

Montgomery County Schools

Beginning Teacher Licensure (BT) Plan

Background Statement

The Montgomery County School System is comprised of eleven schools which vary in size and organizational pattern. From the central office, these schools range in distance from one to fifteen miles. The average LEA student enrollment figure is 4,300 and the number of certified employees serving the student population is approximately 310. This number includes approximately nine library media specialists, eleven counselors, and ten instructional facilitators. During the past five-year period, the number of beginning teachers hired fluctuated from approximately thirty to fifty-five.

In order to accommodate the intent of the Beginning Licensure Program and to meet the unique needs of the LEA, the Deputy Superintendent will implement this program using the lead mentors designated in the middle and high schools. Funds from state and local staff development monies will be allotted (as needed) for training and lead mentor expenses as outlined in the plan. (based on availability of funds)

Collaboration efforts with Quality Teaching and Learning has been established for the 2013-14 school year. This program will provide six days of staff development during the school year for all beginning teachers. Montgomery County Schools will also partner with UNC-Pembroke to provide extra mentor support to all new "lateral entry" teachers as well. In addition, resources within 70 miles of the LEA have been tapped from Pfeiffer, Gardner-Webb, St. Andrews, Sandhills Community College, UNC-Greensboro, and Montgomery Community College. Distance Learning opportunities from Montgomery Community College, Western Carolina, and East Carolina have also been accessed.

Involvement in Program Development

Design of the Beginning Teacher Program was completed by a planning team that consisted of the Deputy Superintendent, principals, and lead mentors. As the program proceeds, more members from each area will be involved in assessing the program and helping to make any needed changes or adjustments.

Program Administration

The **Deputy Superintendent** will be responsible for the general administration and supervision of the program. An initial licensure system team composed of

lead mentors, mentors, instructional facilitators, assistant principals, and principals will execute the components of the projected plan under the authority of the Deputy Superintendent.

The Human Resources office will have the primary responsibility for overseeing the training, orientation, support system, and evaluation activities. Periodic feedback will be given to the Deputy Superintendent by the initial licensure system team. Review of schedules and assignments will be made throughout the school year to ascertain that the program requirements have been met.

The **role of the lead mentor** will be to oversee mentor/mentee relationships in the individual schools, provide building level orientation prior to the start of school, facilitate monthly meetings with mentors/mentees, assist principals with the assignment of mentees to mentors, observe as needed, and collect documentation as required by county/state including mentor logs. The lead mentor will also serve as a mentor to all first, second, and third year teachers at their school. Volunteer mentor teachers will be approved to assist in the mentoring process upon completion of online mentor training.

The **role of the mentor (Lead Mentor)** will be to provide support to mentees on a day-to-day basis, assist mentees with writing their IGP, provide appropriate technical assistance, monitor the completion of the cumulative file, conference with mentees on regular basis and keep logs of meetings, and provide feedback. All teacher/mentor assignments will be made by the principal, lead mentor, and the instructional coach utilizing an application process.

The **role of the instructional facilitators** is to provide technical assistance with curriculum issues, provide support in using curriculum maps and standard course of study materials, observe classrooms as needed, provide staff development opportunities, and to confer with lead mentors as needed. Due to current lack of funding for lead mentor positions, instructional facilitators will provide support for BT's in their individual schools. At all elementary schools the instructional facilitators will serve as the lead mentor.

The Lead Mentor/Mentee support team at each school is responsible for the program implementation at the school level which will include monthly meetings with BT's (Beginning Teachers) expanding on topics that include: Individual Growth Plans, professionalism, classroom management, curriculum planning with NCSCOS goals and objectives, Personal Education Plans, classroom strategies, technology tools, active learning, observations and summative evaluations, parent conferences, and time and stress management. This support team will hold an orientation for BT's prior to school that will include: tour of school, staff introductions, orientation to building procedures and policies.

Formal Orientation Process

Each Beginning Teacher will participate in a county-wide in-service prior to the first day of school. The training will include:

- An in-depth analysis of the teacher evaluation instrument
- An introduction to available support services available through county office
- Overview of benefits/financial information
- The BT process
- State and LEA expectations

Each Beginning Teacher will participate in an individual school orientation prior to the first day of school. The orientation will include:

- Tour of the school
- Introduction of staff
- Orientation to the building
- Procedures and policies
- Model best practices for the first days of school
- Mentor/Mentee time in classroom

Optimum Working Conditions for Initially Licensed Teachers

The following optimum working conditions will be adhered to so that beginning teachers have the opportunity to develop into exemplary teachers:

- Assign beginning teachers in their area of licensure
- Provide orientation that includes state and school expectations
- Require no extracurricular assignments (Policies and Benefits Manual 14.3.1)
- Limit pulling beginning teachers from the classroom first 30 school days
- Instructional Facilitators and Lead Mentors will work collaboratively with the principal to provide on-going support to all "Beginning Teachers"

Mentor Training

In order to train and support mentors in their efforts to assist beginning teachers, they will complete an accredited 24-hour mentor training program, and will have a yearly refresher session organized by Lead Mentors and Instructional Facilitators. Each mentor will participate in meetings throughout the year to stay abreast of information and needs of the BT's.

Principal Support

Principals are responsible for summative performance appraisals based upon the five standards of the NC Teacher Evaluation Instrument and for employment recommendations. Using prescribed forms, the principal will be involved in the pre-and post-conference for the formal observation of each BT. When supervisors or other teachers are involved in the observation, they will be present for the post-conference. Principals will be responsible for designating mentor assignments in collaboration with the lead mentor. Principals will keep mentors updated in order to help mentors best meet the needs of the mentees. Principals will work with mentors to collaborate with the beginning teacher to develop their PDP. Principals will use such strategies as allowing BT's to observe master teachers using best practices so BT's gain the skills needed to be successful in the classroom. Principals will complete at least one observation and a summative evaluation on each beginning teacher every year.

Observations

The Deputy Superintendent will adhere to the state recommended guidelines for conducting observations and conferences. *The Human Resources Department must ensure that all BT's observations are appropriately spaced throughout the year, and specify a date by which the annual summative evaluation is to be completed.* The Deputy Superintendent shall review each school's observation/conference schedule and confirm that the following procedures have been followed and completed.

First, Second, and Third Year Teachers:

- BT teachers will be observed by the principal or his/her designee (if needed) during the first observation period. The principal or his/her designee will conduct the second and third required observations.
- A teacher trained in the NC Teacher Evaluation Instrument, other than the assigned mentor, will be involved in one of the four observation phases (peer observation).
- The assigned mentor/lead mentor/ may observe at any time to make suggestions to the mentee; however, the observation will not be a part of the evaluation process.
- When the need arises, the principal may request an observation by a member of the county office staff.

Using prescribed forms, the principal will be involved in the pre-and post-conferences for the formal observation of each BT. When county office staff is involved in the observation, the principal will be present for the post-conference. Follow-up conferences will be held by the individual(s) making the observations.

The following stipulation will assist in regulating the observation/conference settings.

- Of the four required observations, the first must be a formal, announced observation and the other three formal (announced or unannounced).
- All post-conferences must be conducted within ten (10) days following the observations.

Professional Development Plan

A Professional Development Plan (formerly known as an Individual Growth Plan) will be developed by the BT and mentor following completion of the self-assessment rubric at the beginning of the year. The purpose of the PDP is to facilitate and document the systematic growth of the BT. At midyear, the PDP will be reviewed by the BT and mentor and by the BT, mentor, and principal at the end of the year.

Technical Assistance

Means of identifying and delivering services to BT's:

- PDP's
- Observations
- Self-evaluation
- Collaborative meetings
- Workshops (school and county level)
- Conferences (curriculum specific)
- Professional/curriculum libraries
- Accomplished teachers
- Learning Bridges (computer program)
- Learnnc.org (New Teacher Support)
- NCWISE OWL
- NCpublicschools.org (Curriculum/Licensure)
- Higher Education coursework
- Montgomery County Schools website

Cumulative File of the Beginning Teacher

For each year of the initial licensure program, the cumulative file should contain:

- Copy of teaching license
- Documentation for completion of required new teacher orientation or Lateral Entry 10-day orientation
- Observation documents for the 4 required formal observations (3 by the principal or designee and one by a teacher)
- Summative evaluation by the principal
- Professional Development Plan (PDP)
- Monthly Mentor Logs
- Log of professional/staff development including contact hours and dates of attendance
- Record of teacher evaluation activities

Evaluation of Beginning Teacher Induction Program

BT's and mentors are surveyed by mid-May as a part of the annual evaluation process for our Initial Licensure Program. These surveys will be reviewed by the lead mentors and a summary with recommendations submitted to the Initial Licensure System Team. These surveys indicate what programs or activities were beneficial as well as those that were not as effective. This information is used to plan for the following year.

Record Transfer

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

Continuing License

The Human Resources Department will verify eligibility of beginning teachers for a continuing license on a year to year basis.