

## New Teacher Induction & Mentoring Program Overview

TPS's *New Teacher Induction & Mentoring Program* is based on the [MA DESE Guidelines for Induction & Mentoring Programs](#). A successful induction and mentoring program offers supports to the growth and development of educators who are new to the profession, new to the district, or new to a role in an effort to help them make a strong impact on students. It provides teachers with a systematic structure of support that helps them to be efficacious, become familiar with their school and district, refine their practice, and to better understand their professional responsibilities.

Key components of an effective induction program include:

- Orientation Program: This should include both a start-of-the-year district level and school level orientation. The school level orientation may include experiences during the hiring process, formal staff meetings, and individualized information sessions.
- Support Team: This team should include, minimally, the mentor & administrator, as well as the teacher's grade level and/or content team members. Team(s) should meet regularly and provide support for the development of the new teacher.
- Mentor Program: The mentor relationship is shaped by the activities that the mentor and new teacher participate in together. As part of the licensure regulations, districts are required to provide release time for both the mentor and mentee to engage in regular classroom observations and other mentoring activities ([603 CMR 7.12 \(2\) \(d\)](#)). A strong mentor should be instrumental in: facilitating a strong start to the school year; providing instructional, professional, and personal support; maintaining a confidential relationship with the mentee; serving as a liaison, resource, and teacher leader. A successful mentor program should include:
  - Regular peer group meetings with other mentees and mentors
  - Classroom observations & conferencing with mentor (live or video): frequent, short, targeted, planned & unplanned
  - Observing other effective teachers (including mentor)

Massachusetts requires beginning teachers to receive tailored learning opportunities beyond the initial induction year in order to receive a professional license. This is often referred to as the 50 hour mentoring requirement. ESE strongly recommends that this requirement be met through ongoing induction/mentoring supports in year two and three.



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## **Who's Who**

Program Coordinator: Michael Woodlock

Building Mentor Facilitators: Tom Varnum-THS, Katie Leahy-TMS, Jason Lewis-TES

Mentors: As trained and assigned

## **Structure**

Each new teacher will be paired with a trained mentor for his/her first three years in the district.

### **Year 1 Structure**

Each mentor and mentee pair will meet each month on a regularly scheduled basis. These meetings can vary in length. However, it is expected that the pair formally meet for a minimum of 2 hours per month (September-June). The topics and activities covered in these meetings should be purposefully chosen and structured to meet the needs of the mentee. Topics and activities should relate to the [Standards of Effective Teaching](#) as documented in the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Teacher Performance Rubric. Additionally, mentors and mentees could refer to the [Core Mentoring Topics/Activities document](#) for local guidance. It is recommended that mentor facilitators work with the mentors to schedule and plan 3 peer group meeting (one per trimester) for all first year new teachers. These could take the place of a one-on-one session.

Each mentor will conduct 3 classroom observations (one per trimester) of his/her mentee and then hold a follow up meeting to provide feedback related to areas of strengths and areas in need of improvement. The mentor will use the [Mentor Observation Form](#) as an organizational document and instructional tool. It is recommended that the mentor conduct a mix of announced and unannounced observations (based on the comfort level of the mentee).

Each mentor may also set up opportunities for his/her mentee to observe other teachers in an effort to broaden the mentee's overall knowledge base or to purposefully focus on a skill related to areas such as: curriculum/lesson planning, instruction, assessment, classroom management, and classroom climate. Mentees will use the [Mentee Observation Form](#) as an organizational document and instructional tool to guide their post-observation reflection and learning.

Each mentor will maintain a [Mentor Log](#) for the purpose of tracking his/her time and work, assuring that all identified and/or pertinent topics and needs have been reviewed/addressed/met, and helping guide the year-end program review. This log should be updated, minimally, at the end of each trimester.

Each Mentee will maintain a [Mentee Log](#) for the purpose of tracking his/her time and learning experiences, and documenting participation in the New Teacher Induction & Mentoring Program to meet licensure requirements (50 hour requirement). This log should include all related time and learning experiences that were not mentor-directed such as: in-house PD, conferences & workshops, graduate courses or other related experiences as approved by the program coordinator. This log should be updated, minimally, at the end of each trimester.

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### Year 2 Structure

Year 2 will provide mentees with a more personalized, needs based model. At the start of the school year, the mentee will work with his/her mentor to identify one or two professional focus areas based on feedback from past evaluations, mentor observations, and/or information gathered through other types of feedback including personal reflection. These areas should connect with the mentee's professional practice and/or student learning goals as outlined in his/her educator plan.

Each mentor and mentee pair will meet each month on a regularly scheduled basis. These meetings can vary in length. However, it is expected that the pair formally meet for a minimum of 2 hours per month (September-June). These meetings will focus on supporting the mentee's knowledgebase and skill sets related to the identified focus areas.

Expectations related to required mentor classroom observations, optional mentee observations of other teachers, and the completion of Mentor and Mentee Logs will continue in year two as outlined in *Year 1 Structure*.

### Year 3 Structure

Year 3 will be organized around a shared text(s) and will provide mentees with opportunities to apply what they are learning through the text to their current practice. Each mentor and mentee pair will participate in a book study program that will be facilitated by the Mentor Facilitators. This book study will include a minimum of three face-to-face sessions as well as asynchronous work in between each session.

Each mentor and mentee pair will meet each month on a regularly scheduled basis. These meetings can vary in length. However, it is expected that the pair formally meet for a minimum of 1 hour per month (September-June). These meetings will focus on supporting the mentee's knowledge base and skill sets related to the topics and strategies identified through the book study.

Expectations related to required mentor classroom observations, optional mentee observations of other teachers, and the completion of Mentor and Mentee Logs will continue in year three as outlined in *Year 1 Structure*.

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### **The Mentor Program Confidentiality Policy**

The issue of confidentiality in the mentor/mentee relationship is as sensitive as it is important. The Mentor Program Confidentiality Policy respects the beginning/new teacher's need to grow and learn in a professional environment. Mentors are asked to use their judgment in distinguishing between communications of any type with others that are intended for the constructive development of the new teacher, as opposed to those that might result in the evaluation of the new teacher, noting the following conditions:

1. A mentor will be able to discuss, in confidence and with the mentee's knowledge, any aspect of the mentee's performance with other members of the mentoring team. This includes initiating conversations with the Mentor Program Coordinator and with the mentee's evaluator to consult about the evaluator's recommendations for improvement.
2. A mentor, with the mentee's knowledge and permission, may discuss the mentee's teaching performance with resource professionals whose job it is to help teachers. This could include content leaders, consultants, instructional coaches, and other administrators.
3. A mentor, with the mentee's knowledge, may discuss the mentee's teaching performance with appropriate administrators, if in the mentor's professional judgment, the academic growth and development, social well-being, or physical safety of students is at risk.

### **No Fault Bail Out Policy**

What if, despite the good intentions of everyone, the mentor/mentee match simply does not work?

Sometimes, two good teachers find their personalities don't match or that the pairing is unsatisfactory. *It is important to note in unsatisfactory mentor/mentee relationships, mentors and mentees should not just stop meeting.*

To help in troubled matches, the "No Fault Bail Out" process enables the pair to talk with someone else either to help mediate difficulties or to start the process of dissolving the relationship. Good candidates to seek help from might include the Building Mentor Facilitator, a building administrator, a school counselor, or the Mentor Program Coordinator.

If after mediation, the decision is made to dissolve the relationship, a new pairing will be made by the building administrator, with "no prejudice" towards either party. The Mentor Program Coordinator should be notified so records are updated.

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## **Resources**

Inducting and Mentoring Teachers New to the District (book) - Ribas

Instructional Practices that Maximize Student Achievement (book) - Ribas, Dean & Seider

[Mentoring In Action \(website\)](#)

[Effective Teaching \(website\) - Harry Wong](#)

[Teachers Helping Teachers \(website\)](#)