LEA/Charter Beginning Teacher Support Program

Overview of < LEA/Charter School> Beginning Teacher Support Program

Montgomery County Schools Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP) is designed to provide beginning teachers with the necessary support and on-going assistance to ensure their future success. A primary goal of the BTSP is to help new teachers improve their skills and build confidence. Montgomery County Schools will work with BTs to ensure they successfully meet the state professional teaching standards, impact the learning of their students, and choose to remain in the teaching profession. Throughout the required three-year induction program, BTs receive a multi-layered system of support from their colleagues, an assigned mentor, school administration and central office staff. The induction program provides systemic support for beginning teachers and all key stakeholders are committed to following the Beginning Teacher Support Plan. Principals, instructional facilitators and central office staff are encouraged to provide continual support to beginning teachers.

1. A documented process for identifying and verifying all beginning teachers (BTs)

The process must include beginning teachers who meet requirements for NCDPI's assignment of initial licensure, identifying which teachers will/will not be included in the program (based on appropriate experience and position held), assignment in the area of licensure, plan for documentation of required licensure tests requirement and the process for license conversion (coursework, exams passed, three years of teaching), and the process for collecting BT data for the State of the Teaching Profession in NC Report.

The Associate Superintendent of Montgomery County Schools is responsible for identifying and verifying that all BTs meet the requirements for NCDPI's assignment of an initial license. NCDPI issues an initial license to teachers with fewer than three years of appropriate teaching experience in their initial licensure area. Teachers having three or more years of appropriate experience are not required to participate in the BTSP, nor are student services personnel (media coordinators, counselors) administrators, and curriculum-instructional specialists. Once a continuing license has been earned in one teaching area, additional teaching areas do not require a BTSP experience. The Associate Superintendent works closely with principals to ensure beginning teachers are assigned in their area of licensure. The BT must follow all NCSBE requirements for all required licensure tests.

Effective July 1, 2016, teachers who hold an initial license are eligible to convert to a continuing license once all required coursework has been successfully completed, all NCSBE approved examinations have been passed, and the teacher has completed three years of teaching. Teachers with fewer than three years of teaching experience are required to continue participating in a BTSP regardless of their licensure status. The Associate Superintendent is responsible for verifying eligibility for a continuing license and will monitor compliance of NCSBE requirements.

Completion of the recent graduate survey by the Beginning Teacher (BT) and the employer survey by the principal of the school during the BT's first year of teaching as part of the requirements to measure the performance of Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) stated in GS llSC-269.35 is required. The surveys must be completed during the end of the first year of teaching.

The Associate Superintendent submits all required BT data for the State Board of Education annual report, *The State of the Teaching Profession in North Carolina.*

2. Plan for implementing a sound BT Induction process

Plans must include three-year induction process (120 workdays each year) that includes a formal orientation, required working conditions, the process for mentor selection, training, and assignment, the process for development and monitoring of the BTs' professional development plan, and required or prescribed professional development.

Three- year induction process overview

State Board Policy TCED-016 states: All LEAs/Charters shall implement a Beginning Teacher Support Program. BTSP is a required, three-year induction program for beginning teachers.

The North Carolina Beginning Teacher Support Program Handbook (NCDPI) will serve as a reference guide to help support the implementation of our BTSP.

Teachers with less than three years of teaching experience are required to participate in the NC Beginning Teacher Support Program for three years. According to GS 115(-325, for licensing purposes, a "year", shall be not less than 120 workdays in a full-time permanent position. LEAs may apply this to determining experience years for beginning teachers.

Montgomery County Schools provides a meaningful three-year induction process for our beginning teachers. The process includes a formal orientation, a commitment from principals regarding required working conditions, and processes for mentor selection, mentor training and mentor assignment. Principals and mentors collaborate to ensure that teachers have purposeful professional development plans and opportunities for quality professional development.

a. Orientation

Orientation must be provided, attended, and documented within two weeks of the beginning teacher's first day of work. At a minimum the orientation must include: an overview of the school's/system's goals, policies, and procedures; a description of available services and training opportunities; a copy of the BTSP and the process for achieving a continuing license; develop and distribute optional working conditions guidelines*; the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation Process (NOTE: A local board shall use the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards and North Carolina Teacher Evaluation Process unless it develops an alternative evaluation that is properly validated and that includes standards and criteria similar to those in the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards and North Carolina Teacher Evaluation Process); the NC Standard Course of Study; local curriculum guides; the safe and appropriate use of seclusion and restraint of students; and the State Board of Education's Mission and Goals.

Montgomery County Schools offers a required, formal orientation for beginning teachers each year. Required documentation that each beginning teacher attended the orientation and that the orientation was held within two weeks of the teacher's first day of work is filed in the Human Resources Department. Agendas as well as all other teacher communication regarding orientation is also on file.

Orientation is planned by the Department of Human Resources and the Montgomery County Schools Learning Division Team. All members of the Central Office Administrative Team take part in orientation. Selected community members are on the agenda to welcome teachers and to share ways their organizations can provide services and support.

During orientation, beginning teachers are introduced to the State Board of Education's Mission and Goals, the Code of Ethics for North Carolina Educators, North Carolina Standards for Professional Conduct and the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards. Beginning teachers are required to watch an ethics video as part of their employment process.

Beginning teachers are introduced to the Montgomery County Schools Strategic Plan, vision, mission, core values and applicable district policies and procedures. An overview of the safe and appropriate use of seclusion and restraint of students is provided. Beginning teachers are also provided with a technology and finance briefing.

During orientation, the BTSP is reviewed. A copy of the BTSP is provided to teachers. Key components of the plan are addressed (working conditions, teacher evaluation, and the process for achieving a continuing license).

Beginning teachers are introduced to the Standard Course of Study, the PDSA process and they are briefed on classroom expectations. Additional orientation components continue once beginning teachers are at their home school.

**Working Conditions*

Explain the process for ensuring that beginning teachers have: mentor assigned early, and in close proximity; limited preparations; limited non-instructional duties; limited number of exceptional or difficult students; and no extracurricular assignments unless requested in writing by the beginning teacher.

Montgomery County Schools believes that all beginning teachers need every opportunity to develop into capable and highly effective teachers. In an effort to support our beliefs, Montgomery County Schools will make every possible effort to satisfy the following recommended working conditions: assignment in the area of licensure; mentor assigned early, in the licensure area, and in close proximity; limited preparations; limited non-instructional duties; limited number of exceptional or difficult students; and no extracurricular assignments unless requested in writing by the beginning teacher.

The Associate Superintendent will review all hiring recommendations and documentation to ensure beginning teachers are matched to their licensure area.

As instructional leaders, each principal assures that beginning teachers will be given adequate assistance and support during the three-year induction process. Principals will monitor the number of preparations, number and types of non-instructional duties assigned to BTs and they will monitor the number of exceptional or difficult students placed in the beginning teacher's classroom. The term "non-instructional duties" refers to those duties that are not directly involved with the instructional program or the implementation of the standard course of study, but that all teachers are expected to do. Examples would be bus duty, lunch duty, and hall duty.

Beginning teachers shall provide the Associate Superintendent and their principal with a written statement if they wish to request extracurricular activities and assignments. "Extracurricular activities" refers to those activities performed by a teacher involving students that are outside of the regular school day and not directly related to the instructional program. Letters submitted by BTs participating in extracurricular activities are on file in the Human Resources Department.

Mentors are identified for all beginning teachers in a timely manner. The lead mentor in each school serves as the official mentor for all first, second, and third year teachers. Individual mentors are assigned to each beginning teacher to provide an extra layer of support at the school level as needed. Instructional coaches from UNC-Charlotte (NCNTSP) provide support for beginning teachers.

b. Mentor Selection, Training, and Assignment

Describe the mentor program including the process for selecting appropriate mentors (based on SBE policy and GS 115C-296(e) requirements concerning mentors' NCEES evaluation and student growth expectations), mentor assignment and guidelines, and training and support provided for mentors.

Each year, beginning teachers are assigned a mentor. Montgomery County Schools works to select excellent, experienced and qualified teachers to serve in the mentor role. Currently, each school has a lead mentor who serves as the official mentor to all first, second, and third year teachers in their buildings. At all schools the instructional facilitators serve as the lead mentor. Principals and the Associate Superintendent check for compliance to ensure that all instructional facilitators are rated at least proficient on their current evaluation. Principals and the Associate Superintendent also monitor to ensure that individual mentors receive at least proficient on their current evaluation with priority given to those who are distinguished and accomplished. The principal assigns the most appropriate individual mentor to each beginning teacher. If either a retired teacher or a teacher rated as proficient on their evaluation are assigned, the principal must maintain written documentation to support the assignment.

No lead mentor or individual mentor that falls below proficient or that has not had evaluation data in the past two years will be able to continue to serve as a mentor. A teacher may be a mentor at a different school building from which the mentor is assigned if the principals of each school and the mentor teacher approve the assignment. The mentor must meet demonstrate an "accomplished" rating or higher on three of five standards including Standard 4 on the most recent summative or Standard 4 on an abbreviated evaluation. In addition, the BT's principal must maintain written documentation of the reasons for selecting the mentor from a different school.

Our individual mentors provide support to mentees on a day-to-day basis, assist mentees with their PDP, provide technical assistance, monitor completion of the cumulative file, conference with mentees on a regular basis, provide staff development, keep logs of monthly meetings and provide feedback. Lead and individual mentors also provide a building level orientation for their mentees which includes a tour of the school, introduction to the staff, a review of the school handbook, modeling of best practices for the first days of school and assistance with curriculum issues.

In order to train and support mentors in their efforts to assist beginning teachers, mentors are asked to complete the *NC 21st Century Mentoring Module (NCDPI}.* The online module provides mentors with 21st century skills and knowledge needed to support beginning teachers. Refresher mentor training is provided for lead teachers as needed during their PLC meetings.

Recognizing the importance of beginning teacher development, teacher retention and improved student learning, Montgomery County Schools will make every effort to work closely with administrators to select and assign mentors in the future based on the guidelines set forth by GS115C-296(e).

Currently, no funding is appropriated through the state budget to compensate mentors. Montgomery County Schools was awarded a teacher and school leader incentive grant funded by the US Department of Education to be able to pay the individual mentor.

c. *Professional Development Plans*

Describe the process through which the beginning teacher collaborates with his/her principal and mentor to develop a PDP. Include how the PDP requirements are met and monitored in the LEA/Charter School.

Each beginning teacher is required annually to develop a Professional Development Plan (PDP) in collaboration with his/her principal (or principal's designee) and mentor. The plan is to be based on the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards and a self- assessment (NCEES) of the beginning teacher's knowledge, dispositions and performance to date. The beginning teacher, principal and mentor develop the annual PDP goals, strategies, and activities that are geared toward improving teaching proficiency and professional skills.

PDP's must be reviewed throughout the school year. Mid-year and end-of-year conferences are held with the beginning teacher, principal (or designee) and the mentor teacher to review the progress of the beginning teacher. These conferences provide opportunities to reflect on and to document progress made toward the beginning teacher's professional growth.

PDP completion and conference review dates are found on the Certified Evaluation Planning Calendar on the Human Resources Department Webpage. Professional Development Plans are audited as part of the Title II and BTSP monitoring process.

Formative assessment conferences are held at the beginning, middle, and end of each year, including BT, mentor, and principal to reflect on progress of BT in meeting goals. Signatures of BT, mentor, and principal are required for each formative assessment goals.

d. Professional Development

Describe the process for determining required and/or prescribed professional development for beginning teachers.

Required and/or prescribed professional development opportunities for teachers are planned in specific areas aligned with the strategic goals of Montgomery County Schools. School -based administrators may require professional development activities based on specific school improvement goals. Administrators may suggest individual professional development sessions for beginning teachers based on the teacher's self-assessment, PDP goals, and /or NCEES evaluation data. BTs will participate in and complete any professional development required by the LEA. Currently, Montgomery County Schools has two required professional development½ days built into the school calendar and professional development specific only to beginning teachers is offered throughout the year.

Lead mentors and individual mentors hold monthly meetings with beginning teachers. Professional development topics discussed during the monthly meetings may include: ethics, appropriate use of social media, professional development plans, professionalism, classroom management, diversity training, lesson planning, curriculum resources, classroom strategies, technology tools, equitable practices, active learning, observations and summative evaluations, family engagement, differentiation, the PDSA process, planning for parent conferences and time and stress management. Monthly meeting dates, times and topics are documented on the BT/Mentor contact log. All BT monthly mentor logs are filed in the Human Resources Department.

3. A formal process for conducting observations and summative evaluations on all BTs

Provide details on the process that ensures each beginning teacher receives the required observations and evaluation as outlined in SBE policy (Teacher Performance Appraisal process), General Statute and HB 1030.

The Associate Superintendent annually completes a detailed timeline for all required observations, PDPs and summative evaluations. The timeline is shared with all building level administrators at the beginning of each school year and may be found on the Human Resources Department Webpage. Special attention is given to beginning teacher observations to ensure all processes and procedures are being followed.

Within the first ten days of school, principals must provide an orientation for certified staff on the evaluation process, evaluation rubrics, and the state evaluation policy. All persons who observe teachers must be trained in the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System (NCEES). The NC Rubric for Evaluating Teachers is used for observations and evaluation. Observations should be appropriately spaced throughout the school year.

As outlined in SBE Policy (Teacher Performance Appraisal process), General Statute and HB 1030, all beginning teachers are observed four times during each school year and evaluated annually. Each beginning teacher will be observed three times by the principal or designee and once by a peer teacher. The peer teacher may not be the mentor. A pre-observation conference is required prior to the first observation only. Observations for beginning teachers shall last at least forty-five minutes. All post-observation conferences must be conducted within ten school days of the teacher's observation. Monitored Growth Plans and Directed Plans must be implemented when necessitated by eating. For BT ls and BT 2s, at least two observations must be conducted in the first semester of the school year, and if practicable, at least one of those observations sha ll be within the first grading period. For BT ls and BT 2s, at least one of the three administrative observations must be conducted by the principal.

Principals are required to complete the summative evaluation of all beginning teachers. Principals are encouraged to provide opportunities for beginning teachers to observe their mentor and/or other teachers.

4. Plan for participation in BTSP Monitoring

Describe the plans for compliance with the BTSP Monitoring process (completed on a five-year revolving cycle) and technical assistance provided based on monitoring results to address areas of concern (if necessary).

The five-year BTSP monitoring cycle ensures overall compliance with State Board Policy for beginning teacher support through both induction and evaluation requirements. LEAs are monitored one time during the revolving five-year cycle. The Regional Educator Facilitator provides information prior to the monitoring visit to assist LEAs as they prepare for the process. The BTSP Monitoring Instrument is completed during the visit. The instrument aligns with the educator evaluation system and utilizes ratings of developing, proficient, accomplished and distinguished. A rating in the proficient column indicates compliance with the State Board policies pertaining to beginning teacher support.

Technical assistance will be provided to address any noted areas of concern. Montgomery County Schools will take immediate action to address any concerns. The Associate Superintendent ensures compliance with BTSP monitoring requirements.

5. Plan for participation in the BTSP Peer Review Process

Include the process in place in the LEA/Charter School for completing the annual Peer Review Self-Assessment and annual Peer Review process.

LEAs with an approved BTSP participate in an annual peer review. The Peer Review Process is on a five-year cycle conducted annually, concluding with a formal review after the fifth year. LEAs complete a self-assessment of their BTSP. LEAs gather and enter evidence for the particular standards that are highlighted per year. By the end of the five-year process, evidence for all standards will be collected. This process allows for sharing of best practices.

Participation in the annual self-assessment, the critical friend peer review and the five-year review provides multiple opportunities to assess and reflect on BT data, sample evidences and artifacts. By the 5th year, Montgomery County Schools will be expected to show growth on all standards and elements on the Peer Review Rubric. If growth is not shown, the school system will receive additional support from NCDPI.

6. **Statement on how BTs' personnel files {files that include the teacher's PDP and performance evaluation report{s)) are filed and secured.**

Personnel files (PDPs and performance evaluation reports) for beginning teachers are filed electronically. Files are reviewed throughout the school year by the Associate Superintendent of Montgomery County Schools and by school principals. Electronic files are made available to auditors during Title II monitoring visits.

7. **Plan for a timely transfer of BT files to subsequent employing LEAs, Charter Schools, or non-public institutions within the state**

It is the duty of the Associate Superintendent to ensure a timely transfer of the cumulative beginning teacher file to subsequent employing LEA's, charter schools, or non-public institutions within the state upon authorization of the beginning teacher.

BTSP Coordinator: _____ Date: _____

School Board Chair: _____ Date: _____

Approved by the local School Board (date): _____

Submitted to NCDPI (date): _____

Approved by NCDPI (date): _____