

***School District
of
Onalaska***



2025-26
Induction Program
Year 1 and 2

Philosophy

The School District of Onalaska recognizes the need to provide information, support and resources in the form of an induction program for all certified teachers and specialists new to the district. The induction program offers orientation opportunities, mentorship partnership, support seminars related to the teachers' standards, staff development opportunities, and job-embedded professional development through instructional coaching to ensure a successful start to a career in Onalaska. Positive and supportive school experiences in the first few years will not only have a major impact in long term teacher success but it will also help ensure a successful student learning environment. The induction program is designed to help ensure a successful transition to both the teaching profession and our district.

Program Objectives

- Provide an overall understanding of the operation of the district strategic plan.
- Provide professional support and training at the building level.
- Provide opportunities to become acquainted with their colleagues.
- Encourage, support, and provide professional growth opportunities.
- Create a sense of community.

Induction Program Components

Orientation – Orientation takes place over a three-day period in August. Topics covered during orientation include: technology use, salary, benefits, evaluation, employee handbook, association membership, the mentor program, effective teaching, curriculum development, probationary teacher evaluation, and building orientation.

Mentorship – Teachers who are new to the teaching profession and have no prior experience are provided with a trained mentor for their first two years in the district. Teachers new to the district, but not to the profession, are provided a trained mentor for their first year of employment. A more in-depth explanation of the mentor-mentee relationship is outlined later in this handbook.

Support Seminars – Support seminar opportunities, which are related to the ten teacher standards, are offered during the school year. **Certified teachers and specialists new to the district are asked to attend all required support seminars during their first year of employment.** The mentee will be reimbursed for attending support seminars at the professional development rate.

Mentoring

The School District of Onalaska recognizes the need to provide teachers new to the district with mentorship opportunities.

The mentor program is designed to assist the beginning teacher in becoming acclimated to his or her new teaching position and to assist teachers new to the district but not new to the profession with their transition into Onalaska. Mentors can also be used at the recommendation of the building administrator to help teachers in areas of transition or in other areas of need. The mentor program

requires specific training for the educator serving as mentor. It also includes an observation of the mentee by the mentor (preferably prior to the mentee's first formal observation), monthly meetings between the mentor and mentee to discuss a prescribed set of topics, and an organized opportunity for the mentee to observe other teachers in their field. The formal mentor will keep a file of monthly checklists regarding the mentor/mentee meetings and submit copies of those checklists via Google Classroom to the Director of Instructional Services prior to receiving compensation for their mentoring services.

The mentor should be located in the same building and when deemed appropriate by administration, teaching in the same or similar discipline as the mentee.

Selection Criteria for a Mentor Candidate

- At least three years of successful teaching experience in this district.
- Knowledge of district curriculum and current teaching best practices.
- Strong collaboration skills – good listener, enthusiastic, and strong communication skills.
- Desire to support and guide educators new to the district.
- Demonstrated continuing professional development.
- Willing to participate in mentor training.

No-Fault Termination of Mentor/Mentee Relationship

The district recognizes that at times the mentor-mentee match does not always work. For this reason, if either the mentor or mentee doesn't feel like the relationship is working, he or she may inform the Director of Instructional Services and a replacement will be secured.

Mentor Program Calendar

Summer Mentor training (arranged by the DO)

Mentors will be assigned to new teachers as soon as possible after hiring by the Director of Instructional Services in collaboration with the building principal. Mentors are encouraged to make contact with their mentee as soon as possible after accepting the assignment.

August New Teacher Orientation - August 12-14
August 14 - Mentor/Mentee Dinner on the La Crosse Queen - 5:30 until 7:30 PM

Aug – May Monthly meetings with the mentee (arranged by the mentor)
Observations of other staff in the same discipline (arranged by the mentor/approved by the Director of Instructional Services if substitute is needed)
Observations of the mentee by the mentor - **one per semester** (arranged by the mentor/approved by the Director of Instructional Services if substitute is needed)
Additional staff development for the mentors
Support seminars for educators new to the district.

May – June Review of the mentorship process (mentor/mentee/DO)

School District Requirements for the Beginning Educators

First-Year Mentees

- Participating in collaborative professional development throughout the initial year.
- Participate in support seminars based on the [10 WI teaching standards](#).
- A qualified mentor that meets with the mentee on a monthly basis to review monthly checklists, answer questions and engage in reflection and sharing. Each mentor must complete a district approved mentor training program.
- Participate in pre and post-observation conferencing and reflection with mentor twice per year.
- Teachers within the first three years of the profession, prior to the start of the school year, meet with the Behavior Specialist/Coach on beginning of the year structures/needs surrounding classroom management, routines and procedures, as well as student expectations; a minimum of one observation and observation follow up within the first three weeks of school and follow up throughout at least the first semester.
- If a teacher in grades K through 6, complete at least one formal coaching cycle in mathematics with the Instructional Math Coach.

Second-Year Mentees

- A qualified mentor that meets with the mentee on a monthly basis to review monthly checklists, answer questions and engage in reflection and sharing. Each mentor must complete a district approved mentor training program

MENTORING PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Roles

The roles and responsibilities of the mentor, mentee and administrator/mentor program coordinator clearly define the expectations of the three main parties in the mentor program.

Mentor

- Act as a teacher leader, role model, and coach
- Observe mentee a minimum of one time, more if needed
- Coordinate regular meeting times
- Model effective teaching
- Develop a professional relationship respecting the importance of confidentiality
- Answer questions and serve as a resource
- Provide support to mentee
- Give mentee constructive feedback
- Discuss curriculum, instruction and assessment issues
- Report problems/concerns over mentor/mentee relationship to the Director of Instruction.
- Share resources with mentee
- Provide input on the Mentor Program
- Develop mentor skills through continued training
- Submit Monthly Checklists to the District Office
- Compensated in accordance with the Employee Handbook

Mentee

- Observe mentor or other colleague a minimum of two times
- Attend new teacher orientation and support seminars (see Appendix A)
- Report problems/concerns over mentor/mentee relationship to a person not in an evaluative role
- Share reflective practices with mentor
- Develop a collegial relationship with mentor
- Provide input on the mentor program
- Reflect on the relationship with the mentor

Administrator/Mentor Program Coordinator

- Identify, support, and provide mentor training opportunities
- Match mentor/mentee based on established criteria
- Schedule and facilitate the mentor/mentee welcoming meeting
- Collect and summarize program evaluations
- Collect mentor checklists
- Communicate with staff the philosophy and goals of the mentoring program
- Mediate problems/concerns of the mentor-mentee relationship – reassign if necessary
- Evaluate the mentor program
- Schedule on-going support seminars
- Coordinate and facilitate new teacher orientation

Mentoring At-a-Glance

When assigned a mentee by the Director of Instruction/Principal, reach out to that individual to make contact. We like to let all new staff members know that their assigned mentor will reach out early and often as they become acquainted with the district.

August

- Attend the New Teacher Orientation Mentor/Mentee Sunset Cruise/Dinner
- Welcome your mentee and make them feel at home - introduce them to staff, ask if they want to sit with you during our Back-to-School gathering, etc. Introduce yourself and offer any back to school assistance.
- Review the "Before the Start of School" Mentor Checklist and complete Collaboration Sheet - focus especially on Open House

September

- Review the September Mentor Checklist and complete Collaboration Sheet
- Help them with their EE Self-Review and EE PPG - Ask about School District of Onalaska provided training on EE
- Observations of the mentee by the mentor - **one per semester** (arranged by the mentor/approved by the Director of Instructional Services if substitute is needed) do this prior to the principal's first EE observation

October

- Review the October Mentor Checklist and complete Collaboration Sheet
- Complete observation 1 if not already done - do this prior to the principal's first EE observation
- Ask about PLC Support Seminar

November

- Review the November Mentor Checklist and complete Collaboration Sheet
- Ask about the November PLC Support Seminar
- Observations of other staff in the same discipline (arranged by the mentor/approved by the Director of Instructional Services if substitute is needed)

December

- Review the December Mentor Checklist and complete Collaboration Sheet
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January/February

- Review the January/February Mentor Checklist and complete Collaboration Sheet
- Ask about the January Support Seminar
- Complete second observation if not already done - do this prior to the principal's second EE observation

March/April

- Review the March/April Mentor Checklist and complete Collaboration Sheet
- Attend April 14th Support Seminar with mentee to reflect on the year

May

- Review the May Mentor Checklist and complete Collaboration Sheet

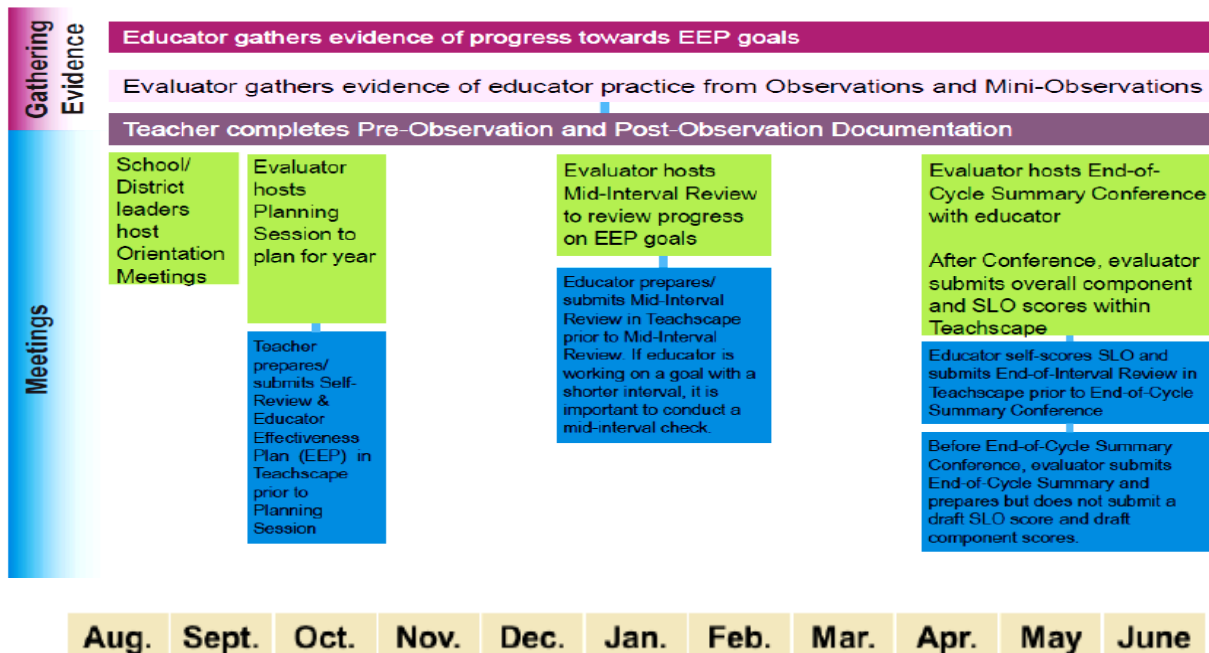
Evaluation of Professional Practice for Probationary Teachers in the School District of Onalaska

The Purpose of Educator Effectiveness

Research consistently identifies effective teaching and instructional leadership as the most important school-based factors impacting student learning. Every child in every community deserves excellent classroom teachers and building leaders. Every educator deserves a specific, individualized roadmap to help move his or her students and professional practice from point A to point B. The Wisconsin Educator Effectiveness (EE) System serves as that road map. The System improves teacher and principal evaluation systems to provide educators with more meaningful feedback and support so they can achieve maximum results with students. In short, Wisconsin created the Educator Effectiveness System to improve support, practice, and outcomes. The EE System was designed by and for Wisconsin educators to evaluate teachers and principals through a fair, valid, reliable, and manageable process using multiple measures across two main areas: educator practice and student outcomes.

All new teachers in the School District of Onalaska have a two-year probationary period. A probationary teacher will have at least two mini observations and three formal announced observations each year, two scheduled by their building administrator and one additional formal announced observation with a second administrator. Administration reserves the right to reduce the formal observations to one in probationary year two if the teacher is meeting expectations. Upon successful completion of two probationary years, teachers will be placed on the normal three-year EE cycle. The graphic below illustrates an overview of the EE System for a teacher in his/her summary year.

Overview of the Educator Effectiveness System: Summary Year



The teacher evaluation process is developed around four frameworks that enhance professional practice. The four domains are as follows:

1) **Domain 1: Planning and Preparation**

1a Applying Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy

1b Knowing and Valuing Students

1c Setting Instructional Outcomes

1d Using Resources Effectively

1e Planning Coherent Instruction

1f Designing and Analyzing Assessments

2) **Domain 2: Learning Environments**

2a Cultivating Respectful and Affirming Environments

2b Fostering a Culture for Learning

2c Maintaining Purposeful Environments

2d Supporting Positive Student Behavior

2e Organizing Spaces for Learning

3) **Domain 3: Learning Experiences**

3a Communicating About Purpose and Content

3b Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques

3c Engaging Students in Learning

3d Using Assessment for Learning

3e Responding Flexibly to Student Needs

4) **Domain 4: Principled Teaching**

4a Engaging in Reflective Practice

4b Documenting Student Progress

4c Engaging Families and Communities

4d Contributing to School Community and Culture

4e Growing and Developing Professionally

4f Acting in Service of Students

The framework defines four levels of performance for each component. The levels of performance describe teaching practice for a specific lesson (not the teacher). The levels of performance are defined as follows:

Figure 1: Framework for Teaching Levels of Performance

			Distinguished
		Proficient	Refers to professional teaching that involves students in innovative learning processes and creates a true community of learners. Teachers performing at this level are master teachers and leaders in the field, both inside and outside of their school.
	Basic	Refers to successful, professional practice. Teaching practices consistently demonstrate proficiency.	
Unsatisfactory	Refers to teaching demonstrating the potential knowledge and skills necessary to be successful, but the application is inconsistent (perhaps due to recently entering the profession or transitioning to a new curriculum, grade level, or subject).		
Refers to teaching that does not convey understanding of the concepts underlying the component. This level of performance is doing harm in the classroom.			

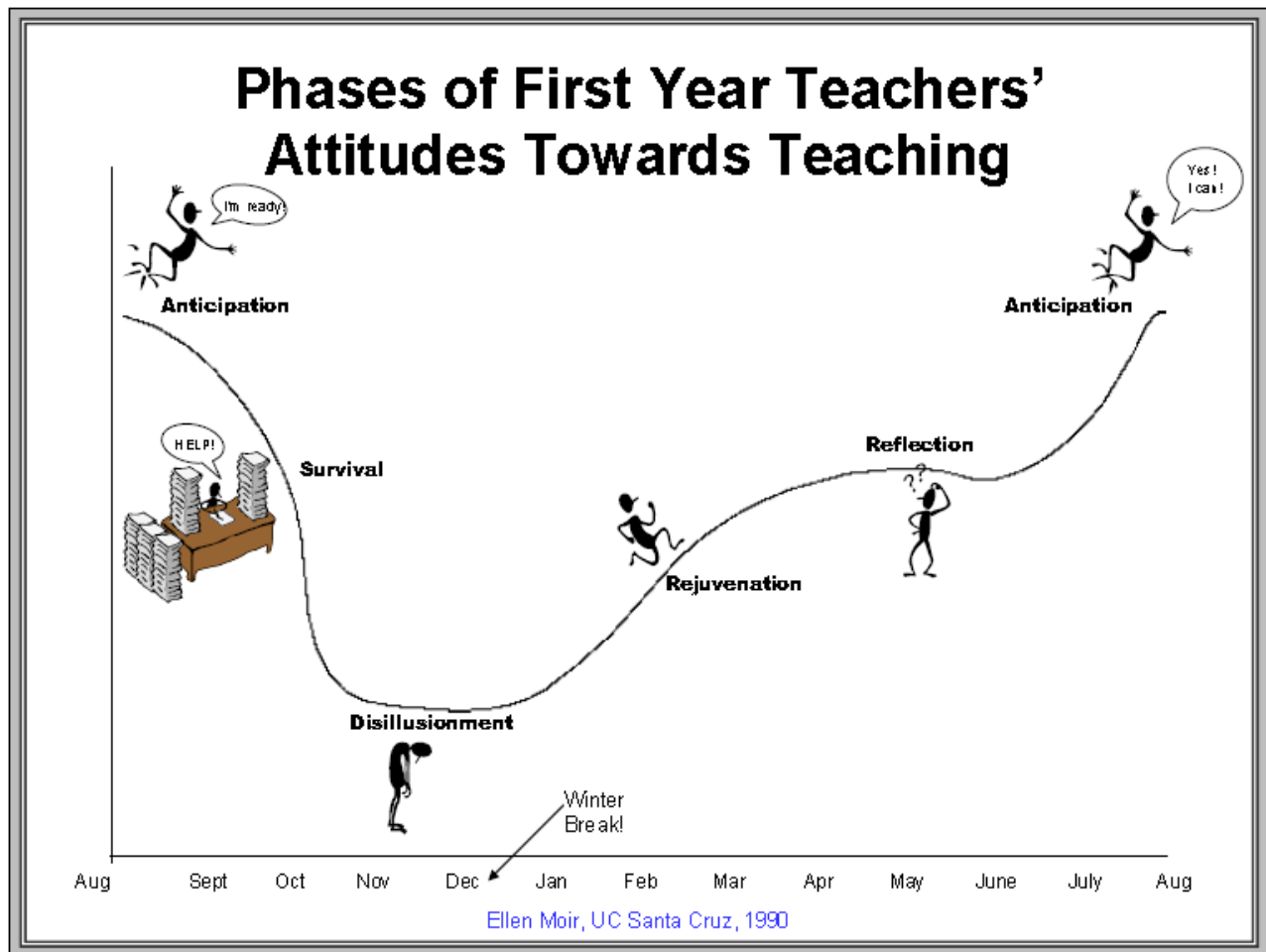
Non teaching certified staff evaluation process will follow the rubrics and outline provided through the Department of Public Instruction.

Additional Resources for Educator Effectiveness

Wisconsin Educator Effectiveness System - [Educator Effectiveness DPI Homepage](#)

Evaluation of Professional Practice - [For Teachers](#)

The Framework is organized into 4 domains and 22 components. A complete description of the domains and components, as well as indicators and descriptions of performance levels is available in [The Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument, 2022 Edition](#)



First-year teaching is a difficult challenge. Equally challenging is figuring out ways to support and assist beginning teachers as they enter the profession. Since 1988 the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project has been working to support the efforts of new teachers. After supporting nearly 1,500 new teachers, a number of developmental phases have been noted. While not every new teacher goes through this exact sequence, these phases are very useful in helping everyone involved -- administrators, other support personnel, and teacher education faculty--in the process of supporting new teachers. These teachers move through several phases from anticipation, to survival, to disillusionment, to rejuvenation, to reflection; then back to anticipation. Here's a look at the stages through which new teachers move during that crucial first year.

ANTICIPATION PHASE

The anticipation phase begins during the student teaching portion of pre-service preparation. The closer student teachers get to completing their assignment, the more excited and anxious they become about their first teaching position. They tend to romanticize the role of the teacher and the position. New teachers enter with a tremendous commitment to making a difference and a somewhat idealistic view of how to accomplish their goals. "I was elated to get the job but terrified about going from the simulated experience of student teaching to being the person completely in charge." This feeling of excitement carries new teachers through the first few weeks of school.

SURVIVAL PHASE

The first month of school is very overwhelming for new teachers. They are learning a lot and at a very rapid pace. Beginning teachers are instantly bombarded with a variety of problems and situations they had not

anticipated. Despite teacher preparation programs, new teachers are caught off guard by the realities of teaching. "I thought I'd be busy, something like student teaching, but this is crazy. I'm feeling like I'm constantly running. It's hard to focus on other aspects of my life."

During the survival phase, most new teachers struggle to keep their heads above water. They become very focused and consumed with the day-to-day routine of teaching. There is little time to stop and reflect on their experiences. It is not uncommon for new teachers to spend up to seventy hours a week on schoolwork. Particularly overwhelming is the constant need to develop curriculum. Veteran teachers routinely reuse excellent lessons and units from the past. New teachers, still uncertain of what will really work, must develop their lessons for the first time. Even depending on unfamiliar prepared curriculum such as textbooks is enormously time consuming.

"I thought there would be more time to get everything done. It's like working three jobs: 7:30-2:30, 2:30-6:00, with more time spent in the evening and on weekends." Although tired and surprised by the amount of work, first-year teachers usually maintain a tremendous amount of energy and commitment during the survival phase, harboring hope that soon the turmoil will subside.

DISILLUSIONMENT PHASE

After six to eight weeks of nonstop work and stress, new teachers enter the disillusionment phase. The intensity and length of the phase varies among new teachers. The extensive time commitment, the realization that things are probably not going as smoothly as they want, and low morale contribute to this period of disenchantment. New teachers begin questioning both their commitment and their competence. Many new teachers get sick during this phase.

Compounding an already difficult situation is the fact that new teachers are confronted with several new events during this time frame. They are faced with back-to-school night, parent conferences, and their first formal evaluation by the site administrator. Each of these important milestones places an already vulnerable individual in a very stressful situation.

Back-to-school night means giving a speech to parents about plans for the year that are most likely still unclear in the new teacher's mind. Some parents are uneasy when they realize the teacher is just beginning and many times pose questions or make demands that intimidate a new teacher.

Parent conferences require new teachers to be highly organized, articulate, tactful and prepared to confer with parents about each student's progress. This type of communication with parents can be awkward and difficult for a beginning teacher. New teachers generally begin with the idea that parents are partners in the learning process and are not prepared for parents' concerns or criticisms. These criticisms hit new teachers at a time of waning self-esteem.

This is also the first time that new teachers are formally evaluated by their principal. They are, for the most part, uncertain about the process itself and anxious about their own competence and ability to perform. Developing and presenting a "showpiece" lesson is time-consuming and stressful. During the disillusionment phase classroom management is a major source of distress. "I thought I'd be focusing more on curriculum and less on classroom management and discipline. I'm stressed because I have some very problematic students who are low academically, and I think about them every second my eyes are open."

At this point, the accumulated stress of the first-year teacher, coupled with months of excessive time allotted to teaching, often brings complaints from family members and friends. This is a very difficult and challenging phase for new entries into the profession. They express self-doubt, have lower self-esteem and question their professional commitment. In fact, getting through this phase may be the toughest challenge they face as a new teacher.

REJUVENATION

The rejuvenation phase is characterized by a slow rise in the new teacher's attitude toward teaching. It generally begins in January. Having a winter break makes a tremendous difference for new teachers. It allows them to resume a more normal lifestyle, with plenty of rest, food, exercise, and time for family and friends. This vacation is the first opportunity that new teachers have for organizing materials and planning curriculum. It is a time for them to sort through materials that have accumulated and prepare new ones. This breath of fresh air gives novice teachers a broader perspective with renewed hope.

They seem ready to put past problems behind them. A better understanding of the system, an acceptance of the realities of teaching, and a sense of accomplishment help to rejuvenate new teachers. Through their experiences in the first half of the year, beginning teachers gain new coping strategies and skills to prevent, reduce, or manage many problems they are likely to encounter in the second half of the year. Many feel a great sense of relief that they have made it through the first half of the year. During this phase, new teachers focus on curriculum development, long-term planning and teaching strategies.

"I'm really excited about my story writing center, although the organization of it has at times been haphazard. Story writing has definitely revived my journals." The rejuvenation phase tends to last into spring with many ups and downs along the way. Toward the end of this phase, new teachers begin to raise concerns about whether they can get everything done prior to the end of school. They also wonder how their students will do on the tests, questioning once again their own effectiveness as teachers. "I'm fearful of these big tests. Can you be fired if your kids do poorly? I don't know enough about them to know what I haven't taught, and I'm sure it's a lot."

REFLECTION

The reflection phase beginning in May is a particularly invigorating time for first-year teachers. Reflecting back over the year, they highlight events that were successful and those that were not. They think about the various changes that they plan to make the following year in management, curriculum, and teaching strategies. The end is in sight, and they have almost made it; but more importantly, a vision emerges as to what their second year will look like, which brings them to a new phase of anticipation. "I think that for next year I'd like to start the letter puppets earlier in the year to introduce the kids

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

[*The New Teacher's Companion: Practical Wisdom for Succeeding in the Classroom*](#) 2009

Gini Cunningham

Research confirms that the teacher makes the greatest difference in the learning success of students, so it's important that new teachers get off to a strong start. With help from veteran teacher and mentor Gini Cunningham, inexperienced teachers can better understand and successfully tackle the many daily challenges they will face in the classroom:

- Setting up classroom procedures and managing class time
- Coordinating standards, curriculum, and textbooks
- Developing manageable lesson and unit plans
- Handling discipline problems and engaging students in learning
- Using effective assessment practices and monitoring student achievement

[*Handbooks for Qualities of Effective Teachers*](#) 2004

James H. Stronge, Pamela D. Tucker, and Jennifer L. Hindman

What makes an effective teacher? How do you help good teachers become even better? What tools and techniques are available to support and sustain quality teaching?

In this companion to the best-selling *Qualities of Effective Teachers*, you'll find numerous strategies for examining the practice of teaching, helping teachers improve their skills, and establishing an environment that supports good teaching.

[*Never Work Harder Than Your Students and Other Principles of Great Teaching*](#) 2009

Robyn R. Jackson

Is great teaching a gift that only a few of us are born with, or is it a skill that can be learned? In *Never Work Harder Than Your Students*, Robyn Jackson makes a radical assertion: Any teacher can become a master teacher by developing a master teacher mindset.

The master teacher mindset can be achieved by rigorously applying seven principles to your teaching until they become your automatic response to students in the classroom. The more you practice these seven principles, the more you begin to think like a master teacher:

1. Start where your students are.
2. Know where your students are going.
3. Expect to get your students to their goal.
4. Support your students along the way.
5. Use feedback to help you and your students get better.
6. Focus on quality rather than quantity.
7. Never work harder than your students.

The following is a listing of additional resources that new educators might find helpful:

[*Every Connection Matters: How to Build, Maintain, and Restore Relationships inside the Classroom and Out*](#) by Michael Creekmore and Nita Creekmore (January 2024)

[*The Antiracist Roadmap to Educational Equity: A Systemwide Approach for All Stakeholders*](#) by Avis Williams and Brenda Elliot (December 2023)

[*Role Reversal: Achieving Uncommonly Excellent Results in the Student-Centered Classroom*](#) by Mark Barnes (February 2013)

[*How to Create and Use Rubrics for Formative Assessment and Grading*](#) by Susan M. Brookhart (January 2013)

[*Neurodiversity in the Classroom: Strength-Based Strategies to Help Students with Special Needs Succeed in School and Life*](#) by Thomas Armstrong (December 2012)

[*Assignments Matter: Making the Connections That Help Students Meet Standards*](#) by Eleanor Dougherty (September 2012)

[*Learning Targets: Helping Students Aim for Understanding in Today's Lesson*](#) by Connie M. Moss and Susan M. Brookhart (July 2012)

[*How to Create a Culture of Achievement in Your School and Classroom*](#) by Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey and Ian Pumpian (May 2012)

[*When Teaching Gets Tough: Smart Ways to Reclaim Your Game*](#) by Allen N. Mendler (April 2012)



**2025-26 NEW PROFESSIONAL STAFF SUPPORT SEMINAR TOPICS &
OTHER TRAINING**
School District of Onalaska

Support seminars provide first-year certified staff members who are new to the School District of Onalaska with opportunities to dialog, learn, network, and share information with each other. Please note that some of the sessions are required.

Dates and Times	Topics	Standards	Location	Requirement
August 12, 13, 14, 2025	Equity in Education Technology Benefits & Purchasing Introduction to our PLC Effective Teaching New Certified Staff & Mentor Relationships	2,3,5,6,9	Onalaska District Office Board of Education Room	Required for all Certified Staff
Before school starts	Schedule meeting with the Behavior Specialist/Coach	1,2,3,4,7, 9,10	Varies	Required for all Certified Staff who are new and/or within the first 3 years in the profession
Within the first 3 weeks of school	Schedule an observation with the Behavior Specialist/Coach	1,2,3,4,7, 9,10	Varies	Required for all Certified Staff who are new and/or within the first 3 years in the profession
Before school starts or 1st week of September with students Mentor/Mentee Meeting	Beginning of school checklist items	1,2,3,4,7, 9,10	Varies	Required for All Certified Staff
September 18, 2025 4:00 to 5:30 pm	Educator Effectiveness Workshop	1,2,3,4,7, 9,10	District Office	Required for All Certified Staff who are new to the Educator Effectiveness system
September 16, 2025 3:30 to 5 pm Spec Ed Staff Only	Learn how to write procedurally compliant IEPs and transition plans for our students with special education needs.	2,4,5,6	District Office Conference Room	Required for Spec Ed Staff Only

<p>October 8, 2025</p> <p>4 to 6 PM</p> <p>Meal will be provided</p>	<p>Professional Learning Communities</p>	<p>1,2,3,4,7, 8</p>	<p>District Office Boardroom</p>	<p>Required for All Certified Staff</p>
<p>November 12, 2025</p> <p>4 to 5:30 pm</p>	<p>Behavior Support & Networking</p>	<p>1,2,3,4,7, 8</p>	<p>District Office Boardroom</p>	<p>Required for all Certified Staff who are new and/or within the first 3 years in the profession/new to the current teaching assignment</p>
<p>January 14, 2025</p> <p>4 to 5:30 pm</p>	<p>Equity in Education</p>	<p>2,4,5,6</p>	<p>DO Boardroom</p>	<p>Required for All Certified Staff</p>