allows for local flexibility, while "pointing" districts in the direction of best teacher mentoring practice. The guidance that follows incorporates the regulatory framework, but also

presents a more complete guide to best practice in teacher mentoring.

Introduction. Induction of new teachers is an important part of the overall preparation and professional development of beginning practitioners. It is part of the teacher's continuum of experiences -- building on preparation programs and accomplishments, and anticipating continued development over the course of the teacher's career. Mentoring is an essential strategy in the teacher induction enterprise.

Experiences of districts in pilot teacher mentoring projects in the late 1980s and 1990s point to the efficacy of this approach for achieving the highest quality, personalized support in welcoming new teachers to the profession and assisting them to practice effectively. Teacher induction has consistently shown to be effective in stemming teacher attrition (NYSED, 1991; Bullard, 1998). Further, teacher mentoring appears to significantly impact a beginning teacher's movement along the continuum of skill development and self-confidence as a teacher (NYSED, 1989).

Initial Steps

Program decisions and actions. In designing and implementing a new teacher-mentoring program, key decisions and actions must be considered during the course of implementation.

- **Planning and early decision-making.** Decide on desired goals and outcomes. Goals and expected outcomes of the mentoring program should be clearly defined for all mentors and novice teachers, as well as the entire school community. Teacher retention and increased teacher skillfulness are defined in regulation as purposes of mentoring programs. Teacher recruitment and establishment of a vital teacher learning community are also indirect outcomes of mentoring programs. Ultimately, as with any professional development for teachers, increased student achievement is the primary goal of a teacher-mentoring plan.
- Construct a knowledge base (literature and experience), design the program, identify constraints, and inform the greater school/district community of the proposed model. Begin with the Office of Teaching Initiatives website at <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/> . This site contains information pertaining to mentoring as well as structural models, print and other resources. Neighboring districts that have experience with teacher mentoring, teacher centers, local teacher organizations, and Regional School Support Centers are also good sources for information on implementation and development of mentoring programs. National, statewide and regionally sponsored conferences that are dedicated to teacher mentoring are also valuable sources of knowledge and expertise.
- Develop or identify program evaluation models based on the knowledge base and identified program outcomes.
- Next, outline the implementation plan, and implement, assess, and modify program components as appropriate.

Required Mentoring Plan Components*

* Italics=CR 100.2 dd excerpts pertaining to mentoring programs.

Development. By regulation, any items of the mentoring plan that fall within the purview of Article XIV of the Civil Service Law (Taylor Law) must be negotiated contractually in accord with those provisions.

The mentoring program shall be developed and implemented consistent with any collective bargaining obligation required by Article 14 of the Civil Service Law, provided that nothing herein shall be construed to impose a collective bargaining obligation that is not required by Article 14 of the Civil Service Law.

It is recommended that the entire mentoring program be collaboratively developed with the full participation and agreement of district officials and the local teachers' union. Experience has shown that professional development is most effective when it is planned with the input of representatives of the

recipients of the training. This principle holds true for this form of professional development as well.

Role of the mentor. By regulation, confidentiality of information obtained by the mentors in their work with their assigned mentees must be maintained, if the mentor will serve in a strictly guidance and support role. Mentors may also serve in an evaluative role relative to their assigned new teachers if this responsibility is negotiated and incorporated into the appropriate collective bargaining agreements.

The information obtained by a mentor through interaction with the new teacher while engaged in the mentoring activities of the program shall not be used for evaluating or disciplining the new teacher; unless the school district or BOCES has entered into an agreement, negotiated pursuant to Article 14 of the Civil Service Law whose terms are in effect, that provides that the information obtained by the mentor through interaction with the new teacher while engaged in the mentoring activities of the program may be used for evaluating or disciplining the new teacher.

The mentor can fulfill a variety of roles for the novice teacher: guide, advocate, confidante, subject expert, "critical friend", champion, and reflective partner, all of which can be considered in light of the overall goals of the mentoring program. Minimally, however, a decision should be made early on regarding the mentor's role relative to a novice teacher's performance evaluation. A mentor may participate in the novice's evaluation, or maintain a purely supportive role in his or her colleague's development. There are advantages to both courses. A mentor in conjunction with a beginning teacher's supervisor can assist in assuring that the performance review is a true professional growth experience for the novice. On the other hand, defining the mentor's role as guidance and support, and ensuring confidentiality of the participants' interactions, helps to create a truly collegial relationship, inviting honesty, risk-taking, and self-reflection by the novice teacher about the practice of teaching.

Mentor selection. The regulation calls for the mentoring plan to include a *procedure for selecting mentors, which shall be published and made available to staff of the school district or BOCES and upon request to members of the public...*

Mentors should be selected based on mastery of pedagogical skills, content knowledge, teaching experience, interpersonal skills and a willingness to serve as a mentor. Particular consideration should be given to teachers with National Board certification, or locally recognized teachers of excellence. Districts that have experience with teacher mentoring often add other local criteria such as leadership qualities, organizational skills, experience with informal mentoring, and positive attitude toward professional growth. They also point to such skills or attitudes as self-confidence, enthusiasm for teaching, and the ability to see many different ways to accomplish a purpose or goal, as desirable in mentor candidates (NYSED, 1989).

The experience of many school districts indicates that mentor selection is best conducted by a carefully balanced committee of experienced educators. The procedures and criteria for the selection of teacher mentors should be clearly articulated to the public. The importance of an open and thoughtful process cannot be overstated. The presence of a balanced committee using a well-defined public process helps eliminate future questions regarding the quality of the mentoring program.

Mentoring activities. Mentoring programs may include such activities as joint lesson planning, coaching, observations, reflection activities, or even curricula development around the NYS Learning Standards. By regulation, districts must describe in the mentoring plan a defined set of activities in which the mentor will engage with his or her assigned beginning teacher:

types of mentoring activities ... may include but shall not be limited to modeling instruction for the new teacher, observing instruction, instructional planning with the new teacher, peer coaching, team teaching, and orienting the new teacher to the school culture...

Mentor preparation and development. The regulation is not restrictive, but rather, seeks to move districts toward best practices.

the preparation of mentors, which may include but shall not be limited to the study of the theory of adult learning, the theory of teacher development, the elements of a mentoring relationship, peer coaching

techniques, and time management methodology...

Even excellent, highly skilled teachers need preparation as they take on the role of a mentor to a colleague. Adult learning theory, teacher development, knowledge of beginning teacher needs, conferencing skills, coaching techniques, reflective practice and establishing effective communication with parents and colleagues are all areas which are beneficial to include in mentor preparation programs. Preparation for mentors can be delivered as formal courses of preparation, for example, those offered by colleges, teacher centers, school districts or consortia offerings. In addition, mentor support groups or monthly mentor meetings are important as on-going sources of support for mentors. A mentor's participation in such activities could partially fulfill the continuing professional development requirements for the maintenance of professional certification, after February 2004.

Time allocation. The district must consider and decide when and how much time will be provided for mentors to carry out mentoring activities. The regulation allows for an array of configurations that a district might employ to ensure that there is adequate opportunity for mentoring activities to take place, including release from instructional time, release from duties, the use of superintendent conference days, and summer orientation. There is latitude in **how** time is provided, but there **must** be a defined time when mentoring services will occur:

time allotted for mentoring, which may include but shall not be limited to scheduling common planning sessions, releasing the mentor and the new teacher from a portion of their instructional and/or non-instructional duties, and providing time for mentoring during superintendent conference days, before and after the school day, and during summer orientation sessions.

Significantly, best practice dictates that districts plan and build into school scheduling time for professional development for teachers in its employ.

Record keeping requirements. The regulation requires districts to retain the names and teacher certificate numbers of mentors and the teachers to whom they provided service, mentoring activities and the number of clock hours of mentoring provided to each new teacher.

School districts and BOCES shall maintain documentation of the implementation of the mentoring program described in the professional development plan. Such documentation shall include for each individual receiving mentoring pursuant to the mentoring program: the name of that individual, his or her teacher certificate identification number, the type of mentoring activity, the number of clock hours successfully completed in the mentoring activity, and the name and the teacher certificate identification number of the individual who provided the mentoring.

For Consideration in Designing the Mentoring Program

The mentoring relationship. The quality of the relationship between the experienced teacher and the novice teacher is central to an effective and meaningful mentoring experience. The knowledge, organizational skills, and wisdom of the experienced mentor teacher, coupled with the energy, enthusiasm, and eagerness of the newcomer, are key ingredients leading to a more productive and satisfying beginning teaching experience. The mentoring relationship emerges, develops, and matures in response to the beginning teacher's perceived needs and abilities (NYSED, 2000). In general it should be characterized as professional, flexible, trustful, mutually educational and entailing sustained, frequent contact. Districts should support the establishment of the mentoring relationship in a number of ways, including arranging for initiation of the relationship, e.g., joint orientation, common training or social events early in the school year; scheduling; and establishing a process to allow for adjustments in mentor/mentee pairing (Mager, 2000).

Role of the principal and other educators in the school. The relationship with the school administrator is a key relationship in the newcomer's professional life. The initial relationship of a beginning teacher with his or her principal greatly impacts the decision to remain in teaching (Gold, 1996, p. 579). In successful teacher mentoring programs, building principals participate in mentor selection, facilitate assignment of new teachers to mentors, support and champion mentoring as integral to the school's professional development planning to other teachers and parents, assist with scheduling for program

activities, and assist in the design of the mentoring program, among other activities.

The induction of teachers needs to be seen as the work and responsibility of the entire school community. For example, mentors will frequently direct assigned mentees to other colleagues' classrooms to observe or include them in action research or curriculum development projects with other teachers, to experience collegial collaboration. This should be encouraged if schools are to become truly supportive learning communities for all learners, students and teachers.

Mentoring and annual professional performance reviews. Regardless of the district's designation of the mentor's role as strictly one of guidance or one of evaluation as well as guidance, the presence of a mentoring program should never be construed as limiting or replacing the process of annual professional performance reviews conducted by school administrators or others who supervise the beginning teacher. The mentor program should complement the annual professional performance review process, sharing the common goal of excellent teaching and increasing student achievement.

Role of colleges and universities. Educators from postsecondary institutions proximate to the district are an excellent resource and should be included in the design and planning of the district-mentoring program. In addition, college faculty can provide content area expertise, reflective courses and seminars, consultation for local program evaluation, sponsorship and support of regional mentoring activities, e.g., mentor training or conferences for multi-district mentoring participants. College faculty in teacher preparation programs can also be an important connection for recruitment of classroom replacement/substitute teachers.

Program coordination. Teacher mentoring programs in districts are best overseen and coordinated by an identified person or small group who will attend to such matters as working with building principals to schedule program activities, including conferencing, classroom observations, or mentor training. This group or individual also needs to intervene when mentor teacher and beginning teacher matches require adjustment due to personality conflicts or other unforeseen circumstances. The particular configuration depends on local circumstances and there is no one model that is best for all districts. Some districts have successfully utilized teachers as coordinators, to work cooperatively with building principals; others have used a co-coordinator design with an administrator and teacher jointly acting as coordinators; still others choose to coordinate by committee (a caution here: too large a group may be unwieldy). Whatever program coordination design is chosen, there should be linkages with the district's professional development planning committee.

Adjustments in mentor teacher and beginning teacher pairings. Occasionally, despite everyone's best efforts and sound selection processes, the mentoring relationship is troubled, has irretrievably broken down, and does not meet the needs of the beginning teacher. This eventuality should be anticipated, not because it happens often (in fact, it is quite rare that conflicts can't be worked through), but because the new teacher's needs are paramount in the teacher mentoring relationship, and it is essential that it not be a negative experience for the newcomer. In fact, it is advisable, if another mentor is not available in the event of an unsuccessful pairing, that the new teacher be supported outside of the formal mentor program with care taken by the program coordinator that this not be seen as a failure on the part of the new teacher.

Program evaluation. Evaluation of teacher mentoring programs is done for the purposes of accountability, program improvement, and to grow the local and statewide knowledge base of successful mentoring practices. Decisions about the evaluation of teacher mentoring programs should be made during the planning phase of the program. Such decisions include:

- Who will conduct the evaluation? Will you use district personnel or contract for the services of an external evaluator? There are advantages to both: in-house resources may be less costly and more accessible; using an external evaluator may bring fresh perspectives and allow for greater assurances to respondents of the confidentiality of their input.
- Who is the intended audience? School community, parents, school board members, district professional development committees, SED, and local legislative representatives are all possible audiences.

- What questions do you want addressed by the evaluation? For this, go back to the expected outcomes of the teacher-mentoring program: e.g., teacher retention, improved school climate, increased teacher effectiveness, increased student achievement. Are you concerned about any negative impact to the school community or to instructional programming? Do you want to make adjustments to the various components of the mentoring program during implementation?
- What kinds of data will be collected and how will it be collected? Again, go back to desired outcomes for direction here. Think long-term and short-term information needs. You may also wish to look at some historical factors; for instance, what is the recent history of teacher turnovers? Is there any "exit" interview data as to why teachers leave? Are mentors and new teachers comfortable with arrangements for time for their working together? What about the effect on others in the school building?

Improvements can be made in the teacher-mentoring program each year if you build in the means for evaluative feedback to be used in program development. Continuity of personnel in advisory or steering groups will be beneficial to this process. Also, former mentors and mentees can provide valuable information about activities, materials, training or support strategies that were particularly effective for them (Regional Laboratory for the Northeast and Islands, 1994; Mager, 2001).

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COMMENTS regarding these draft guidelines may be directed to Nancy Brennan, Associate in the SED Office of Teaching at nbrennan@mail.nysed.gov.

[Frequently asked questions](#)

Mentoring Requirement

1. **As a new teacher with an Initial certificate, am I supposed to receive one year of mentoring or am I required to mentor another teacher?**

The purpose of the mentoring requirement is to provide a new teacher with support in order to gain skillfulness and more easily make the transition to one's first professional teaching experience. Therefore, new Initial certificate holders are to receive mentoring from an experienced teacher.

2. **Must all teachers holding Initial classroom teaching certificates complete a mentored experience in their first year of teaching in a public school?**

No. If a teacher has had at least two years of teaching prior to service in a public school under an Initial certificate, the teacher is exempt from the requirement to complete a mentored experience.

3. **If a non-public school offers a mentored experience, what is the recommended documentation of such experiences?**

It is recommended that non-public schools keep the same documentation that is required of public schools relative to mentoring experiences. This documentation includes: the names and teacher certificate numbers of beginning teachers served and those who provided the mentoring; types of mentoring activities, and total hours of mentoring successfully completed.

4. **Does a school district need to provide mentoring experiences for per diem substitute teachers it employs who hold Initial certificates?**

There are two answers depending on the duration of the employment.

- o If the Initial certificate holder is in his or her first year of teaching and is employed in the district for more than 40 days (approximately .22 FTE), the district must provide mentoring to such long-term substitute teachers.
- o If the Initial certificate holder is in his or her first year of teaching and is employed in the district 40 days (approximately .22 FTE) or less, the district is not obliged to provide mentoring to such short-term substitute teachers. However, section 100.2 dd (district professional development plans) calls for the district to plan and **provide** substantial professional development opportunities for **all** teachers in the district. It is highly recommended that districts provide all instructional staff with appropriate and focused professional development, to help students achieve consistent with State learning standards.

5. **Is a school district expected to provide mentoring for paraprofessionals in their employ?**

No, the obligation for a mentored experience in the first year of the teaching profession pertains to classroom teachers holding Initial certificates only.

6. **If a district has begun planning its mentor program to reflect the Regulatory requirements for first year Initial certificate holders, but the teachers' organization and the board of education have not been able to come to agreement, what does the Department advise?**

Keep the conversation going and remind all parties to the discussion that these mentored experiences are for the benefit of the novice teacher and ultimately for students, by ensuring experienced skillful teachers in the teaching force. Collaboration is key to a sound and effective program; so all efforts should be made to develop these mentoring programs jointly. However, the board of education is ultimately responsible for assuring that professional development through the PDP process occurs, and has authority for final approval of the district's professional development plan, including the mentoring program.

7. **What is the relationship between the New York State-mandated mentoring for certification and teacher mentoring required in schools in need of improvement under No Child Left Behind legislation?**

After February 2, 2004, teachers with NYS Initial teaching certificates must complete a mentored experience in their first year in the teaching profession. School districts must plan and implement teacher-mentoring programs to serve teachers in their employ who are obligated to have such mentored experiences, in any school within the district. A framework for these experiences is provided in section 100.2 (dd) (2) (iv) of Commissioner's Regulations (district professional development plans). See the amended language of the regulation <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/November2003/1103heppca8.htm> .

NCLB-mandated teacher mentoring is school-centered and not necessarily limited to first year teachers. However, the mentoring program for new teachers described in a district's professional development plan and NCLB-mandated mentoring provided in the context of school improvement plans should be coordinated. For example, the mentor selection process designed and reflected in the professional development plan for Initial certificate holders might be employed to select mentors for NCLB mandated mentoring.

8. **Where can I find information and advice on the development and implementation of mentoring programs?**

Begin with the Office of Teaching Initiatives website information pertaining to mentoring at <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert> . Information pertaining to mentoring as well as structural models and other resources are available under **Resources for Teachers and Schools**. Teacher centers, local teacher organizations, and Regional School Support Centers are also sources for information on the implementation and development of mentoring programs.

9. **Are non-public schools obligated to provide mentoring experiences for teachers in their employ holding an Initial certificate?**

No. While the regulation for district professional development planning and mentoring experiences for Initial certificate holders does not explicitly apply to non-public schools, we encourage non-public schools to support their novice teachers by providing a mentored experience as a means to increase instructional skillfulness as they transition from preparation to professional teaching and to promote teacher retention.

10. **If your district employs teachers who hold Transitional B Certificates. Is the district required to provide mentoring for these teachers?**

Yes, holders of Transitional B and Transitional C teaching certificates must receive mentoring, but there are differences in regulatory mandates for these certificate holders vs. those for the Initial certificate holder. See the comparison chart below.

Transitional B classroom teaching certificate

Transitional C classroom teaching certificate

Initial classroom teaching certificate

Period in which mentoring must be provided

Entire period of teaching contract (2-3 years)

Entire period of teaching contract (2-3 years)

First year of teaching only

Specific time requirements of mentoring

Daily for the first 40 days, thereafter negotiated by the college, certificate holder and school district

Daily for the first 20 days; thereafter negotiated by the college, certificate holder, and school district

To be determined locally

Specific Program Components

Scheduled Mentoring activities to include planning, observation, advisement, assessment of skills by the mentor

Scheduled Mentoring activities to include planning, observation, advisement, assessment of skills by the mentor

Mentor's primary role is that of guidance and support. The mentor's role may also be evaluative, if this responsibility is reflected in the collective bargaining agreement;

Publicized mentor selection process;

Defined mentoring activities;

Mentor preparation;

Time allocation for mentoring activities to take place;

District Record-keeping requirements;

Program elements are negotiated as called for by the Taylor Law

Mandated Participants

Certificate holder, mentor, principal, and supervising college faculty

Certificate holder, mentor, principal, and supervising college faculty

Mentor and assigned 1st year teacher

Program is described in

Agreement between preparing college, certificate holder, and school district

Agreement between preparing college, certificate holder, and school district

District Professional Development

Plan

While not required, it is strongly recommended that all mandated mentoring in a district follow the framework provided in section 100.2 (dd) (1)(iv) of the Commissioner's Regulations.

1. **What is the principal's role with respect to the new teacher if the teacher is being served in the mentored program?**

The principal, as the instructional leader of the school, continues to provide supervision and direction

through annual professional performance reviews and other means, designed to increase skillfulness of all teachers in the school and student achievement consistent State learning standards. While a principal may also provide mentoring to new teachers in his or her building, it is recommended that persons other than the building principal be the primary providers of mentoring. Keep in mind that mentoring can be a very time-consuming enterprise, particularly early in the school year, and availability of the mentor to those served is critical. New teachers in the school are best served by persons whose time is dedicated totally or in part to mentoring beginning teachers in the school or district.

It is recommended that principals take on such vital roles as participating in the design of the program, selecting mentors, supporting the program with other teachers and parents, assisting in coordination of scheduling the mentoring, and in evaluating the impact of the program.

2. Does the entire mentoring plan need to be collectively bargained?

No. Section 100.2(dd) of Commissioner's Regulation stipulates that the mentoring program be developed and implemented consistent with the Taylor Law, but does not impose a collective bargaining obligation that is not required by the Law. However, it is *strongly* recommended that the school board, school administrators, and the local teachers' organization jointly develop all aspects of this plan. An effective mentoring program will improve the practice and skills of the incoming professionals and ultimately, help students achieve consistent with the State learning standards.

3. Must the mentoring provided to Initial certificate holders be certificate specific—does the mentor need to be certified in the same subject area as the 1st year teacher to whom they are providing service?

No. While it is certainly desirable for the mentor and mentee to be certificated and teach the same subject, it is not mandated. The mentoring experience can be effective, even if the mentor is in a different certificate area.

4. Must mentors be assigned to provide service on a 1:1 ratio with the new teachers in the district?

No. A variety of configurations are allowed. It is recommended however, that if a mentor provides services to multiple teachers, that the ratios not exceed 1:10 and a smaller ratio be maintained if their assigned teachers (mentees) are located in different school sites.

5. May districts hire retired teachers as mentors?

Yes. Persons who have valid NYS teaching certificates and have gone through the district's selection process may serve as mentors.