Beginning Teacher Support Program Standards

Overview

Standard 1: Systematic Support for High Quality Induction Programs – This standard is designed to promote the commitment of all stakeholders in seeing mentoring and induction programs succeed. Key program elements include the creation of an institutional plan, demonstrating institutional commitment, and support and principal engagement.

Standard 2: Mentor Selection, Development, and Support – This standard articulates the process and criteria for mentor selection, discusses mentor roles and responsibilities, and delineates foundational mentor training. Key program elements include mentor selection, defining the role of mentors, and mentor professional development.

Standard 3: Mentoring for Instructional Excellence – Mentors are given protected time to provide beginning teachers with support to achieve success in the areas set forth by the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards. Key program elements include providing time for mentors and beginning teachers, ensuring mentoring is focused on instruction, and addressing issues of diversity.

Standard 4: Beginning Teacher Professional Development: Professional development is provided to beginning teachers that orients them to their new career and supports their efforts to meet the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards. Key program elements include structured orientation to the school site, as well as professional development designed to meet the unique needs of beginning teachers that is aligned with the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards, and the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation System.

Standard 5: Formative Assessment of Candidates and Programs – New teachers and mentoring programs are monitored and supported using a formative assessment system to guide their work. Key program elements include formative assessment systems and program evaluation.

Standard 1: Systemic Support for High Quality Induction Programs

The commitment of all stakeholders - beginning teachers, mentors, faculty members, school level administrators, district-level administrators, school boards, State Boards of Education, Department of Public Instruction, post-secondary education institutions, and professional organizations - to the effectiveness, sustainability, and success of the mentoring and induction program is felt system-wide. Stakeholders foster a climate that values the support of beginning teachers through mentoring and induction while promoting conditions for high quality mentoring and induction by evaluating, designing, and revising related policy and practices. Stakeholders support ongoing program improvement and accountability through multiple processes including data analysis and program review.

The leadership of the principal is instrumental in ensuring the success of mentoring and induction programs at the site level. Principals establish and maintain a positive school environment that supports mentor-beginning teacher interactions and targeted professional development. Principals provide clear and consistent communication to staff regarding the role of mentor and the multiple facets of mentoring, including the essential component of confidentiality.

1a. Institutional Plan

Key Features:

- Plan is approved by the Board of Education
- Plan is based on State Board Policy
- Plan clearly outlines responsibilities and procedures for all stakeholders

1b. Institutional Commitment and Support

Key Features:

- Stakeholders acknowledge the value and importance of mentoring and induction.
- Stakeholders appoint and support designated leadership for oversight of the mentoring and induction program.
- Stakeholders support the creation of policies and practices that meet state mentoring-induction program standards.
- Stakeholders advocate for conditions that promote high quality mentoring and induction.
- Stakeholders support data collection, program improvement, and program accountability.

1c. Principal Engagement

Key Features:

- Principals provide positive working conditions for beginning teachers.
- Principals provide a positive context for beginning teacher work with mentor.
- Principals endorse and/or support the development of a mentor role that encompasses a range of dimensions.
- Principals clearly communicate mentor's role to staff.
- Principals respect the nature of the mentor's relationship with the beginning teacher.

Standard 2: Mentor Selection, Development and Support

The selection of well-qualified mentors is essential to creating mentoring and induction programs that support beginning teacher development, teacher retention, and improved student learning. Selection criteria are developed through interaction and collaboration with a variety of stakeholder groups. Selection criteria are well-defined, explicit, and clearly communicated to all stakeholders by program leadership. The application, interview, and selection processes are transparent and uniformly implemented.

The wide range of roles and responsibilities of mentors are clearly defined and broadly communicated to all staff. The initial role of mentors is to assist in the orientation of beginning teachers to the induction program and to their school. At this time mentors often provide logistical and emotional support. Throughout the year mentors work with beginning teachers during and after school to promote growth along the indicators defined in the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards and the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation System and to ensure quality student learning.

Mentors are provided a formal orientation to the induction program and foundational training in mentoring before they work with beginning teachers. Following formal training, mentors will participate in ongoing professional development and in facilitated professional learning communities of mentoring practice to refine mentoring skills, advance induction practices and improve student learning.

2a. Mentor Selection

Key Features:

- Selection criteria include input from a variety of stakeholder groups.
- Mentor selection criteria are clearly articulated by program leadership.
- Process for mentor application and selection is transparent and uniformly applied.

2b. Mentor Role

Key Features:

- Mentors support beginning teacher orientation and provide logistical and emotional support.
- Mentors focus their primary support on improving instruction and learning.
- Mentors provide ongoing support and encouragement for the beginning teacher.

2c. Mentor Professional Development

Key Features:

- Mentors receive initial training regarding their role as mentors and their responsibilities in the induction program.
- Mentors receive ongoing training to advance their knowledge and skills.
- Mentors have opportunities to participate in professional learning communities of mentoring practice.

Standard 3: Mentoring for Instructional Excellence

Effective mentor-beginning teacher interactions and relationships are at the core of a successful mentoring and induction program. Program, district, and site leadership collaborate to ensure that sufficient time is provided for mentors to meet with their beginning teachers to engage in the improvement of teaching and learning and induction-related activities both during and outside of school time.

The North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards and the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation System are the comprehensive guides used by all teachers, mentors, and beginning teachers to advance practice and student learning. Mentors are regularly present in the classrooms of beginning teachers to observe and to strategically collect data on management, instruction, and student learning. Mentors and beginning teachers collaboratively analyze observation data, develop next steps, and together monitor results in an ongoing process designed to continuously improve teaching and learning.

Mentors support their beginning teachers to appreciate the wide-range of assets that all students bring to the classroom through their diversity. Mentors guide beginning teachers in the development of positive, inclusive, and respectful environments that support learning for a diverse student population. Mentors and beginning teachers design and implement a broad range of specific strategies designed to meet the diverse needs of their students and to promote high levels of learning.

3a. Time

Key Features:

- Mentors are provided time to work with beginning teachers during and outside of the school day.
- Mentors and beginning teachers have protected time to engage in required mentoring and induction-related activities.

3b. Instructional Focus

Key Features:

- Mentors utilize the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards and the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation System to guide, refine and deepen their work with beginning teachers across the full range of teaching practices.
- Mentors make classroom observations to support beginning teachers in developing effective classroom management, lesson planning, and instruction.

3c. Issues of Diversity

Key Features:

- Mentors support beginning teachers to appreciate diversity and to create a respectful environment for a diverse population of students.
- Mentors support beginning teachers to design and implement instruction that meets the diverse learning needs of students.

Standard 4: Beginning Teacher Professional Development

Beginning teachers benefit most by participating in professional development that is targeted to meet their needs as novice instructors. To meet the needs of beginning teachers and promote their successful entry and engagement in the school community, principals ensure that beginning teachers receive a structured orientation and often provide a school handbook with detailed explanations of school policy and procedures.

Ongoing professional development is tailored to meet the needs of beginning teachers and scheduled before the start of school or soon thereafter. Provision is made to support late hire beginning teachers to receive information provided at site and district professional development. Professional development for beginning teachers is aligned with the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards and the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation System.

4a. Beginning Teacher Professional Development

Key Features:

- Beginning teachers participate in a structured orientation to their school.
- Beginning teachers participate in district-wide professional development designed for beginning teachers prior to the start of the school year or soon thereafter.
- Professional development for beginning teachers is aligned with the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards and the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation System and takes into account the unique needs of beginning teachers.

Standard 5: Formative Assessment of Candidates and Programs

The system-wide use of the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards and the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation System provides standards-based aligned descriptions of practice and expectations for beginning teacher development. Mentors utilize the language and expectations of these foundations in the use of formative assessment tools for ongoing collaborative data collection, analysis, reflection and implementation of next steps to improve beginning teacher practice and student learning.

The North Carolina Mentoring and Induction Program Standards form the basis on which individual mentoring and induction programs are assessed. District mentor program leaders and stakeholders partner to design a reliable infrastructure to support the collection, analysis and use of standards-based data to promote continuous high quality program improvement. All stakeholders work together to mediate challenges to program improvement and to advance positive impacts and successes of mentoring and induction programs.

5a. Formative Assessment

Key Features:

- Mentors utilize the language and expectations in the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards and the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation System in supporting their beginning teachers' practice and student learning.
- Mentors use formative assessment tools to gather data on classroom practice and student learning to promote and guide their work with beginning teachers.

5b. Program Evaluation

Key Features:

- Infrastructure exists that assists in the collection and use of data regarding beginning teacher practice and program implementation overtime.
- Program leaders and stakeholders use data to identify impacts, successes, and challenges and to inform program improvement.

North Carolina Mentor Standards
Overview

Standard 1: Mentors Support Beginning Teachers to Demonstrate Leadership – Mentors utilize effective communication skills to establish quality professional and confidential relationships with beginning teachers to impart knowledge of ethical standards, instructional best practice, and leadership opportunities. Key elements of the standard include building trusting relationships and coaching, promoting leadership, facilitating communication and collaboration, sharing best practices, imparting ethical standards and advocating for beginning teachers and their students.

Standard 2: Mentors Support Beginning Teachers to Establish a Respectful Environment for a Diverse Population of Students – Mentors support beginning teachers to develop strong relationships with all learners, their parents or guardians, and the community through reflective practice on issues of equity and diversity. Key elements of the standard include supporting relationships with students, families, peers and the community, honoring and respecting diversity, creating classroom environments that optimize learning, and reaching students of all learning needs.

Standard 3: Mentors Support Beginning Teachers to Know the Content They Teach – Mentors have strong knowledge of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) and 21st century goals and assist beginning teachers in the utilization of these tools to promote student achievement. Key elements of the standard include imparting and utilizing the NCSCOS and 21st century goals into beginning teacher practice.

Standard 4: Mentors Support Beginning Teachers to Facilitate Learning for Their Students: Mentors support beginning teachers in their understanding and use of student assessment tools to drive student achievement. Mentors also support beginning teachers to understand their professional licensure obligations and pursue professional growth. Key elements of the standard include developing and improving instructional and professional practice and understanding and analyzing student assessment data.

Standard 5: Mentors Support Beginning Teachers to Reflect on Their Practice - Mentors continually work on improving their mentoring and observation skills to improve their effectiveness with beginning teacher support. Key elements of the standard include allocating and using time with beginning teachers, developing reflective practitioners and gathering data on beginning teacher practice.