

Report on the Effectiveness of Representative Mentor Programs

Background Information

Session Law 2007-323 Section 7.17 directs the State Board of Education to evaluate the effectiveness of a representative sample of local mentor programs and report on its findings to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the Fiscal Research Division. The report is to include the results of the evaluation and recommendations both for improving mentor programs generally and for an appropriate level of State support for mentor programs.

This report includes information on the retention of beginning teachers in North Carolina, summaries of representative Initial Licensure Programs, data on mentor programs provided through the Teacher Working Conditions Survey, information on other selected mentor programs, and recommendations for improving mentor programs generally. The recommendations reflect discussions of the Select Committee on Lateral Entry and the SBE Task Force on Teacher Retention, and the State Board of Education budget requests.

Teacher Induction in North Carolina

Since the mid 1980s, North Carolina has had an induction program for beginning teachers. Initially, the program was two years in length. Since January 1, 1998, all teachers who hold initial (Standard Professional 1) licenses are required to participate in a three year induction period with a formal orientation, mentor support, observations and evaluation prior to the recommendation for continuing (Standard Professional 2) licensure. Beginning teachers have paid mentors during their first two years of employment. Within the requirements and guidelines described below, LEAs have the flexibility to develop induction programs that meet the needs of their beginning teachers.

Each LEA must develop a plan and provide a comprehensive program for beginning teachers. This plan must be approved by the local board of education. The plans, which are to be on file in the LEA for review, must:

- (1) describe adequate provisions for efficient management of the program.
- (2) designate, at the local level, an official to verify eligibility of beginning teachers for a continuing license.
- (3) provide for a formal orientation for beginning teachers which includes a description of available services, training opportunities, the teacher evaluation process, and the process for achieving a continuing license.
- (4) address compliance with the optimum working conditions for beginning teachers identified by the SBE.
- (5) address compliance with the mentor selection, assignment, and training guidelines identified by the SBE.
- (6) provide for the involvement of the principal or the principal's designee in supporting the beginning teacher.
- (7) provide for a minimum of 4 observations per year in accordance GS 115C-333, using the instruments adopted by the SBE for such purposes. The plan must address the appropriate spacing of observations throughout the year, and specify a date by which the annual summative evaluation is to be completed.
- (8) provide for the preparation of an Individualized Growth Plan (IGP) by each beginning teacher in collaboration with the principal or the principal's designee, and the mentor teacher.

- (9) provide for a formal means of identifying and delivering services and technical assistance needed by beginning teachers.
- (10) provide for the maintenance of a cumulative beginning teacher file that contains the IGP and evaluation report(s).
- (11) provide for the timely transfer of the cumulative beginning teacher file to successive employing LEAs, charter schools, or non-public institutions within the state upon the authorization of the beginning teacher.
- (12) describe a plan for the systematic evaluation of the Beginning Teacher Support Program to assure program quality, effectiveness, and efficient management.
- (13) document that the local board of education has adopted the LEA plan, or that the charter school or non-public institution plan has been approved by the SBE.

Charter schools and non-public institutions that have a state-approved plan to administer the licensure renewal program may submit a Beginning Teacher Support Program Plan to the SBE for approval.

In compliance with GS 115C-333, each beginning teacher is to be observed at least three times annually by a qualified school administrator or a designee and at least once annually by a teacher. Each beginning teacher is to be evaluated at least once annually by a qualified school administrator. Each observation must be for at least one continuous period of instructional time that is at least 45 minutes in length and must be followed by a post-conference. All persons who observe teachers must be appropriately trained. The required observations must be appropriately spaced throughout the school year. The Beginning Teacher Support Program Plan must specify the role of the beginning teacher's assigned mentor in the observations. Whether or not the assigned mentor may conduct one of the required observations is a local decision.

Local school systems are responsible for providing training and support for mentor teachers. Systems may choose to use programs developed by the Department of Public Instruction, other programs (e.g., Teacher Academy), or develop programs of their own.

Based on the belief that quality mentors are a critical key to the success of beginning teachers, providing needed emotional, instructional, and organizational support, each beginning teacher is to be assigned a qualified, well-trained mentor as soon as possible after employment. If the beginning teacher is not assigned a full-time mentor, to ensure that the mentor has sufficient time to provide support to the beginning teacher, it is recommended that the mentor teacher be assigned only one beginning teacher at a time. If the assigned mentor is not housed in the same building as the beginning teacher (e.g., to provide a mentor in the licensure area [art, music, physical education] the system may assign a mentor housed in another school), the system must assure that the mentor is provided sufficient time to meet with and support the beginning teacher.

State Board policy specifies that the following guidelines should be used for mentor teacher selection:

1. Successful teaching in the area of licensure

- Appraisal ratings among the highest in the school (regardless of instrument/process used);
- Strong recommendations from principal and peers;

2. Commitment

- Willingness to serve as a mentor;
- Willingness to participate in on-going annual professional development related to mentoring;

3. *Other*

- Preference for career status teachers who have experience in the district norms, culture, and mission, as well as the State's goals (ABC's), strategic priorities, and standard course of study; and
- Preference given to those who have successfully completed a minimum of 24 contact hours of mentor training.

Each beginning teacher must be provided an orientation. This orientation should be conducted prior to the arrival of students. If the teacher is employed during the school year, the orientation should be conducted within the first ten days of employment. At a minimum, the orientation should provide the beginning teacher with an overview of the school's/system's goals, policies, and procedures; a description of available services and training opportunities; the Beginning Teacher Support Program and the process for achieving a Standard Professional 2 (continuing) license; the teacher evaluation process; the NC Standard Course of Study; local curriculum guides; the safe and appropriate use of seclusion and restraint of students; the State's ABC's Program; and the State Board of Education's Strategic Priorities, and Goals.

To ensure that beginning teachers have the opportunity to develop into capable teachers, the following working conditions are strongly recommended:

- assignment in the area of licensure;
- mentor assigned early, in the licensure area, and in close proximity;
- orientation that includes state, district, and school expectations;
- 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 2003 Budget Bill contained a special provision to allow LEAs flexibility in the use of mentor funds. The provision required that LEA plans for the flexible use of mentor funds be submitted to the State Board of Education for approval and that the State Board of Education submit a report on the impact of the mentor programs on teacher retention. Twenty-nine (29) LEAs had plans approved for the 2006-07 school year. Of these, 23 implemented programs. They were: Asheville City Schools, Bertie County Schools, Buncombe County Schools, Burke County Schools, Carteret County Schools, Caswell County Schools, Catawba County Schools, Chapel Hill/Carrboro City Schools, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Cumberland County Schools, Davie County Schools, Durham Public Schools, Guilford County Schools, Henderson County Schools, Hickory City Schools, New Hanover County Schools, Orange County Schools, Pitt County Schools, The Public Schools of Robeson County, Wilkes County Schools, Wilson County Schools, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools, and Yancey County Schools. Avery County Schools, Greene County Schools, Hoke County Schools, Iredell-Statesville Schools, Jones County Schools, and Wake County Schools choose not to implement their proposed programs.

Based on review of annual Initial Licensure Program Reports previously submitted to the Department of Public Instruction, LEAs reported that they conduct the required three-day orientation for beginning teachers and provide all beginning teachers with mentors. They provide system-wide and school level activities for beginning teachers. They use both formal and informal feedback from beginning teachers and mentors to improve their programs.

Teacher Retention in North Carolina

Attachment A provides detailed information on the retention of beginning teachers in North Carolina since the 1995-96 school year. It tracks three cohorts of teachers: those with experience credit when they begin teaching; those with no experience credit when they begin teaching; and lateral entry teachers. Teachers with experience credit may be teachers from other states who received credit for previous teaching experience or teachers without teaching experience who have received credit for other related work experiences. The data indicate that:

- The retention of lateral entry teachers has improved since 1995. However, we are still losing approximately half of the lateral entry teachers after the third year. Retention after one year has increased from 62.5% to 77.6%*; it has increased from 47.5% to 61.9%* after two years; it has increased from 40% to 53.8% after three years; it has increased from 36% to 50.3% after four years; and it has increased from 31.7% to 44.7%* after five years. (*This represents a slight decrease from information provided for 2005-2006.)
- While the retention after one year of beginning teachers with no experience credit is better than that of teachers with experience credit and lateral entry teachers, it has also declined slightly since 1995. It has gone from 83.7% to 82.3% after 1 year; from 75% to 71.5% after two years; from 65.9% to 60.8% after three years; and from 60.6% to 58.7% after four years. After five years, it has gone from 56.2% to 50.7%.
- The retention of beginning teachers with experience credit has increased slightly in some cases and decreased in other cases since 1995. It has gone from 78.4% to 81.2% after one year; from 65.4% to 69% after two years; from 58.9% to 62.4% after three years; from 53.5% to 55.7% after four years; and from 50.4% to 45.1% after five years.

Nationwide, it is reported that approximately 50% of teachers leave the profession after five years. In North Carolina, for the most recent five-year cohorts the rates are:

Beginning teachers with no experience credit	50.7% (This is a decrease from the 56.2% reported for 2005-06.)
Beginning teachers with experience credit	45.1%
Lateral entry teachers	44.7%

Data on Mentoring from the 2006 Teacher Working Conditions Survey

The most recent Teacher Working Conditions Survey contained questions about mentoring and induction. The questions were only asked of those North Carolina educators who indicated that they had served as a mentor or were new educators (three years of experience or less in the profession). Several common questions about the frequency and effectiveness of induction were asked of both groups. The Center has provided the following analysis.

New teachers indicate that mentoring was effective in several areas (Table 1). In particular, mentors provided helpful general encouragement and social support (71 percent indicated it helped a lot or was critical). Also, 64 percent indicated mentors helped a lot or were critical for completing products or documentation. However, a substantial proportion of new teachers believe that mentors are providing little or no help, particularly in curriculum and subject area taught (30 percent) and classroom management (24 percent). In general, it appears that mentoring is helping a significant number of new teachers, but that a roughly one-quarter of new educators are not finding the assistance helpful to them.

Table 1
New Teacher Perceptions of Mentoring Effectiveness

My mentor was effective in providing support in the following areas	No help at all	Helped a little	Helped some	Helped a lot	Help was critical
Instructional strategies	9%	13%	23%	41%	14%
Curriculum and the subject content I teach	15%	15%	22%	34%	13%
Classroom management/ discipline strategies	10%	14%	23%	38%	15%
School and/or district procedures	9%	12%	21%	40%	17%
Completing products or documentation required	8%	10%	17%	41%	23%
Completing other school or district paperwork	11%	11%	19%	39%	20%
Social support and general encouragement	6%	8%	14%	42%	29%

While more could be done to better support and prepare mentors themselves for their work with novice teachers, there are some positive data trends for mentor preparation. Slightly more than three-quarters (76 percent) of formally assigned mentors report receiving specific training as a mentor, 39 percent report having release time to observe their mentee(s), and 29 percent report having common planning time with mentee(s). While the numbers could be higher, they are a point of strength relative to other states.

As was the case with principals and teachers (in the TWC Survey), mentors and mentees have vastly different perceptions of their respective induction experience (Table 2). Mentors report that they are able to provide more frequent support to teachers in many areas that new teachers do not indicate receiving.

The inconsistencies in the quality of mentoring efforts across the state are reflected in the split of data relative to the effectiveness of induction for retaining teachers. While 43 percent of new teachers who experience mentoring in North Carolina say it was important or very important in their decision to continue teaching in their school, a nearly equal 42 percent say it was only slight important or made no difference in their decision.

Table 2
Differences in the Perceptions of Mentees and Mentors
Regarding Frequency of Mentoring Activities

	Mentees			Mentors		
Mentoring Activity	Never	Less than once per month to Several times per month	At least once per week	Never	Less than once per month to Several times per month	At least once per week
Planning during the school day	31%	40%	29%	15%	42%	43%
Mentor observing mentee	21%	70%	8%	7%	80%	13%
Mentee observing mentor	49%	44%	6%	29%	61%	9%
Planning instruction	34%	45%	22%	9%	56%	35%
Having discussions about teaching	6%	47%	47%	1%	32%	67%

Summaries of Representative Full-Time Mentor Programs

The 2003 Budget Bill contained a special provision to allow LEAs flexibility in the use of mentor funds. LEAs approved for the flexible use of mentor funds are required to submit annual reports on their programs. Summaries of several representative programs follow.

Asheville City Schools

The Asheville City Schools designed a program to:

- provide consistent, on-going support for new teachers and their mentors on a daily basis;
- provide a direct link between the Office of Human Resources and beginning teachers/mentors;
- provide direct hands-on licensure support for lateral entry teachers;
- provide a link between local universities and teachers for Praxis support, content support, and professional development;
- provide feedback to new teachers and principals through direct involvement in classrooms;
- serve as an advocate and an “ear” for new teachers; and
- help retain highly qualified beginning teachers.

The program served 77 beginning teachers. The following activities and services were provided:

- individual meetings with new teachers, mentors for specific, requested support
- convened quarterly mentor support meetings
- covered classes for new teachers to observe in classrooms of master teachers
- covered classes for mentors to observe in classrooms of beginning teachers
- observations in classrooms of beginning teachers, offering feedback and suggestions
- demonstration lessons, as requested
- mentor training
- finding curriculum materials/resources to support beginning teachers
- monthly meetings with BT Ones and Twos and their mentors, offered professional development in SERVE teacher evaluation
- beginning teachers/mentors were informed about appropriate professional development opportunities
- appropriate professional development was organized and conducted for beginning teachers
- work with principals
- work with beginning teachers (especially laterals) on licensure issues
- development and facilitation of Beginning Teacher Orientation
- development and facilitation of Beginning Teacher Orientation for lateral entry teachers in conjunction with University School Teacher Education Partnership (SUTEP)
- work with Asheville City Schools Foundation to provide opportunities for beginning teachers
- work with Elementary and Secondary Curriculum Coordinators in order to provide language and literacy coaching to beginning teachers
- serve as part of the recruitment team

Of the 77 beginning teachers served, the following outcomes occurred:

- 33 BT3's successfully completed the Beginning Teacher process
- 32 BT3's are returning
- 18 BT2's are returning
- 16 BT1's are returning
- 85.71% of the beginning teachers returned

The mentoring program for Beginning Teachers working in the Asheville City Schools has demonstrated successful completion of the Beginning Teacher program. The mentoring program in the Asheville City Schools has demonstrated success in retaining Beginning teachers at the first, second, and third years of teaching.

Buncombe County Schools

The Buncombe County Schools designed a program to:

- provide consistent and on-going support for all BTs
- act as role models and to provide valuable resources
- provide appropriate feedback to classroom teachers and principals
- serve as encouragers
- create and maintain a high level of support for BTs
- develop a network of support for beginning teachers
- draw from a wealth of experience and knowledge of retired teachers as mentors
- create and maintain open avenues of communication among all parties (BTs, administrators, central office personnel)
- assist in the recruitment and retention of highly qualified teachers

The program served 318 beginning teachers. The following services and activities were provided:

- New Teacher Orientation
- New Teacher Orientation Makeup Sessions

- Lateral Entry Orientation via Asheville-Buncombe Community College
- Regular classroom visits made by mentors
- Monthly Logs maintained by District Mentors
- Monthly Reflections submitted by all BT's
- Regularly scheduled meetings for all BT's
- Instruction/Discussion re: pertinent BT issues
- Classroom Management, Discipline, Parent Conferencing, Thinking Maps, Math Investigations, **101 Answers for New Teachers and Their Mentors (for BT 1's), **Teaching with Love and Logic (for BT 2's), NCWISE Training, Balanced Literacy with Connie Prevatte, Lucy Caulkins' Writing Program, Debbie Miller and Comprehension Strategies
- Current publications available for personal and professional growth – books provided by \$500 grant from BCS Foundation

Survey results indicated the following:

- The Flexible Use of Mentor Funds has afforded Buncombe County Schools the opportunity to support Beginning Teachers in a myriad of ways.
- District Mentor Teachers whose salaries are paid by these funds are all retired, experienced and highly motivated individuals. They possess a passion for teaching and are eager to give back to the profession by encouraging young educators.
- On-going staff development is provided on a monthly basis for BTs. Mentors maintain open lines of communication via phone calls, emails and personal visits to classroom
- Several of our teachers who recently left to enjoy the early days of motherhood, have since returned to the classroom. That seems to be the number one reason that our female teachers leave initially.
- The Flex Funds have also allowed us to add another mentor teacher to our staff. The District Mentor Teachers continue to receive training, often through our Instructional Services and Technology Departments. Such staff development activities serve to keep mentors current regarding the implementation of programs of study for all BCS teachers. Thereby, mentors are better prepared to advise new teachers and/or model lessons as needed.
- The use of Flex Funds has been an important tool in creating an atmosphere of professionalism for our new teachers. It is our goal to not only recruit quality educators, but to keep them in our system by providing solid, positive, on-going support through mentors teachers who care.

Carteret County Schools

The Carteret County Schools designed a program to:

- expand their mentoring support program based on continued assessment of needs of BTs
- provide BTs with insight from several master teachers
- affect change in the classroom by providing additional on-site assistance
- develop strategies for fostering career independence in initially certified personnel

The program served 71 beginning teachers. The following services and activities were provided:

- Travel to each BT to provide support inside the classroom
- Sharing of information on Pedagogy, aligning of coursework with SCOS
- Planning and implementation of instruction
- Instructional strategies, needs of diverse learners learning styles Individualized Education Plans and 504 Plans
- Modeling lessons
- Serving as a resource link for the BTs

The outcomes and conclusions of the program indicated the following:

- Interviews with Principals cited positive noted changes in BT-1's performances and the desire for continuation of the program.

- Interviews with BT 1's stated that a feeling of great support was given to them by the mentor.
- There was a low turnover rate among the BTs touched by this program.
- BTs experienced more success in the classroom this school year.
- BTs completed the school year with a more positive outlook regarding the success of the school year.
- Interviews with Principals sited positive noted changes in BT1's performances and the desire for continuation of the program.

Caswell County Schools

The Caswell County Schools designed a program to provide one Lead Mentor Teacher.

The program served 15 beginning teachers. The following services and activities were provided:

- Content pedagogy
- Student development
- Diverse learners
- Multiple instructional strategies
- Motivation and management
- Communication and Technology
- Planning
- Assessment

Reflective Practice

- Each BT was required to meet with the Lead Mentor Teacher at least once per week for formal meetings addressing INTASC standards.
- The Lead Mentor Teacher was committed to meeting with BTs on an as needed basis in addition to the scheduled meeting times.
- The Lead Mentor Teacher assisted BTs with lesson plans and modeled lessons.
- Monthly meetings were held which included planned staff development and a stress reliever activity.

Of the 15 beginning teachers served, the following outcomes occurred:

(13) Beginning Teachers remained in the same position, same site

(0) Beginning Teachers were non-renewed

(2) Beginning Teachers resigned

87% of the Beginning Teachers remained in the Caswell County Schools

The conclusions of this program suggest this program was effective in helping to retain teachers in our system. We lost two BTs. One resigned because she was awarded a scholarship, which stipulated that she must teach in Virginia. The other resigned due to personal reasons. The turnover in our system was not because of lack of support. Administrators were pleased to have one Lead Mentor teacher. BTs were pleased to have one Lead Mentor Teacher who was committed to the mentor process. BTs gave positive feedback of the program and expressed that support was more than adequate and that the Lead Mentor Teacher responded in a timely manner to their individual needs.

Davie County Schools

The Davie County Schools recruited a core of qualified retired teachers to deliver mentoring and support services to beginning teachers to better serve the needs of their beginning teachers and to substantially increase the amount of quality contact time between mentors and their mentees. These 13 mentors were designated Master Mentors and were assigned a maximum of six mentees each. They were able to deliver services to each of our BTs with the expectation that they would average 1-2 hours of contact time with each mentee weekly. Master Mentors were also required to attend Central Office meetings in order to assure quality control of the services delivered throughout our county.

The program served 57 teachers. The following services and activities were provided:
Each Master Mentor received instruction/training in each of the following areas:

- Mentor Training
- TPAI-R
- Mentor Handbook
- Mentor Requirements
- Mentor Contact Logs
- IGP Development and Support
- INTASC Standards
- Observations/Data Collection
- Classroom Management Plans
- NC Standard Courses of Study
- Communications/Scheduling
- Documentation of services delivered

Each Master Mentor delivered the following services to their mentees:

- 1st workday site orientation
- 1-2 hours of weekly contact
- Classroom discipline/procedure plan development
- Lesson planning formats
- Development of IGP/INTASC Standards assessments
- Establishment of a professional folder/file
- Parent conferencing
- Classroom problem-solving
- Use of technology in the classroom
- Informal observations
- Formal observations/evaluations review and feedback
- Individual BT requested services

Davie County reported the following outcomes and conclusions:

- We have seen improvement in the mentoring process by having mentors available to meet with each other to discuss and improve delivery of services.
- We have experienced more focused mentoring as retired mentors are available to provide services "on demand" and as needed by individual mentees.
- We have increased the time each mentor could spend with each mentee in formal and informal settings.
- We have encouraged mentors to become stronger advocates for mentees as a result of stronger bonds with their mentees and more casual bonds with site principals.
- Our original proposal cited our need to substantially increase the number of weekly contact hours a BT spends in quality conference time with his/her assigned mentor in order to insure beginning teacher retention and improve the quality of our program.
- As our baseline date, we used a report from our 2003-2004 BTs that indicated that our BTs had spent an average of 32.71 minutes in sit-down conference time per week with their mentors.
- The same report of data gathered from our 2004-2005 BTs indicated an increase of 30 minutes of mentor/mentee conference time per week bringing our average weekly contact time to 73 minutes per week.
- Our 2005-2006 report indicates we are averaging 80 minutes of mentor/mentee contact per week. Our 2006-2007 report indicates 90 minutes per week.
- We believe that the significant increase in the amount of mentee/mentor contact time as documented by mentor logs and anecdotal data strongly suggests that the bonds between the mentors and their mentees were significantly strengthened. For most of our retired mentors, their work as a Master

Mentor was their only employment and we believe that this allowed a greater focus on helping our BTs.

- By meeting with the Master Mentors as a group and soliciting and implementing their suggestions for changes to the program, these mentors assumed an ownership of the program and were continually seeking ways to better deliver support services.
- One of the most significant changes in the mentors was how they perceived a need to change direction on how to help 2nd quarter. Mentees needed less formal contact time with mentors but needed more hands on assistance in the classroom. Mentors demonstrated lessons, modeled working in centers with students and supported the mentee during instruction.
- We had much positive feedback from our administrators as they believe that Master Mentors were able to deliver quality support services to the BTs due to focusing on that one job instead of having to deliver services while maintaining their own classroom assignments.

Durham Public Schools

Durham Public Schools is completing the second year of a full-time mentor program to support initially licensed teachers. In this program, thirty-five teachers are released from their direct classroom responsibilities to serve as mentors for a cadre of beginning teachers. The mentors serve as instructional coaches for the beginning teachers and work to develop the instructional capacities of these teachers through a variety of techniques. The mentor program of Durham Public Schools partners with the New Teacher Center at the University of California at Santa Cruz to develop the skills of the mentors and utilize the mentoring strategies and protocols developed by the New Teacher Center over its two-decade history. The flexible use of state mentor funds have allowed DPS to pool state mentor dollars to defray the salaries of some of the full-time mentors. This flexibility is vital to the funding of the DPS mentor program.

The program served 650 Beginning Teachers. The following services and activities were provided:

The mentors serve beginning teachers in a confidential, non-evaluative relationship and offer multiple types of assistance.

- conduct observations and provide non-evaluative feedback
- guide thoughtful lesson and unit planning
- help frame classroom procedures and behavior plans
- discuss ways to differentiate instruction
- lead seminars and discussion groups on specific topics
- explore multiple ways to assess student growth and understanding
- serve as an empathetic listener and sounding board
- guide adherence to BT program standards
- frame discussions on INTASC standards

The mentors also collaborate within the mentor team and with Instructional Services to develop professional development activities for beginning teachers. These include

- New Teacher Orientation
- monitoring of 10-day lateral entry training
- specialized workshops on
 - working with parents
 - differentiation
 - supporting ESL students
 - supporting EC students
 - developing culturally responsive classrooms

The data analysis for the 2006-2007 school year has not been completed, but the 2005-2006 data highlights the impact of a well-structured full-time mentor model for beginning teachers. Key results reveal:

- beginning teacher turnover dropped by 37.5%
- surveys of beginning teachers reveal consistent levels of high satisfaction with the support received from their mentor particularly in the areas of grade level/content knowledge and emotional support
- student performance, as measured by state EOG and EOC tests, of students taught by beginning teachers was commensurate, if not superior, to the performance of students taught by veteran teachers
- mentor practice in Durham Public Schools gained sophistication, standardization and focus

The first two-years of the DPS mentor program highlight the potential of high-quality programs to support the instructional growth of beginning teachers. Beginning teacher retention has improved dramatically and the student performance of beginning teachers has improved under the model. The program has also enjoyed the opportunity to expand its outreach. Members of the mentor team presented at the Symposium of the New Teacher Center and had proposals accepted to present at the 2007 National Staff Development Conference and the 2008 NTC Symposium. The DPS program has also been invited to speak at the kick-off event for a UNCG sponsored mentor training in June 2007 and the program has recently received a grant from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation to expand the outreach efforts of the mentor program.

Other Selected Mentor Models

The ***Santa Cruz New Teacher Project***, a 16 district consortium led by the University of California-Santa Cruz, has been nationally recognized as an effective teacher induction program. Reports indicate that only 5 percent of participants in the project have left the teaching profession after 14 years.

The program uses full-time mentor teachers, who are exemplary veteran teachers on-loan full-time from participating districts for a period of two-three years. The mentors are matched with beginning teachers based on grade level and subject matter expertise. Mentors meet weekly with each first and second year teacher for approximately two hours before, during, or after school providing mentees context specific support.

The beginning teachers participating in the project receive release days for observation of other teachers, curriculum planning, and self-assessment. They participate in a monthly seminar series that serves as a network where these novice teachers share accomplishments and challenges with peers. Special attention is paid to literacy, language development, strategies for working with diverse student populations, and the needs of English language learners.

Throughout the school year, mentors and beginning teachers collaborate to meet the beginning teacher's immediate instructional needs while working towards the self-identified professional growth goals. Collaborative Assessment Logs record the teacher's progress from week to week, and various items representing the teacher's learning and/or growth of their students in relation to professional goals are collected.

Mentors receive two-three days of training at the beginning of the program, followed by weekly staff development sessions at which mentors have the opportunity to discuss challenges related to their work, examine and analyze data of teacher practice, and practice observation and coaching skills. Training is provided in the areas of literacy development, coaching and observational skills, giving feedback, equity pedagogy, and group facilitation skills.

The cost of the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project is \$3,443 (state) + \$2,500 from the New Teacher Project per teacher.

Additional information on the Santa Cruz program can be found at the National Conference on Teacher Quality: Exemplary Practices for Mentoring New Teachers website:
www.ed.gov/inits/teachers/exemplarypractices/d-1.html.

The full-time mentoring programs in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and Durham Public Schools are based on the Santa Cruz model.

The ***Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program*** (LaTAAP), a state-mandated initiative, supports new teachers by providing them with a formal two-year program of mentoring and assessment for certification. At the beginning of the teacher's first year of experience in a Louisiana public school classroom, he/she is assigned a mentor or mentor support team by the building principal or school system. Mentors and new teachers have a minimum of 30 contact hours per year, meeting on a weekly basis. They are matched by grade level and by subject areas when possible. Legislation requires common planning time and collaboration between mentors and new teachers, but this is not always possible. Mentors give critical feedback after periodic observations and help new teachers create a professional development plan. During the second year, the new teacher is also assigned an assessment team consisting of the principal or principal designee and an assessor from outside the building. The beginning teacher submits a portfolio to the assessment team and each assessor observes once to collect data upon which to base the team's certification recommendation. The LaTAAP program includes specific teaching criteria and structured guidelines throughout the program to ensure a standardized process of mentoring and assessment. New teachers who completed the Louisiana Teacher Assessment Program consistently rated the assistance and support of their assessors, particularly experienced teachers, as one of the strongest parts of the program.

LaFIRST (Framework for Inducting, Retaining, and Supporting Teachers) is a separate, voluntary induction program also administered by the Louisiana Department of Education. It provides support in school districts or parishes that apply for and receive state grant money. The LaFIRST program's goal is to supplement and expand the activities of LaTAAP but not to replace it. Districts decide the structure of their own programs.

Tangipahoa is a poor, rural parish in Louisiana. Its LaFIRST program supplements the work of the LaTAAP mentors with four full-time and four half-time mentors who were hired in 2003–04 and trained to assist new teachers, including special education teachers. These mentors receive the LaTAAP Assessor and Mentor Trainings, Tangipahoa FIRST mentor training, and monthly follow-up training by the program coordinator. Each full-time mentor is assigned approximately 18 beginning teachers.

In all Tangipahoa FIRST training sessions, teachers are grouped together by grade and subject level to encourage ongoing interaction and networking. Through a program called FIRSTTech, Louisiana maintains a Blackboard website where it posts training materials and links to teacher resources. New teachers can use the site to participate in online discussions about teaching.

Tangipahoa reported 100% retention of certified teachers in 2002-03. They cite the strong administrative support at the school and district levels for the program as critical to its success.

The ***South Carolina Mentoring and Induction Program*** requires that all school systems present a written, detailed induction plan to the State Department of Education and receive approval prior by the State Board of Education prior to the implementation of the plan. Each school system must appoint a induction and mentoring coordinator to oversee development and implementation of the plan. Two specific objectives drive the program: 1) to provide a meaningful induction experience for beginning

teachers and 2) to provide professional support from qualified, trained and appropriately assigned mentors for these induction teachers as well as for annual-contract teachers who require diagnostic assistance or are scheduled for ADEPT formal evaluation. Plans are due on May 1 of each year. Continuing professional development is required of all mentors. Upon completion of advanced training, mentors enter a five-year cycle in which they must complete a minimum of 15 contact hours of professional development activities related to mentoring. Mentor training is based on the program developed by the New Teacher Center at the University of California Santa Cruz.

The *Texas Beginning Educator Support System* is a statewide program begun in 1999 with a pilot serving 988 teachers. It is now in place in every region of Texas through way of partnerships. In some districts, TxBESS complements existing support programs, in others, it helps to improve them. TxBESS serves a great percentage of teachers in economically challenged areas. The local district is responsible for teacher orientation and a minimum of five days of release time for new teachers and mentors. Mentors observe in the classroom at least twice each semester with follow-up conferences. Teachers are trained in district policies, school and community needs, student assessments, instructional strategies, curriculum assistance and use of instruction media. A formative assessment used for the professional development of new teachers is the TxBESS Activity Profile (TAP) aligned with the Examination for the Certification of Educators in Texas (ExCET). Collaboration with faculty from teacher preparation programs has led to greater alignment between state standards and teacher preparation goals.

Impact studies found that program participation improved retention of beginning teachers, especially in minority groups and high school teachers for each of their first three years on the job. Since 1999, more than 10,000 beginning teachers in over 300 school districts have been supported by TxBESS. After the first year of the program, 89.1% of participants returned for a second year while 81.2% of non-participants returned. After the second year, 82.7% of participants remained, while only 74.3% of non-participants did so. After the third year, the percentages were 75.7% for remaining participants and 67.6% for non-participants. In addition, mentors reported important benefits to their own professional development after participation in TxBESS.

The *Toledo Plan*, adopted in 1981, was the first “peer review” established for the induction and evaluation of teachers in the United States. It came about after a decade of negotiations between the district and the Toledo Federation of Teachers (TFT). The Toledo Plan is a district-wide requirement, lasting two semesters, for all first-year teachers and for experienced teachers who are new to teaching in Toledo. In it, mentees, called interns, are evaluated frequently by mentors, called consultants. The consultants must write six or seven formal reports per participant, per semester. The plan has two parts: the intern component and the intervention component. Interns are recommended or not for employment at the end of the year by the consultant to the Intern Board of Review. Intern consultants make classroom observations two to three times a month and then meet to discuss the results. Consultants are released full-time from teaching responsibilities, but interns and veteran participants are not. Veteran teachers considered to be struggling by the principal or by the teacher’s union must participate in the intervention component. Veterans who do not improve often choose retirement or resignation rather than the lengthy intervention process. Others may not have their contracts renewed. About two-thirds of interventions and assistance fail to improve instructional practice, but the number of interventions is slowing declining.

Between the establishment of the Toledo Plan in 1981 and the 2000-01 school years, 3,025 teachers were placed in the intern program. Of these teachers, approximately 8.5 percent did not have their contracts renewed for a second year. In spite of the fact that one of Toledo’s most important goals was/is to remove ineffective teachers from district schools, a Harvard study found higher teacher retention rates in Toledo than in other comparison Ohio districts. The plan has been copied by school districts in California, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota and New York as well as by other districts in Ohio. In the year 2001, the Toledo Plan received the “Innovations in American Government Award, sponsored by the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and the Council for Excellence in Government.

The National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices Issue Brief on Mentoring and Supporting New Teachers (January 9, 2002) reports that using the Toledo Plan model, Columbus, Ohio retained 98 percent of its first year teachers. It also reports that a short time ago, Seattle lost half of its new teachers every five years. After implementing an induction program based on the Toledo model, the retention rate rose to more than 90 percent. And finally, Rochester, New York's teacher turnover rate decreased by 70 percent when the city started an induction program modeled after the one in Toledo.

The *Center for the Support of Beginning Teachers (CSBT)* is housed in the College of Education and Allied Professions at *Western Carolina University*. Established in 2005 by Western's Board of Trustees, the Center is designed to provide support to Western North Carolina school systems in their efforts to prevent beginning teachers from experiencing "career burnout" and leaving the profession.

Support options for new teachers, mentors and principals are tailored to the region - developed by the Center in collaboration with Western's School-University Teacher Education Partnership (SUTEP) and Beginning Teacher Coordinators from the region. Program components build on the successes of past grant-funded initiatives as well as recommendations from beginning teacher, mentor, and principal focus group and online surveys.

Beginning teachers want and need a variety of supports - emotional, procedural, technical and instructional and no one person can provide all these supports. CSBT induction activities include face-to-face meetings complemented and enhanced by an electronic network developed for beginning teachers; ongoing professional development for mentors; and opportunities for principals to focus on their role in new teacher development. The Center provides a comprehensive approach that includes support, practice, feedback, and evaluation collaboratively delivered by the school systems and university.

Professional Development

Beginning Teacher Induction Symposium The Induction Symposium brings together first year teachers from WNC school systems to Western's campus. Held in August, the symposium satisfies two of three professional development days required of new teachers.

Mentor Training – Western's mentor training follows the state-approved 30 hour program which includes outside assignments in addition to the 3 days on campus. The program places an emphasis on learning and applying the North Carolina Mentor Program Standards that foster the professional growth of new teachers. Training in the NC Teacher Appraisal Instrument, Individual Growth Plan, and licensure requirements are included.

Advanced Mentor Training (for those who have completed the 30-hour program) provides an opportunity for mentors to reflect on the mentoring process, improve communication and coaching skills, and identify strategies to move beginning teachers toward standards-based practice. The two-day training also includes a review of NC beginning teacher requirements.

E-mentor Training An opportunity for mentors and Western's faculty to use communications technology as a platform for coaching and establishing learning communities for beginning teachers. Participants learn strategies for creating "practice-centered conversations" online to stimulate reflection and foster collaboration among new teachers, mentors, and faculty members.

Principals may participate in professional development opportunities focusing on beginning teacher support. Faculty in the Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations at Western, along with principals from the region facilitate the workshop. Session topics include:

- Beginning teachers: What do they need from their principals?

- Growing our own: How can we support and retain good teachers?
- Making it work: Strategies for providing the best support to beginning teachers!

CSBT Online Network

Participating beginning teachers use the CSBT Online Network Portal to share with colleagues both within their school system and across the region. Features of the site include:

- Professional learning communities – online collaborative teams where beginning teachers working in similar settings can come together virtually to discuss concerns and seek coaching and guidance from their peers, mentors, and university faculty.
- Weblogs – space where new teachers can reflect on their own experiences and developing expertise as well as compare and comment on the experiences of others.
- Resources – annotated list of websites, sample lesson plans, and classroom management tips

Research and Evaluation

Online surveys for beginning teachers, mentors, and principals, developed at the request of Beginning Teacher Coordinators, evaluate the effects of induction programs on teacher retention and inform future professional development. Scaled and open-ended questions are included and responses are analyzed in conjunction with retention data made available through NCDPI. Comparisons of perceptions among new teachers, mentors, and principals are made on common survey items.

Evaluation data are used by CSBT to sponsor and conduct research to determine the effects of induction and alternative entry programs on teacher retention and new teacher development. Research projects in progress:

- Effects of online support on retention
- Principal support
- NC TEACH retention
- Joint research project with McGill University

From the Center for Teaching Quality

The Center for Teaching Quality (*Teaching Quality Across the Nation: Best Practices and Policies, June 2006*) cites seven ways in which school systems can better support new teachers. These are:

- Schedule release time for both mentors and novice teachers to ensure they have frequent and consistent opportunities for common planning and observation.
- Consider allowing expert teachers full-release from teaching duties for several years to work as full-time mentors.
- Maintain low ratios of mentors to novice teachers and pair them appropriately. Novice teachers need building-level curriculum support from a mentor on the same grade level and in the same subject areas.
- Assign new teachers appropriately. Give new teachers reduced teaching loads and lower numbers of special needs students.
- Hire new teachers earlier in the hiring process, and provide sufficient time and resources for novice teachers to begin their professional careers.

- Create and coordinate a district wide network of new teachers.
 - Collaborate with university education programs to provide ongoing, consistent training to new teachers. Employ university faculty as school-based advisors.
-

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Funding be provided for a full-time mentoring program at a ratio one mentor teacher per 15 beginning teachers.
 2. Funding be provided for a full-time Beginning Teacher Support Program Coordinator (Initial Licensure Program Coordinator) for each LEA.
-

Rationale for Recommendations

In the past several years, the State Board has convened several ad hoc committees to consider issues related to teacher recruitment and retention. Two of these committees made recommendations related to mentoring beginning teachers.

The recommendations of the Select Committee on Lateral Entry, co-chaired by SBE member, Mr. Wayne McDewitt and President of Bell South North Carolina, Ms. Krista Tillman, included the recommendation that:

The State Board should seek funding from the General Assembly to provide full-time mentors for all teachers with three or fewer years of teaching experience, but particularly lateral entry teachers. A ratio of 1 full-time mentor per 15 beginning teachers should be requested.

The recommendations of the Task Force on Teacher Retention, chaired by SBE Vice Chairman, Dr. Jane Norwood, included the recommendations that:

At a minimum, the State Board of Education should seek reinstatement of funding for mentors for all beginning teachers for their first three years of teaching. Additionally, the State Board of Education should seek funding for a full-time mentor program at a ratio of 1 mentor per 15 beginning teachers. All beginning teachers, regardless of funding source, should be included in the allotment. While local systems should have the flexibility to design mentoring programs that best meet their needs, the State Board should establish guidelines for local systems to receive funding for the full-time mentoring programs.

The State Board of Education should seek funding for a full-time Initial Licensure Program Coordinator at the LEA level.

As reflected in The National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices Issue Brief on Mentoring and Supporting New Teachers (January 9, 2002) "mentoring and release time are often cited as two of the most critical components of an induction program" (p.4). Citing the NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education, Creating a Teacher Mentoring Program (Washington, DC; NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education, 1999), the NGA Issue Brief indicates that data from the National

Center for Education Statistics strongly suggest that the benefit of mentoring is linked to the amount of time that a mentor and beginning teacher work together. Only 26% of beginning teachers who work with their mentor “a few times a year” report substantial improvements in their professional skills; in contrast, 88 percent of those who work with mentors at least once a week believe the relationship has major benefits. This supports the feedback that has been received from BT Coordinators, personnel administrators, mentor teachers, beginning teachers, and school administrators in North Carolina when asked how the mentoring program can be improved. To improve the quality of North Carolina’s mentoring program, beginning teachers and their mentors need time to work together; beginning teachers need time to observe master teachers; school administrators need time to observe and provide assistance to beginning teachers. The program also needs to be appropriately funded.

The National Governor’s Association Center for Best Practices has indicated that “a simple formula for estimating the cost of replacing an individual teacher is 25 percent to 35 percent of annual salary plus benefit costs.” It also has suggested that “funding teacher induction programs at a level of up to \$5000 per teacher (in 1990 dollars) is more cost-effective than paying for programs to replace teachers who have left.”

Attachment A

Retention of New Hires

Number of Teachers Employed for the First Time in NC

1995/96 – 2006/07

Type of Teacher (School Year)	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Beginning Teacher/No Experience	4,201	4,815	5,097	4,915	4,177	3,007	3,628	3,507	4,278	4,938	5,056	4,811
Lateral Entry Teacher	833	1,079	1,372	1,186	1,800	1,799	2,023	2,112	2,079	2,106	2,006	1,971
Emergency Permit Teacher	NA	NA	13	500	578	805	943	527	501	402	290	28
First Year in NC/But Has Experience (Teaching or Non-Teaching)	1,909	2,180	3,053	3,456	4,051	4,804	3,411	2,634	2,458	2,551	2,829	3,033
Total Employed as First Time NC Teachers	6,943	8,074	9,535	10,057	10,606	10,415	10,005	8,780	9,316	9,997	10,181	9,843

Cohort Year	Cohort	Number	% After 1 Year	% After 2 Years	% After 3 Years	% After 4 Years	% After 5 Years	% After 6 Years	% After 7 Years	% After 8 Years	% After 9 Years	% After 10 Years	% After 11 Years
1995-96	First Time Teachers in NC with Experience Credit	1,909	78.4%	65.4%	58.9%	53.5%	50.4%	47.5%	45.8%	42.6%	41.4%	41.2%	39.2%
	First year teachers with No Experience Credit	4,201	83.7%	75%	65.9%	60.6%	56.2%	53.4%	51.2%	48.8%	47.8%	47.1%	46.9%
	Lateral Entry teachers	833	62.5%	47.5%	40%	36%	31.7%	30.4%	29.8%	29.4%	28.3%	28.7%	28.5%
1996-97	First Time Teachers in NC with Experience Credit	2,180	72.8%	61.5%	54.5%	50.0%	46.6%	44.4%	41.2%	39.5%	38.3%	36.5%	NA
	First year teachers with No Experience Credit	4,815	82.3%	71.7%	64.1%	57.9%	54.0%	51.5%	48.2%	46.6%	45.7%	45.1%	NA
	Lateral Entry teachers	1,079	65%	50.8%	45.8%	39.7%	37.5%	35.1%	34.2%	33.4%	33.1%	33.8%	NA
1997-98	First Time Teachers in NC with Experience Credit	3,053	65.7%	54.4%	47.9%	42.8%	38.2%	35.6%	33.8%	32.7%	31.6%	NA	NA
	First year teachers with No Experience Credit	5,097	80.8%	69.3%	59.7%	55.2%	52.5%	48.5%	47%	45.3%	44.8%	NA	NA
	Lateral Entry teachers	1,372	71.2%	56%	46.6%	41.7%	39.7%	37.6%	36.8%	36.9%	35.7%	NA	NA
1998-99	First Time Teachers in NC with Experience Credit	3,456	66.8%	53.2%	46.1%	41.5%	38.2%	35.8%	34.8%	33.4%	NA	NA	NA
	First year teachers with No Experience Credit	4,915	80.5%	67.9%	60.2%	56.1%	51.9%	49.5%	47.4%	46.0%	NA	NA	NA
	Lateral Entry teachers	1,186	74.4%	53%	43.7%	40.6%	37.4%	37%	36.8%	35.6%	NA	NA	NA
1999-00	First Time Teachers in NC with Experience Credit	4,051	67.1%	54.9%	46.3%	42.3%	39.8%	38.5%	36.8%	NA	NA	NA	NA
	First year teachers with No Experience Credit	4,177	80%	67.9%	61.7%	56.3%	53.5%	50.9%	48.9%	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Lateral Entry teachers	1,800	74.6%	54.3%	46.4%	43.4%	40.9%	40.7%	40.2%	NA	NA	NA	NA
2000-01	First Time Teachers in NC with Experience Credit	4,804	68%	55.7%	47.4%	45.6%	43.3%	40.9%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	First year teachers with No Experience Credit	3,007	82.3%	72.1%	64.5%	59%	56.2%	52.9%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Lateral Entry teachers	1,799	74.4%	53.5%	49.7%	47.6%	45.1%	43.4%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Attachment B

2006-2007

**Beginning Teachers as Reported by the LEAs
Numbers and Reasons for Leaving
(State Totals)**

