

Formerly TCP-A-004

POLICIES ON THE BEGINNING TEACHER SUPPORT PROGRAM

Overview of the Beginning Teacher Support Program

All LEAs/Charters shall implement a Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP). The BTSP is a required, three-year induction program for beginning teachers (BTs). The North Carolina Beginning Teacher [Handbook](#) is a reference guide for LEAs/Charter Coordinators to use during the implementation of a BTSP. This handbook provides resources, templates, and examples to successfully implement and maintain their Beginning Teacher Support Program.

Goals of the Beginning Teacher Support Program

One primary and direct goal of the BTSP is to help new teachers improve skills and build confidence to become successful educators. BTs will only reach their fullest potential with systems of support from the state, school district, local school and quality mentors. North Carolina's program includes these components in order to provide a systematic structure of support for beginning teachers.

Other goals of the BTSP are to ensure that BTs:

- meet the state's professional teaching standards;
- impact the learning of all students in distinguished ways and;
- choose to remain in the profession and become future master teachers, teacher leaders, skilled administrators and superintendents.

Beginning Teacher Support Program Standards Overview

These standards are designed to assist local districts and charter schools in creating and implementing successful BTSPs. A more in-depth breakdown of these standards can be found in the North Carolina Beginning Teacher [Handbook](#).

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 addresses 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 school site and professional development designed to meet the unique needs of beginning teachers and 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.

Mentor Standards Overview

The Mentor Standards were designed to focus on what knowledge, skills, and dispositions beginning teachers need and clearly articulate how mentors can help teachers attain them. A more in-depth breakdown of mentor standards and the mentor standards continuum can be found in the North Carolina Beginning Teacher [Handbook](#).

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Professional Teaching Standards Overview

The North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards are the basis for teacher preparation, teacher evaluation, and professional development and define what teachers need to know and do to be able to teach students in the 21st Century.

Standard 1: Teachers Demonstrate Leadership

- Teachers lead in their classrooms.
- Teachers demonstrate leadership in the school.
- Teachers lead the teaching profession.
- Teachers advocate for schools and students.
- Teachers demonstrate high ethical standards.

Standard 2: Teachers Establish A Respectful Environment For A Diverse Population Of Students

- Teachers provide an environment in which each child has a positive, nurturing relationship with caring adults.
- Teachers embrace diversity in the school community and in the world.
- Teachers treat students as individuals.
- Teachers adapt their teaching for the benefit of students with special needs.
- Teachers work collaboratively with the families and significant adults in the lives of their students.

Standard 3: Teachers Know The Content They Teach

- Teachers align their instruction with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.
- Teachers know the content appropriate to their teaching specialty.
- Teachers recognize the interconnectedness of content areas/disciplines.
- Teachers make instruction relevant to students.

Standard 4: Teachers Facilitate Learning For Their Students

- Teachers know the ways in which learning takes place, and they know the appropriate levels of intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development of their students.
- Teachers plan instruction appropriate for their students.
- Teachers use a variety of instructional methods.
- Teachers integrate and utilize technology in their instruction.
- Teachers help students develop critical thinking and problem solving skills.
- Teachers help students work in teams and develop leadership qualities.
- Teachers communicate effectively.
- Teachers use a variety of methods to assess what each student has learned.

Standard 5: Teachers Reflect On Their Practice

- Teachers analyze student learning.
- Teachers link professional growth to their professional goals.
- Teachers function effectively in a complex, dynamic environment.

Standard 6: Teachers Contribute To The Academic Success Of Students

- The work of the teacher results in acceptable, measurable progress for students based on established performance expectations using appropriate data to demonstrate growth.

Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP) Requirements

The purpose of the BTSP is to provide support to new teachers entering the profession. Every LEA and Charter must have a BTSP and a Beginning Teacher Support Program Plan (BTSP Plan) that has been approved by the local board and NCDPI, and on file for review at the LEA, charter school, or non-public institution. The BTSP plan must be aligned to the Beginning Teacher Support Program standards and, when monitored, must demonstrate proficiency. A template is provided to guide Coordinators in the development and approval of the BTSP plan in the North Carolina Beginning Teacher Support Program [Handbook](#).

BTSP Plans shall include the following:

- 1) **A documented process for identifying and verifying all BTs.** That process must consider the following:
 - The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) issues an initial license to teachers with fewer than three years of appropriate teaching experience (normally defined as public school experience) in their initial licensure area.
 - Teachers with three or more years of appropriate experience are not required to participate in the BTSP, nor are student services personnel (e.g., media coordinators, counselors), administrators, and curriculum-instructional specialists.
 - Once a continuing license has been earned in one teaching area, additional teaching areas do not require a BTSP experience.
 - Beginning teachers must be assigned in their area of licensure.
 - The BT must follow NCSBE requirements for all required licensure tests (see [SBE Policy Manual](#)).
 - Beginning Teacher Licensure Conversion Process: Effective July 1, 2016, teachers who hold an Initial license are eligible to convert to a continuing license once all required coursework has been successfully completed, all NCSBE approved examinations have been passed, and the teacher has completed three years of teaching. Teachers with fewer than three years of teaching experience, however, are required to continue participating in a Beginning Teacher Support Program regardless of their licensure status.
 - Collect Beginning Teacher Data for the State of the Teaching Profession in North Carolina Report: For purposes of [GS 115C-12\(22\)](#) and [SB333](#), the State Board of Education is required to monitor and compile an annual report on the decisions of teachers who leave the teaching profession. The template for this data are available in the North Carolina Beginning Teacher Support Program Handbook.
- 2) **Plan for implementing a sound BT Induction process.** Teachers with less than three years of teaching experience are required to participate in the NC Beginning Teacher Support Program for three years. According to [GS 115C-325](#), for licensing purposes, a “year,” shall be not less than 120 workdays in a full-time permanent position.

LEAs/Charters may also apply this to determining experience years for its beginning teachers. A BT Induction process ensures that:

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

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

- mentor assigned early, and in close proximity;
- limited preparations;
- limited non-instructional duties**;
- limited number of exceptional or difficult students; and
- no extracurricular** assignments unless requested in writing by the beginning teacher.

**The term "non-instructional duties" refers to those that are not directly involved with the instructional program or the implementation of the standard course of study, but that all teachers are expected to do. Examples would be bus duty, lunch duty, and hall duty. The term "extracurricular activities" refers to those activities performed by a teacher involving students that are outside the regular school day and not directly related to the instructional program.

- b. Each year, the BT is assigned a mentor. In accordance with GS § 115C-296(e) all local boards are expected to have a mentor program to provide ongoing support for new teachers entering the profession. Their programs must follow the following guidelines:
 - i. LEAs shall select excellent, experienced, and qualified teachers to serve as mentors.
 1. Mentor teachers must be rated at least at the "accomplished" level on the North Carolina Educator

Effectiveness System (NCEES). For the purposes of this policy, “accomplished” means a teacher has received ratings of accomplished or higher on three of the five standards to include Standard 4 on the most recent summative evaluation, or on Standard 4 for teachers on an Abbreviated Evaluation.

2. Mentor teachers must have met expectations for student growth. For the purposes of this policy, meeting growth shall be defined as meeting growth in any course or subject area through the State, or SBE-approved local growth model. LEAs may also use composite growth ratings for determining mentor eligibility.
 3. LEAs may use the most recently available evaluation and/or growth data available for teachers who lack evaluation and/or growth data from the prior year. Teachers without evaluation and/or growth data for two or more consecutive years shall not be eligible to serve as mentor teachers.
 4. Teachers for whom a State or SBE-approved local growth model does not exist may be deemed eligible to serve as a mentor teacher provided all other mentor requirements are met.
 5. Any teacher who is assigned to be a mentor to a beginning teacher must meet eligibility requirements in the year of the assignment. Once an eligible mentor has been assigned to a beginning teacher, the teacher may continue to serve as **that** beginning teacher’s mentor throughout the BTSP, regardless of any change to the mentor teacher’s evaluation status.
- ii. Mentor Assignment/Guidelines shall follow the expectations listed under the key features of Standard 2: Mentor Selection, Development, and Support for Beginning Teacher Support Program Standards (see North Carolina Beginning Teacher Support Program Handbook).
 - iii. Local school systems/charter schools are responsible for providing training and support for mentors. LEAs/Charters may choose to use programs developed by the Department of Public Instruction, other programs, or develop programs of their own based on the NC Mentor Standards. If other programs are used or developed, they must be based on the current NC Mentor Standards. Mentors need the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be effective instructional coaches, emotional supports, and organizational guides to those entering the profession.

- c. Each year, each beginning teacher is required to develop a Professional Development Plan (PDP) that is developed in collaboration with his/her principal (or the principal's designee) and mentor.
 - i. The plan is to be based on the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards, and must include goals, strategies, and assessment of the beginning teacher's progress in improving professional skills.
 - ii. At the beginning, middle, and end of each year, formative assessment conferences including the BT, mentor and principal should be held to reflect on the progress of the beginning teacher in meeting the goals established for professional growth. Signatures of BT, mentor, and principal are required for each formative assessment conference.
- d. Each year, the BT completes any professional development required or prescribed by the LEA or charter.

- 3) A formal process for conducting observations and a summative evaluation on all Beginning Teachers.** All beginning teachers shall be evaluated as outlined in the policy establishing the Teacher Performance Appraisal process (see [SBE Policy Manual](#)) and in accordance with [HB 1030, Section 8.32\(h\) and \(i\)](#).
- 4) Plan for participation in BTSP Monitoring.** Each LEA/Charter with approved BTSP plans will be monitored for compliance with this policy. Monitoring is completed on a five-year revolving cycle. Technical assistance is provided as necessary to address areas of concern.
- 5) Plan for participation in the BTSP Peer Review Process.** In order to assist LEAs/Charters in progressing along the BTSP continuum to provide the highest quality support to beginning teachers, LEAs/Charters with approved BTSP plans will participate in a regionally-based annual peer review. The Peer Review process includes an annual self-assessment and a peer review with a critical friend (filed annually with NCDPI). Data from the annual peer reviews will be summarized and analyzed by NCDPI on a five-year cycle.
- 6) Statement on how BT's personnel files (files that include the teacher's PDP and performance evaluation report(s)) are filed and secured**
- 7) Plan for a timely transfer of BT files to subsequent employing LEAs, charter schools, or non-public institutions within the state**