



Savannah-Chatham County Public School System Teacher Induction Handbook

2025-2026 SY

The Office of Professional Learning Vision/Mission

Vision: To empower all staff through professional development to perform at their highest potential.

Mission: Provide impactful professional learning experiences to optimize individual skills and talents of all employees.

THRIVE Vision: Cultivate the optimal performance of induction phase teachers.

THRIVE Mission: Provide impactful professional learning experiences in a supportive environment that promote the continuous professional growth of induction phase teachers.

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Purpose Letter

Dear Induction Stakeholder,

The purpose of this handbook is to help guide SCCPSS educators and administrators through the process of induction. In order to develop and maintain a highly effective faculty, the THRIVE induction program strives to provide professional learning experiences that support the professional growth of our newest teachers and give them a strong start in our schools.

Induction is a team effort. District specialists, administrators, teacher leaders, and induction phase teachers all play a vital role in the success of this program. The Office of Professional Learning strives to continuously improve this process each year. This handbook will help all participants stay current with procedures of the induction program and provide consistency in the support that is offered to induction phase teachers.

Thank you in advance for your commitment to our collective professional growth.

Sincerely,

The Office of Professional Learning

Definition of Terms

Induction: The process of providing a variety of professional support in order to promote successful entry into the teaching profession and/or SCCPSS.

Induction Phase Teacher (THRIVE teacher): A teacher who has been hired into a new permanent position. Teachers are considered to be in the “induction phase” until they have successfully completed the district induction program and/or completed their first three years of teaching.

Induction Support Team: Group which includes an administrator, mentor, SBIS/instructional coach, and when possible, a district specialist or other external support agency representative (RESA, GSU, etc.) that works with a THRIVE teacher to develop and monitor progress of the teacher induction plan.

Mentor: Educator who provides guidance, shares knowledge and experiences, and supports the induction phase teachers in making a positive impact on student growth and achievement.

Site-Based Induction Specialist (SBIS): Induction leader who coordinates the school-based implementation of the district induction program.

System Orientation for Incoming Educators (SOFIE): District and school-based orientation that includes onboarding and foundational professional learning for newly hired certified employees.

Teacher Induction Plan (TIP): A professional development plan created in collaboration between the THRIVE teacher and induction support team that drives professional learning and differentiated support.

THRIVE: Name of the SCCPSS teacher induction program.

THRIVE Hub: Brightspace course where induction tasks are placed and required documentation can be uploaded.

Program Overview

THRIVE is the Savannah-Chatham County School System's (SCCPSS) teacher induction program. It includes the following elements:

- Three-pronged approach of support (district, school, and peer)
- A 1-3 year comprehensive plan for professional learning
- 1 year mentor support for THRIVE 1 teachers
- Training for mentors, SBIS, and administrators

THRIVE teachers have a variety of backgrounds and levels of experience. The needs of each of each induction phase teacher will vary. The THRIVE program is designed to provide consistent quality support to every induction phase teacher while meeting their diverse professional learning needs. THRIVE is divided into 3 levels on a continuum of professional learning, support, and proficiency. Below are some guidelines for selecting the THRIVE Level of an induction phase teacher:

Level	Description	TAPS Focus Standards
THRIVE 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers with ≤ 1 year experience • International teachers with no previous experience teaching in the United States 	Professional Knowledge (1) Instructional Planning (2) Positive Learning Environment (7) Professionalism (9) Communication (10)
THRIVE 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers with 1-2 years experience 	Instructional Strategies (3) Assessment Strategies (5) Positive Learning Environment (7) Professionalism (9) Communication (10)
THRIVE 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers with 2-3 years experience • Veteran teacher with 3+ years experience but new to the district 	Differentiated Instruction (4) Assessment Uses (6) Academically Challenging Environment (8) Professionalism (9) Communication (10)

*****Administrators may decide to move an induction phase teacher through the levels early based on documented proficiency on the TAPS standards. These changes should be documented on the school profile notes and induction plan.***

THRIVE Teacher

Role and Responsibilities

THRIVE teachers are expected to:

- Be open and candid concerning needs for professional growth and development.
- Commit to being a reflective practitioner.
- Participate fully in the THRIVE induction process.
- Complete/submit all required induction tasks and documents.

Resources and Support

THRIVE Hub: THRIVE teachers will be able to monitor the dates and tasks at each THRIVE level through the THRIVE Hub for their school.

Mentor: THRIVE 1 teachers will be assigned a mentor to work closely with them throughout the year. Mentors will meet regularly with THRIVE teachers to answer questions, give feedback, help with resources, or other forms of support.

SBIS: Each school will have a site-based induction specialist. This person will coordinate THRIVE in your school, provide additional support for THRIVE 2 & 3 teachers, and conduct monthly training for THRIVE 1 teachers and their mentors.

Monthly meetings: THRIVE 1 teachers, their mentors, and others as required by administration will attend monthly meetings with the Site-Based Induction Specialist (SBIS) at each school. Attendance at these meetings is a requirement of THRIVE 1. If a meeting is missed, the SBIS can arrange for a make-up meeting or alternative task.

THRIVE Conferences: THRIVE teachers will attend THRIVE professional learning conferences throughout the year. These professional development sessions will focus on the priority Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS) at each THRIVE level. Other professional learning sessions and courses may be considered as alternatives to these sessions at the request of administrators and/or SBIS.

International, TSLA (GaTAPP), Teacher on Loan

International Teachers

It is recommended that newly hired international teachers with previous experience working in the United States and 3 or more years of classroom experience be placed in THRIVE 3. International teachers with no prior experience teaching in the United States should be placed in THRIVE 1 regardless of previous classroom experience. All teachers can progress through the THRIVE levels based on their performance on TAPS at the administrator's discretion. All progress through the induction process should be documented on the teacher's induction plan in the school profile.

TSLA (GaTAPP) Teachers

Many of our THRIVE teachers will be enrolled in Teach Savannah Learning Academy (TSLA). TSLA is an alternative certification program endorsed by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. These teachers will take courses that often meet the needs of their THRIVE requirements. The Office of Professional Learning strives to integrate these programs as much as possible to prevent overloading THRIVE teachers with tasks that are redundant. For example:

- Model classroom observations count for both the TSLA and THRIVE requirements.
- TSLA classroom observation and feedback can be used to meet the needs of THRIVE 1.
- Courses taken through the TSLA program can count towards professional development needs determined in the teacher induction plan.
- TSLA candidate support team meetings (CST) can count as the induction support team meetings.

Teacher on Loan

Induction phase teachers (teachers with 0-2 years of experience) serving as teachers on loan will have the opportunity to participate in some or all of the THRIVE professional learning and other resources, but will not be required to participate. This decision will be made by the school administrator. If a teacher on loan transitions out of this role and into another certified educator position, they will be required to participate in THRIVE at that time.

Specialized Content Induction (SPED, PreK, CTAE, Fine Arts, World Languages, PE/Health)

Mentors

Every effort will be made to pair specialized content THRIVE 1 teachers with another same/similar subject mentor teacher. These teachers will likely teach in different schools than their mentees. District staff in these departments (along with district professional learning specialists) will assist in making these mentor/mentee connections with the approval of the site administrators. Mentors for these teachers will be paid according to the THRIVE mentor pay schedule listed in this handbook. All requirements will still apply for these mentors and mentees with the exception of attendance at monthly site-based meetings. Bi-weekly check-ins do not need to be in-person. Video conferencing, phone calls, and regular email correspondence can take the place of in-person check-ins.

Observation and Feedback

All efforts should be made for mentors to conduct in-person observations of their mentees' classroom. If mentors cannot observe mentees in person, they can request recordings for observation or use observation notes completed by another induction stakeholder to conduct a coaching conversation.

Professional Learning Opportunities

THRIVE teachers of specialized content may receive differentiated professional learning sessions at SOFIE and THRIVE conferences. These teachers should pay close attention to communication about these learning sessions to ensure they are attending the correct sessions for their content area. Other training may be required from the specialized content departments outside of THRIVE professional learning events.

Mentor

Role and Responsibilities

The role of the mentor in SCCPSS is to support THRIVE 1 teachers transitioning into our school district and the profession. Mentors are relationship-oriented, development-driven, focusing on career and personal growth of their mentees. Mentors in SCCPSS provide on-going professional learning by engaging in mentoring conversations, conducting classroom observations and feedback, and serving as a model for new teachers. In addition, the mentor will serve on the Induction Support Team to aid the THRIVE teacher in meeting his/her professional goals. Mentors are expected to:

- Understand and implement district and building policies and procedures effectively
- Assist new teachers with creating a positive and rigorous learning environment
- Understand the district's adopted and board-approved curriculum
- Provide feedback regarding effective instructional delivery
- Provide on-going support

Resources and Support

Mentors will attend a THRIVE Orientation and Teacher Support Training provided by the Office of Professional Learning. Support for mentors will be provided by the Site-Based Induction Specialist. Mentors will attend the school's monthly THRIVE meetings with the mentee. Additional support can be requested from the district induction team at the Office of Professional Learning.

Stipend

1 Mentee	2 Mentees
\$300 per semester	\$400 per semester

**Stipends will be paid at the end of the school year. Monitoring will happen quarterly.

THRIVE 2 and 3 buddy teachers are not eligible for stipends.

Site Based Induction Specialist

Role and Responsibilities

The role of the Site Based Induction Specialist (SBIS) is to facilitate the induction process in his/her school. SBIS are expected to:

- Support the implementation of the induction program as a school-level teacher leader.
- Complete district training and attend meetings to ensure the school meets SCCPSS and GaDOE Induction Guidance expectations.
- Assist the principal in selecting a pool of high-quality, site-based mentors using the SCCPSS mentor selection criteria (Appendix C)
- Provide site-based orientation (SOFIE) within the first 10 days on the job, ongoing training, and support to THRIVE teachers and mentors.
- Provide information and resources to mentors, THRIVE teachers, and administrators to better understand the induction process.
- Ensure that all THRIVE 1 teachers are assigned a mentor during pre-planning or within the first ten days on the job.
- Meet quarterly with district induction specialists to review site-based induction.
- Conduct monthly induction meetings with THRIVE 1 teachers and their mentors using district provided resources.
- Participate in induction support team meetings with administrators, mentors, and other team members.
- In collaboration with the administrator and induction support team, maintain the teacher induction plans for THRIVE teachers.
- Maintain school profile and the school THRIVE Hub.
- Ensure that all induction paperwork is submitted to the district program managers by established deadlines.
- Maintain and submit an SBIS work log.

Stipend

<5 teachers	5-10 teachers	>10 teachers
\$375 per semester	\$500 per semester	\$625 per semester

**Stipends will be paid at the end of the school year. Monitoring will happen quarterly.

Administrator

Role and Responsibilities

Principals in schools play a very important part in the success of the teacher induction program in SCCPSS. Administrators are expected to:

- Establish a culture that creates and supports an effective teacher induction program aligned with the district mission and vision of the program.
- Provide and support on-going professional learning that is aligned with the needs of induction phase teachers to ensure student success.
- Actively identify and endorse a Site-Based Induction Specialist (SBIS) for his/her school (Appendix C).
- Actively identify and endorse mentors for THRIVE 1 teachers (Appendix C).
- Assign instructional placements and additional duties in a manner that considers the needs of induction phase teachers and every learner.
- Assign additional duties and responsibilities in a manner that considers the induction phase teacher's time constraints.
- Provide the induction phase teachers with appropriate materials and resources.
- With the SBIS, facilitate induction support team meetings at least twice a year (mid-year and end of year review).
- Determine PD needs of induction phase teachers based on observations, teacher and student assessment data, and input from the other members of the induction support team.

SCCPSS and Outside Agency Stakeholders

Roles and Responsibilities

The Office of Professional Learning will provide all induction stakeholders professional development experiences and resources to support the successful implementation of the THRIVE program. This includes:

- Funding for 1 year of mentoring for THRIVE 1 teachers.
- Selection criteria and training for mentors.
- Orientation for all teachers new to the district.
- Process for site-based induction support.
- Training materials for site-based induction specialists.
- Professional learning conferences throughout the year.
- Training for mentors and SBIS.

The Office of Professional Learning will collect assessment information and various other data to conduct program evaluation for a continuous improvement cycle of THRIVE. It will also collaborate with external agencies such as the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs), higher education institutions, and other community organizations as needed.

Appendix A: School Profiles

The school profile is a document that captures pertinent information about induction at each school. The accuracy and completeness of this information is necessary as it provides program data and contributes to the overall support of induction phase teachers. The SBIS is responsible for maintaining this document. Training will be provided on how to use the School Profile document by Professional Learning. The school profile consists of two parts—the school overview page and the Teacher Induction Plan (TIP).

Overview Page

The overview page provides an at-a-glance summary of each school's induction process. Induction levels, support personnel, teaching assignments, and other important information is recorded. This document will also serve to provide continuity in induction from one year to the next.

Teacher Induction Plan

The Teacher Induction Plan (TIP) is a tool used to document the progress of the THRIVE teacher and design professional development experiences to meet his/her needs. The TIP includes the following components:

- **Professional development goals**
 - Should be based on the teacher's role, district and school goals, identified developmental needs, prior preparation, and experiences.
 - The goals will be tied to the TAPS standards.
- **Priority TAPS standards for each THRIVE level**
 - Teachers are evaluated on all standards each year, but the priority standards in the TIP highlight a PD scope and sequence (Appendix B).
- **Mid-year and end-of-year checkpoints with action steps**
- **Student growth notes**
 - Elementary schools will use iReady data.

- Middle schools will use iReady- data for ELA and math. Middle grade science and social studies will use Progress Learning data.
- High School ELA, math, science, and social studies teachers will use Progress Learning data.
- Special content area teachers (CTAE, Health/PE, SPED, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, ESOL, EIP, etc.) should select a measure that reflects student learning from their class that is consistent throughout the year.

- **Notes to document all pertinent information that guide the induction process for each THRIVE teacher.**

Effective and high quality professional learning is ongoing, embedded, and differentiated. Observations, walkthroughs, teacher self-assessments, student assessment data, etc. should inform the action steps that will help the THRIVE teacher increase their effectiveness in the classroom. THRIVE teachers should have multiple opportunities for feedback, reflection, and participation in the induction process. The Office of Professional Learning is available at any stage of the induction process to assist in the development of induction plans and to provide or facilitate professional learning experiences for teachers.

Appendix B: Induction Support Team

Induction support teams will be created by the administrator to ensure a collaborative approach to support for induction phase teachers. Induction support teams should be created as quickly as possible for each THRIVE teacher following the hiring date. Teams should operate as a support system for the THRIVE teacher sharing a common goal of effective professional development. Decisions made by the team should be supported with evidence/data that is documented in the TIP.

Teams will consist of the induction phase teacher and a combination of two or more of the stakeholders listed below:

- Mentor
- School administrator
- TSLA supervisor
- Academic coach
- Site-based induction specialist
- District specialist
- Other specialists supporting the THRIVE teacher

Induction support teams should meet at least 2 times a year:

- End of semester 1 following or in conjunction with the TKES mid-year conference.
- End of semester 2 following or in conjunction with the TKES summative conference.
- GaTAPP CST meetings can double as an Induction Support Team meeting. Documentation should still be recorded in the induction plan.

Appendix C: THRIVE PD Scope and Sequence

	SOFIE	Fall PLC	Spring PLC	Other
<p>THRIVE 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Knowledge (1) Instructional Planning (2) Positive Learning Environment (7) Professionalism (9) Communication (10) 	<p>TAPS 1, 2, 7, 9, 10</p> <p>Curriculum Overviews Resources District Initiatives District/School Expectations</p>	<p>TAPS 1, 2, 7, 9, 10</p> <p><u>Possible topics:</u> Classroom Mngmt (Routines/Procedures)</p> <p>Teacher Self-Efficacy</p> <p>Parent Engagement</p> <p>Curriculum/Planning</p>	<p>TAPS 1, 2, 7, 9, 10</p> <p><u>Possible topics:</u> Classroom Mngmt (Behavior)</p> <p>Student Self-Efficacy</p> <p>Teacher Clarity</p> <p>EL Support Strategies</p>	<p>TAPS 3, 7</p> <p>Routines and Procedures (Harry Wong Course)</p> <p>Class Management and Engagement Techniques (Teach Like a Champion)</p>
<p>THRIVE 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructional Strategies (3) Assessment Strategies (5) Positive Learning Environment (7) Professionalism (9) Communication (10) 	<p>TAPS 1, 2, 7, 9, 10</p> <p>Curriculum Overviews Resources District Initiatives District/School Expectations</p> <p>**THRIVE 2 teachers only participate in SOFIE if they are a new hire.</p>	<p>TAPS 3, 5, 7, 9, 10</p> <p><u>Possible topics:</u> Classroom Mngmt (SEL, De-escalation, Restorative Practices)</p> <p>Instructional Strategies (Engagement)</p>		<p>Optional: participate in monthly meeting with SBIS</p> <p>Targeted PD track based on induction plan</p>

<p>THRIVE 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiated Instruction (4) • Assessment Uses (6) • Academically Challenging Environment (8) • Professionalism (9) • Communication (10) 	<p>TAPS 1, 2, 7, 9, 10</p> <p>Curriculum Overviews Resources District Initiatives District/School Expectations</p> <p>**THRIVE 3 teachers only participate in SOFIE if they are a new hire.</p>		<p>TAPS 4, 6, 8, 9, 10</p> <p><u>Possible topics:</u> Endorsements</p> <p>Instructional Strategies (Rigor)</p> <p>Differentiation</p>	<p>Targeted PD track based on induction plan</p>
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Appendix D: Mentor/SBIS Selection Criteria

SBIS	Mentor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher leader experience • Academic coach (preferred) • Experience with TLAC strategies (preferred) • Available to conduct monthly meetings • Available to conduct site-based orientation in late July (preferred) and within the first 10 days of hire for off-cycle hires • Able to collaborate regularly with principal • Able to maintain induction documentation • Available to check on induction phase teachers and mentors regularly • Effective communication skills • Strong organizational skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 3 years of successful (Level 3 or 4 summative evaluation) P-12 teaching experience as a certified teacher • A valid, clear renewable professional teaching certificate • Compliance with all the requirements of the GA Code of Ethics for Educators • Current knowledge of teaching styles and philosophies • A commitment to his/her own professional development • Ability to serve as a positive role model for the mentee • Able to meet regularly with mentee • Proficiency in the use of instructional technology

Appendix E: Induction Checklists

Administrator	SBIS	Mentor	THRIVE 1	THRIVE 2	THRIVE 3
<input type="checkbox"/> Attend/complete THRIVE orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Select SBIS <input type="checkbox"/> Select mentors <input type="checkbox"/> Assist SBIS in placing teachers in THRIVE levels <input type="checkbox"/> Sign work agreements <input type="checkbox"/> Assist SBIS in planning site-based orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that site-based orientation occurs if SBIS is unavailable <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate induction support team meetings or assign to a designee <input type="checkbox"/> Assist SBIS in completing TIPs	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend THRIVE orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct site-based orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Submit signed work agreement <input type="checkbox"/> Attend quarterly check-ins with district specialist <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct monthly meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Submit attendance for monthly meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Regularly update school profile <input type="checkbox"/> Regularly monitor THRIVE Hub	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend/complete THRIVE orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Submit signed work agreement <input type="checkbox"/> Meet regularly with mentee <input type="checkbox"/> Document contact/work on log and upload each semester <input type="checkbox"/> Attend monthly meeting w/mentee & SBIS <input type="checkbox"/> Attend Teacher Support Trainings <input type="checkbox"/> Give regular feedback and support based on observations	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend SOFIE <input type="checkbox"/> Attend monthly meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Attend all THRIVE 1 conferences <input type="checkbox"/> Meet regularly with mentor <input type="checkbox"/> Complete 3 model classroom observations and submit reflections <input type="checkbox"/> Complete any PD assigned by induction support team	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend SOFIE (if new to district) <input type="checkbox"/> Attend THRIVE 2 conference <input type="checkbox"/> Check in periodically with SBIS and/or buddy teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Complete 2 model classroom observations and submit reflections <input type="checkbox"/> Complete any PD assigned by induction support team	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend SOFIE (if new to district) <input type="checkbox"/> Attend THRIVE 3 conference <input type="checkbox"/> Check in periodically with SBIS <input type="checkbox"/> Complete PD assigned by induction support team and/or self-selected PD that addresses a PD goal on the induction plan; upload documentation

Appendix F: Model Classroom Observation Form

This is the form that is used by THRIVE teachers when observing model classrooms. This form can be found on the school's THRIVE Hub. When completed, THRIVE teachers will upload this to the assigned task in their school's THRIVE Hub.

Candidate/THRIVE Teacher Name:

School:

Grade Level:

Subject:

Demographics (to include race/ethnicity, gender, students with disabilities, English language learners):

Time In:

Time Out:

SEE IT	Notes
<p>As you observe consider these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What has the teacher done especially well?• Were the students engaged? How did you know?• Were there a variety of activities? Describe.• Were there opportunities for students to engage in academic discourse? Describe.• What activities did you find to be the most effective?• How does the teacher manage the	

<p>classroom environment, including student behavior?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you observe about the physical environment of the classroom that is particularly effective? 	
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NAME IT	Notes
<p>Reflect on the gap between what you saw and your own practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have you learned about your own teaching practices, beliefs, and assumptions based on this observation? • What's the biggest gap between your practice and what you saw the observed teacher doing? • What is the observed teacher doing that is effective, and what impact does this have on student learning? 	

DO IT	Notes
<p>Define one clear action step to take that is observable, high leverage, and bite-sized. The smaller the better. Why did you choose this action step and what impact do you hope it will have on teaching and learning?</p>	

Appendix G: THRIVE Hubs



Each school will have its own THRIVE hub for SBIS, THRIVE teachers and mentors to track tasks and submit required documentation. This hub will be located on the Brightspace LMS. THRIVE hubs will be created by Professional Learning and maintained by each school's SBIS. SBIS will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that all THRIVE teachers and mentors have been included in the hub.
- Ensuring that tasks have been assigned correctly.
- Monitoring course for task completion.

Training for the use of the THRIVE Hubs will be provided by Professional Learning.

Appendix H: Work Agreements

All SBIS and mentors must complete a supplemental work agreement as one of the requirements to receive their stipends.

The following guidelines should be followed when completing the work agreement:

- Employee name as listed in the SCCPSS directory
- Employee ID number
- Site name
- Employee signature and date
- Principal signature and date

Do not collect any other signatures on this document. The Office of Professional Learning will collect the remaining required signatures. Upload the signed work agreement to the correct assignment in the THRIVE Hub on Brightspace. SBIS will need to complete a separate work agreement for conducting site-based orientation in July.