



INFORMATION BULLETIN

The New York State Mentor Teacher-Internship Program

The New York State Mentor Teacher-Internship Program (MTIP) was established in 1986 with the enactment of Section 3033 of Education Law. It is designed to provide peer guidance and assistance to teachers in their first or second year of full-time public school employment. Due to NYSUT's lobbying efforts, the program was funded throughout the late 80's, reaching a high of \$16.5 million in 1990-91. No funding was provided from 1991 to 1994. In 1994 the state budget included \$4 million for the program. Some eighty-four districts submitted applications; however, the funds were never released by the Division of Budget, so no programs were funded by the state. No funding was provided from 1995 to 1997. In 1997 \$10 million was provided. Again, no funding in 1998, 1999, and 2000. The state budget included \$5 million for school years 2000-02, \$6 million for the 2002-03 school year, and \$4 million for the 2003-04 school year. Funding for the program remained level at \$6 million from 2004-07, until funding was increased to \$10 million in 2007-08 and 2008-09. Seventy-eight school districts and BOCES were funded in 2007-08 and ninety-three in 2008-09.

The Board of Regents adopted regulations to govern district-based mentoring programs to meet the September 2004 implementation date for school districts to provide initial certificate holders with a one year mentored experience.

Following are highlights of the New York State Mentor Teacher-Internship Program guidelines.

- The intern **must** be released from classroom instruction no less than 10 percent of the time. The previous requirement was 20 percent. Interns may now be served in their second year of their employment if not served in the first year. Previously funds could only support first-year teachers.
- In order for a district to apply, a plan **must** be prepared consistent with the Taylor Law, i.e.; it must be negotiated between the teachers' union and the district.
- A local committee, the majority of who are chosen by the local teachers' union, must select eligible mentors.
- Eligible interns are those who are full-time teachers in their first or second year of service in a particular certification area, holding a provisional certificate, a temporary license, or a New York City temporary per diem certificate.
- *No Child Left Behind* – Under the *No Child Left Behind Act* SEC. 1116, (b), (3), (x), any school receiving Title I funds found to be in need of improvement shall develop a school improvement plan that incorporates a teacher mentor program (see attached SEC. 9101, (42) for definition of teacher mentoring). Funds from Title I and Title II may be used to support a teacher mentor program.

Attachments:

- a) Section 3033 of Education Law *The New York State Mentor Teacher-Internship Program*.
- b) Part 85 of Commissioner's Regulations governing the NYS Mentor Teacher-Internship Program.
- c) Amendment to the Commissioner's Regulations 100.2(22) (iv)
- d) SED Draft Guidelines for Implementing District-Based Teacher Mentoring Programs.
- e) SEC. 9101, (42) Teacher Mentoring.

200802
Updated February 2009
Updates & Replaces: 200305
65764

New York State United Teachers
Research and Educational Services
800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, New York 12110-2455
800-342-9810 ● (518) 213-6000
Fax: (518) 213-6450



Teacher Unions Are Full Partners in the Process

According to the law and regulations, teachers' unions and school districts are to be partners in the development and implementation of Mentor Teacher-Internship Programs (MT-I).

The law states that, "Each board of education or board of cooperative educational services which applies for funds under this section shall prepare a plan for implementation of a Mentor Teacher-Internship Program consistent with article fourteen of the Civil Service Law. The plan shall be developed in accordance with this section and regulations of the commissioner."

This means that the conditions and requirements of the law must be included in the district/BOCES plan and that this plan is subject to negotiations pursuant to the Taylor Law. The plan to establish and implement a Mentor Teacher-Internship Program that is submitted with the application must be negotiated between the district and the local teachers' union.

Union Appoints Teachers to Mentor Selection Committee

The teachers' union has direct responsibility for a key element of the process, the Mentor Teacher Selection Committee. By law, the union chooses the teachers who are to be on the committee and those teachers are to constitute a majority of the committee membership.

The list of persons eligible to serve as mentor teachers is created by the selection committee. Mentors are selected from this list.

As defined by law and regulation, the mentor must have, to the satisfaction of the selection committee:

- (a) indicated a willingness to participate in the program (volunteered);
- (b) demonstrated a mastery of pedagogical and subject matter skills; and
- (c) given evidence of superior teaching abilities and interpersonal relationship qualities.

Link to Teacher Certification

Under current certification regulations, some teachers may satisfy the experience requirement for permanent certification through satisfactory completion of the internship program. Elementary teachers (CR 80.15) and secondary academic teachers (CR 80.16) must complete satisfactorily "a one academic year supervised internship or two years of teaching experience in a public or nonpublic school." The Board of Regents adopted new regulations in June 2000 that require a one-year internship for professional certification of all teachers effective September 2004.

Major Program Elements That Must be Negotiated

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Intern Selection | <p>1. The process and criteria for selection of interns:
The law states that the board of education has the right to decide which probationary teachers will and which will not participate in the program. The regulations require the intern to be a full-time teacher who is in his/her first or second year of service in a particular certification area (e.g., a teacher who has taught kindergarten and is switching to teaching 6th grade would <i>not</i> qualify as an internship candidate). Interns may be holders of a provisional certificate or a temporary per diem (TPD) certificate.</p> |
| Mentor/Intern Team | <p>2. The process and criteria for the selection of mentors for interns, i.e., how mentor/intern teams are to be created:
The law states that the superintendent assigns particular mentors to particular first year teachers. The regulations require that the mentor and intern come from the same certification area. However, a variance from this rule can be obtained from the Commissioner.
A district may choose to negotiate an agreement whereby the teachers' union creates the mentor/intern teams. The way this "teaming" is done is subject to collective bargaining.</p> |
| Confidential Advisory Relationship | <p>3. The details that define the advisory relationship between the mentor and the intern:
The regulations state that the intern is "under the guidance of a mentor teacher."
The regulations state the "mentors will 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, and the 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." This language signifies that the relationship between the mentor and the intern is to be advisory, <i>not</i> evaluative. However, a variance to alter this relationship may be requested pursuant to CR 85.2(d) which would allow information obtained by the mentor through interaction with the intern to be made available to supervisors or used in the evaluation of the intern.</p> |
| Reduced Assignments | <p>4. The law provides for a reduction in the classroom assignment of the intern and mentor to participate in the program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interns — Participating first year teachers cannot carry more than a 90% classroom instruction assignment. Accordingly, an intern's teaching assignment may be less than 90% but cannot exceed 90%.• Mentors<ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) Part-Time Mentors
The state funds will cover up to 10% of a mentor's salary thus implying a reduction of at least 10% of the mentor's classroom instruction assignment. The regulations state that a mentor must continue to provide classroom instruction for at least 60% of his/her assignment. Taken together, it appears mentoring can constitute between 10% and 40% of a teacher's assignment.
The way these assignments are made is subject to negotiations consistent with the Taylor Law.(b) Full-Time Mentors
A teacher may serve as a mentor on a full-time basis for not more than two years out of five consecutive school years.
Mentoring is, by regulation, service in a teacher's tenure area. Therefore, both part-time and full-time mentor teachers continue to accrue seniority in their tenure area in the same way they would if they were teaching in this certificate area. |

Intern Training	<p>5. The way(s) the needs of the interns for training and support will be assessed and addressed:</p> <p>The negotiated plan must include a statement of how intern training needs will be met, which may include, but is not limited to interns' participation in the district's staff development program, a teacher center, or postsecondary program.</p> <p>This part of the plan is subject to negotiations consistent with the Taylor Law.</p> <p>(Note: NYSUT's Effective Teaching Program offers a mentoring and peer coaching program which has proven to be a highly effective professional development activity for individuals participating in the MT-I Program.)</p>
Mentor Training	<p>6. The training to be provided mentors:</p> <p>The plan is to include a description of the training to be provided to mentors. As part of the plan, this program evaluation system is subject to negotiations consistent with the Taylor Law. (Again, locals should consider the NYSUT ETP mentoring and peer coaching program, which can be presented in blocks in your district.)</p>
Program Evaluation	<p>7. A program evaluation system:</p> <p>The plan must include a program evaluation system which is to have at least the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 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. <p>As part of the plan, the program evaluation system is subject to negotiations consistent with the Taylor Law.</p>
Operational Budget	<p>8. The development of an operational budget:</p> <p>When an implementation plan has been negotiated between the district/BOCES administration and the teachers' union and approved by the Commissioner, the district or BOCES is eligible to receive up to 10% of each intern's and mentor's salary. Expenditures to be supported by grant funds include reimbursement for release time costs, fringe benefits, training costs, supplies and materials, evaluation, program coordination, in-state travel costs, and replacement or substitute teacher costs. Equipment costs are not allowable. As part of the negotiated plan, the operational budget is subject to negotiations consistent with the Taylor Law.</p>
The Program Coordinator	<p>9. Program coordination should be part of the operational budget. Although the law and regulations do not refer to program coordination, the State Education Department has encouraged those applying to budget for it.</p> <p>Funded programs usually have a program coordinator (sometimes called a program director) whose salary is partially or fully funded by the MT-I grant. As part of the negotiated plan, the selection of a program coordinator, the authority of the program coordinator, and the budget of a program coordinator are subject to negotiations consistent with the Taylor Law.</p>
Variances	<p>10. Variance Requests</p> <p>a) Confidentiality — Districts with mentor teacher-internship agreements, which have been negotiated which require mentors to make "information obtained by the mentor through interaction with an intern" available to supervisors or used in the evaluation of the intern may be granted a variance to continue this practice.</p> <p>b) Other Regulations — The Commissioner may grant a variance from any MT-I regulation if the Commissioner finds that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the requirements of the regulations have been "substantially met;" or

2. the requirements of the law “have been met;” or
 3. the granting of the variance is “consistent with the purpose of the Mentor-Teacher-Internship Program.”
 - c) Same Certification Area — A variance may be obtained if it becomes difficult to match the certificate area of the mentor and the intern.
 - d) The variance process for Part 100 variances will apply to variance requests for the MT-I Program, i.e., the local bargaining agent must sign-off. No specific form is provided other than for mentor qualifications.
- Reporting 11. The development of the district/BOCES report to the State Education Department:
- a) the names of interns who have successfully completed the program;
 - b) the certification areas of the interns;
 - c) the names of the mentors, their certification areas, and years of experience;
 - d) a description of the teaching assignments of each mentor and intern;
 - e) copies of the district’s summative evaluation form concerning each intern; and
 - f) other evaluation and descriptive information as the Commissioner may require.
- As part of the negotiated plan the report is subject to negotiations consistent with the Taylor Law.

Other Issues

1. Funding – Now that school districts will be required to implement a mentoring program for new teachers with less than two years of teaching experience, it is imperative that mentoring programs not become another unfunded state mandate. Resources are needed to provide those elements – program coordination, training, salaries, and replacement teacher costs – that are essential to program quality and effectiveness. Another unfunded mandate would be particularly burdensome on low-wealth school districts; already struggling to attract and retain qualified teachers.
2. Flexibility – Current regulations allow for 10% release time from instructional duties for mentors and interns. NYSUT does not oppose changes to the regulations that allow school districts and unions flexibility in how programs are implemented. For example, minimizing loss of instructional time by allowing mentors and interns’ time to meet instead of performing other duties such as monitoring the lunch room or study hall.
3. Professional Development – Service as a mentor may satisfy some of the requirements for “substantial” professional development required as part of the new Commissioner’s Regulation (100.2(dd)) that govern district professional development plans.
4. Peer Review -- Local Leaders should obtain a copy of NYSUT’s Information Bulletin No. 200825 on New Tenure Determination Law: Use of Peer Review for guidance about the use of peer review and the role of mentoring in making tenure determinations for probationary teachers. The *Aft/NEA Handbook Peer Assistance and Peer Review* is also available at www.aft.org.
5. *No Child Left Behind* – Under the *No Child Left Behind Act*, any school receiving Title I funds that is found to be in need of improvement must incorporate a teacher mentor program. Funds from Title I and Title II may be used to support a teacher mentor program.

The term “TEACHER MENTORING” means 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.

NYSUT recommends that local leaders should strongly encourage districts to develop teacher mentoring programs using Section 3033 of New York State Education Law and Part 85 of Commissioner’s regulations that govern the New York State Mentor Teacher Internship program.

Recommendations to Local Leaders

It is recommended that local leaders do the following with regard to the New York State Mentor Teacher-Internship Program:

1. Learn if your district/BOCES is planning on applying for Mentor Teacher-Internship Program aid (the State Education Department has already sent every district/BOCES superintendent and local teacher union president an application form). If your district is not planning to apply, the local may wish to decide whether the time is right to encourage the administration to seek such aid. This grant will be helpful to meeting the district’s 2004 requirements.
2. If your district/BOCES is planning to apply, develop an understanding with administration that the law makes the teachers’ union a full partner in the process.
3. Determine if the relationship of the mentor and intern will remain confidential. If your contract has made provision for a peer evaluation type of program, and you wish to have the mentor involved in the evaluation of the intern, you must request a variance. The relationship between the mentor and intern will remain confidential unless that role is altered through collective bargaining.
4. Negotiate the MT-I Program coordination be under the direction of a coordinator who is a union officer or union member.
5. Negotiate a governance structure that requires union participation in program oversight, problem solving and conflict resolution.
6. Work closely with your teacher center and/or NYSUT’s Education & Learning Trust to develop appropriate staff development opportunities.
7. Establish a reporting system by which the union’s board is regularly kept aware of developments regarding the Mentor Teacher-Internship Program.
8. 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 of the MT-I Program using formal channels (e.g., newsletters, web sites, faculty meetings) and informal channels;
 - ◆ support the MT-I Program by resolving teacher conflicts and clearing up misunderstandings about the program;
 - ◆ report ongoing developments to the appropriate union officials; and
 - ◆ obtain support for the MT-I Program from the union’s membership by including reports on the program on the agenda of regular union meetings.
9. Take every opportunity to educate the community to the benefits of the MT-I Program and the major role played in the program by the teachers through their union.
10. Obtain the assistance of your Labor Relations Specialist.

S 3033 New York State mentor teacher-internship program.

1. Boards of education and boards of cooperative educational services are hereby authorized to participate in the New York State mentor teacher-internship program in accordance with the provisions of this section.
2. Each board of education or board of cooperative educational services which applies for funds under this section shall prepare a plan for implementation of a mentor teacher-internship program consistent with article fourteen of the civil service law. The plan shall be developed in accordance with this section and regulations of the commissioner. The board of education or board of cooperative educational services shall submit an application and plan by May first of the current year for approval by the commissioner; provided however for the nineteen hundred ninety-seven--ninety-eight school year, such plan may be submitted by November first, nineteen hundred ninety-seven.
3. Each board of education and board of cooperative educational services which determines to participate in the program shall select persons eligible to serve as mentor teachers from a list of persons who have demonstrated their mastery of pedagogical and subject matter skills, given evidence of superior teaching abilities and interpersonal relationship qualities, and who have indicated their willingness to participate in such program. Such list of persons eligible to serve as mentor teachers shall be developed by a selection committee composed of certified or licensed personnel employed by the school district or the board of cooperative educational services, a majority of whom shall be classroom teachers chosen by the certified or recognized teachers employee organization. The assignment of particular mentor teachers and teacher interns to work together shall be made by the superintendent of the participating district or district superintendent of the participating board of cooperative educational services. Each person designated as a mentor teacher shall continue to provide classroom instruction for at least sixty percent of the time spent in performance of such individual's duties during the school year or such person may so serve on a full-time basis for not more than two school years out of five consecutive school years, provided that such service as a mentor teacher shall not diminish or impair the tenure and seniority rights of the mentor teacher.
1. Each board of education and board of cooperative educational services which determines to participate in the mentor teacher-internship program shall require those first or second year eligible teachers which it chooses to include in the program to perform their duties under the guidance of a mentor teacher, and shall ensure that such teacher intern and mentor carry no more than a ninety percent classroom instruction assignment in order to allow such teacher intern time to receive special assistance from a mentor teacher. In order to participate as a teacher intern in a mentor teacher-internship program, a first or second year teacher shall hold a provisional or permanent teaching certificate, temporary emergency license, regular license, or temporary per diem certificate for a field in which no licensed person is available to teach and shall not have participated in such program in the previous year.
5. A school district or board of cooperative educational services participating in an approved mentor teacher-internship program in the current year shall be eligible for aid including but not limited to costs related to release time of the intern and mentor teacher up to ten percent of the mentor teacher's salary and up to ten percent of the teacher intern's salary respectively in accordance with the provisions of this subdivision. To receive such assistance, a school district or board of cooperative educational services must file a claim with the commissioner by October first of the current school year in a form prescribed by the commissioner which shall include the actual salary of each program participant as of September fifteenth of such year. The commissioner shall pay one-half of the amount of such assistance by January fifteenth of each year and shall pay the remaining amount based upon a final report filed by the school district by August fifteenth of each year.
6. Each board of education and board of cooperative educational services which participates in the program shall file a report with the commissioner on or before August first of each school year concerning compliance with the requirements of the program during the preceding school year. Such report shall be in such form and in such manner as the commissioner may require. The commissioner shall evaluate such programs and file a report with the legislature on or before December first, nineteen hundred eighty-seven.

Part 85 Mentor Teacher Internship Program

(Statutory authority: Education Law, §§ 207, 3033 [2]-[4], [5]; L. 1997, ch. 436, § 1, part A, § 117-b) Sec.

Historical Note

Part (§§ 85.1-85.2) filed: May 27, 1986 as emergency measure, expired 60 days after filing; July 28, 1986 as emergency measure; made permanent by order filed Sept. 26, 1986 eff. Sept. 27, 1986.

§ 85.1 Definitions.

As used in section 3033 of the Education Law and in this Part:

(a) Intern shall mean a person who:

(1) is a full-time teacher with no greater than a 90 percent classroom instruction assignment employed by the governing body of a school district or board of cooperative educational services having an approved internship plan, and is in his or her first or second year of service in a particular license area or area of certificate title;

(2) holds a valid provisional or permanent teacher's certificate or temporary emergency license issued by the Commissioner of Education, or a valid regular teaching license, temporary per diem certificate for a field in which no licensed person is available to teach, or the equivalent of a temporary emergency license issued by the city school district of the City of Buffalo, other than a certificate or license valid for supervisory or administrative service; and

(3) has not participated in the mentor teacher-internship program in the previous year.

(b) Mentor shall mean a teacher who is permanently certified in the same area of certificate title as the intern, or permanently licensed in the same license area as the intern, and who has demonstrated his or her mastery of pedagogical and subject matter skills, given evidence of superior teaching abilities and interpersonal relationship qualities, and has indicated willingness to participate by being a mentor in an approved mentor teacher-internship program. Each teacher designated as a mentor shall carry not more than a 90 percent classroom instruction assignment but at least a 60 percent classroom instruction assignment, except that a teacher may serve as a mentor on a full-time basis for not more than two school years out of five consecutive school years. In the event that a school district or board of cooperative educational services demonstrates to the satisfaction of the commissioner that an appropriately certified mentor is not available, a teacher permanently certified or licensed in a different area of certificate title or license area than that of the intern, may serve as a mentor. Service as a mentor shall not result in any change in the mentor's tenure area or areas, and shall not otherwise diminish or impair the tenure and seniority rights of the mentor teacher.

Historical Note

Sec. filed: May 27, 1986 as emergency measure, expired 60 days after filing; July 28, 1986; amds. filed: July 27, 1987; Nov. 2, 1987 as emergency measure; Dec. 28, 1987 as emergency measure; Jan. 26, 1988; Dec. 23, 1997 eff. Feb. 6, 1998.

§ 85.2 Application and district internship plan.

(a) Application. In order to qualify for State funds pursuant to Education Law, section 3033 and this Part, a

school district or board of cooperative educational services shall submit an application and plan in a form prescribed by the commissioner. Such application and plan shall be submitted for approval by the commissioner no later than the date specified by Education Law, section 3033(2). Such application shall contain an assurance by the chief executive officer of the school district or board of cooperative educational services that the plan to establish and implement a mentor teacher-internship program has been approved by the board of education or board of cooperative educational services.

(b) District internship plan. The plan shall provide evidence of its development in accordance with the provisions of article 14 of the Civil Service Law, and shall contain the following components:

(1) a statement of the number of interns and mentors to participate in the program during the school year for which funding is requested and the percentage of all eligible persons in the district or board of cooperative educational services who will participate as interns in the program.

(2) a description of:

(i) how the needs of the interns for training and support will be assessed;

(ii) the training and professional support to be provided to the interns, which may include, but shall not be limited to, participation in the district or board of cooperative educational services staff development program, a teacher resource and computer training center or a post-secondary institution program; and

(iii) how the mentors will guide and support their interns, including the portion of time each intern will have direct contact with the mentor, 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 and that 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;

(3) the process and criteria for the selection of mentors for interns, including the selection of persons eligible to serve as mentors from a list of eligible persons developed by a selection committee composed of certified or licensed personnel employed by the school district or board of cooperative educational services, a majority of whom shall be classroom teachers. Such classroom teachers shall be chosen by the certified or recognized teachers employee organizations representing teachers in the school district or board of cooperative educational services whenever such organizations exist;

(4) the process and criteria for selection of interns;

(5) a description of the training to be provided to mentors including a description of the extent to which this training will be coordinated with the district staff development program;

(6) a program evaluation system which shall include, but shall not be limited to, criteria for assessment of mentor performance, and criteria for assessment of intern performance in areas including, but not limited to, instructional planning and management, classroom management, presentation of subject matter and communication skills; and

(7) an operational budget, in a form satisfactory to the commissioner, which identifies all funds and resources deemed necessary for the implementation of the program. Such budget may include up to 10 percent of the salary of each mentor per mentor-intern relationship and up to 10 percent of the salary of each intern, and other estimated costs of the program including, but not limited to, the reasonable cost of evaluation, training and materials. Equipment costs shall not be included.

(c) Reporting requirements. Following each school year in which a school district or board of cooperative educational services has implemented an internship plan, the school district or board of cooperative educational services shall file with the department a report which shall include the names of the interns who

have successfully completed the mentor teacher-internship program and their areas of certification and licensure, the certificate titles or license areas and the number of years of teaching experience of the teachers who have served as mentors, a description of the teaching assignments of each mentor and intern, and copies of each intern's summative evaluation form together with other evaluation and descriptive information as the commissioner may require. Such information shall be submitted in a form prescribed by the commissioner.

(d) Variances. (1) A variance may be granted from the requirement of subparagraph (b)(2)(iii) of this section that 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 upon a finding by the commissioner that a school district or board of cooperative educational services has entered into an agreement negotiated pursuant to article 14 of the Civil Service Law, concerning the use of such information whose terms are in effect and are inconsistent with such requirement.

(2) A variance may be granted from any of the specific requirements of this Part upon a finding by the commissioner that:

(i) such requirements have been substantially met;

(ii) all requirements of section 3033 of the Education Law have been met; and

(iii) the granting of a variance is consistent with the purposes of the mentor teacher-internship program.

Historical Note

Sec. filed: May 27, 1986 as emergency measure, expired 60 days after filing; July 28, 1986; amds. filed: Nov. 2, 1987 as emergency measure; Dec. 28, 1987 as emergency measure; Jan. 26, 1988; June 26, 1990; Dec. 23, 1997; Sept. 19, 2000 as emergency measure; Nov. 14, 2000 eff. Nov. 30, 2000. Amended (d)(1).

Amendment to the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education

100.2(22) (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.



[resources - educators](#) > [mentoring resources](#)

Guidelines for Implementing District - Based Teacher Mentoring Programs

- [Initial Steps](#)
- [Required Mentoring Plan Components](#)
- [For Consideration in Designing the Mentoring Program](#)
- [References](#)

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).

References

Bullard, C. Qualified teachers for all California students: Current issues in recruitment, preparation, and professional development. California State Library, August, 1998.

Gold, Y. "Beginning teacher support: Attrition, mentoring and induction". In Handbook of Teacher Education (2nd Edition), 1996.

Mager, G. Statement of mentoring as a form of new teacher induction. Presented to the NYS Professional Standards and Practices Board, 2000.

Mager, G. [Discussion of evaluation of teacher mentoring programs, 2001]

Newton, A.; Bergstrom, K.; Brennan, N.; Dunne, K.; Gilbert, C.; Ibarquen, N.; Perez-Seles, M.; and Thomas, E. Mentoring: A resource and training guide for educators. Andover, MA: Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 1994

New York State Education Department. Mentor Teacher Internship Program: Guidebook (Draft), 1989.

New York State Education Department. A report to the State Education Department on the New York State Mentor Teacher Internship Program for 1986-87: A follow-up on the experiences of intern teachers. Prepared by Dr. Gerald Mager, Stanley Cianfarano and Carol Corwin, June, 1990.

New York State Education Department. NYS Mentor Teacher Internship Program, 1986-91: Summary of teacher retention reports. NYSED, 1991.

New York State Education Department. 2000-2001 New York State Mentor Teacher Internship Program:
Request for proposal, 2000

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

No Child Left Behind Excerpt

Section 9109

- (42) **TEACHER MENTORING-** The term teacher mentoring' means 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 their instructional skills; and
 - 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.

65764