

South Carolina Induction and Mentoring Program: Implementation Guidelines



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Introduction

Educational leaders and policy makers today are directing a great many of their resources toward the goal of raising the level of student achievement in this country. Inarguably, the presence of high-quality teachers in the nation's classrooms is central to the effort to ensure that all our nation's students, regardless of their race and socioeconomic status, are able to meet national and state performance standards. Across the United States, however, this effort is being seriously undermined by one factor in particular: our failure to attract, to cultivate, and to keep our newest teachers.

In its 2003 report *No Dream Denied: A Pledge to America's Children* (accessible online at <http://www.ecs.org/html/Document.asp?chouseid=4269>), the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future capsules the situation:

Too few of the teachers we have prepared are choosing to enter the schools, and too many of those who are hired don't stay long enough to join their colleagues in developing a quality teaching environment once they are there. Newly prepared teachers, and those with as many as five or more years of experience, are leaving their schools in growing numbers; they are leaking out of the bucket faster than we can replace them. The response has been to try to keep the bucket full by pouring in more inexperienced teachers, and under prepared individuals, at a faster rate, but this has destructive consequences for the quality of teaching in many schools. Why? Because these novice teachers flow through the schools so fast that they aren't in their jobs long enough to become good at them. . . . approximately a third of America's teachers leave teaching sometime during their first three years of teaching; almost half may leave during the first five years. (23–24)

To provide all students with quality teachers, we must strive to improve the professional skills and the retention rate of beginning teachers. If we want to build strong school communities that are capable of improving student achievement, we must develop programs that support beginning teachers' continued growth as they learn on the job how best to meet the needs of their students. Research shows that intensive, mentor-based induction programs can significantly reduce teacher turnover and help teachers to focus on improving instruction.

South Carolina is dedicated to developing, implementing, and sustaining such programs statewide to ensure that beginning teachers understand what is expected of them, that they receive specific assistance from mentors as they transition into the profession, and that they become an integral part of a learning community that supports their continuous professional growth and development. The purpose of this guidelines document is to provide the necessary direction for district leaders, school-based administrators, mentors, and members of professional learning communities to meet these central objectives.

Overview of the Induction and Mentoring Initiative

The guidelines for South Carolina's induction and mentoring initiative have been developed on the basis of the mandate set forth in Section 59-5-85 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina:

The Department of Education shall develop guidelines for the teacher induction program, established in Section 59-26-20 [*sic*, error for 59-26-30] which shall include sustained long-term coaching and assistance. Information on best practices in teacher induction programs must be disseminated to school districts. By July 1, 2000, the State Department of Education shall adopt criteria for the selection and training of teachers who serve as mentors for new teachers as a part of the induction program.

Section 59-26-30 of the Code stipulates that the State Department of Education (SDE) is to "promulgate regulations to be used by local school districts for providing formalized induction programs for teachers employed under induction contracts. Induction programs developed or adopted by school districts must provide teachers with comprehensive guidance and assistance throughout the school year, as well as provide teachers with formal written feedback on their strengths and weaknesses relative to state standards for teaching effectiveness." Section 59-26-30 further stipulates that the SDE is to "promulgate regulations to be used by local school districts for evaluating and assisting teachers employed under annual contracts."

Under these legislative mandates, South Carolina's induction and mentoring initiative exists as a collaborative effort among the state's school districts, the teacher education programs in the state's colleges and universities, the South Carolina Department of Education's Division of Educator Quality and Leadership (DEQL), and the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA) of South Carolina. Implemented by the individual school districts statewide, these induction and mentoring programs will have one overriding objective: to inform, encourage, and support beginning teachers for the purpose of improving the quality of teaching in the state, raising the level of student achievement, and reducing the rate of attrition among our newest teachers.

The members of the South Carolina Induction and Mentoring Committee have assisted the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA) and the SDE's Division of Educator Quality and Leadership (DEQL), in collaboration with the New Teacher Center at the University of California, Santa Cruz, in creating the guidelines set forth in this document. The SDE's induction and mentoring program requirements are based on nationally recognized and research-based mentoring models and are aligned with the state's ADEPT Performance Standards. CERRA and the DEQL will continue to provide leadership for the induction and mentoring initiative.

The DEQL and CERRA will assist the school districts in implementing these guidelines by

- providing districts with information and guidance on best practices in induction;
- providing districts with information and guidance on best practices for assisting beginning teachers through professional learning communities;
- coordinating and conducting initial mentor training;
- collaborating with each district's induction and mentoring coordinator to help plan, implement, and conduct the district's program evaluation;
- coordinating and arranging for selected mentors to receive advanced mentor training;
- providing and/or coordinating continuing professional development for all mentors; and
- collecting data on districts' implementation of the mentoring program.

In addition, the DEQL, in collaboration with CERRA, will develop a teacher assistance and support survey that all school districts will be required to administer on an annual basis to all mentors, all teachers served by mentors, and all school administrators who work directly with mentors. Districts must analyze and review the results of this survey and must use the results as the basis for changes in order to continuously improve their induction and mentoring programs.

A vital and intrinsic part of South Carolina's statewide mentoring initiative is the detailed written plan for their induction and mentoring program for beginning teachers that all school districts in the state will be required to develop and submit to the DEQL by May 1, 2008. The text of the district plan must clearly and specifically address each area of the key elements outlined in this guidelines document. Failure of a district to submit a plan may cause that district's allocation of ADEPT funds to be withheld.

Each district's induction and mentoring program plan will be reviewed by a DEQL-appointed team of educators to ensure that all program requirements have been addressed. The DEQL will subsequently present the district plans to the State Board of Education (SBE) for approval. All district induction and mentoring programs—which will replace the current district induction programs—must be approved by the SBE prior to their implementation. The DEQL will make every effort to secure SBE approval in a timely manner so that district plans can be fully implemented by August 1, 2008.

If a school district elects to make changes in its approved induction and mentoring program in subsequent years, the district must submit a copy of the revised plan to the SDE by May 1 for implementation in the fall of that year. Revised induction and mentoring plans will be reviewed by a DEQL-appointed team of educators and must be approved by the SBE prior to implementation. The SDE may allow a district to submit a statement of assurances form on May 1, in lieu of a duplicate plan, for years that the district seeks to make no substantive changes to its SBE-approved induction and mentoring plan.

In developing their induction and mentoring programs, districts must involve selected district administrators, school administrators, teachers who have recently completed the induction process, and mentors from the elementary, middle, and secondary levels. Districts are also encouraged to include representatives from teacher preparation programs in the development of their plans for induction and mentoring.

School districts may establish regional district consortia to collaborate with one another in developing and implementing their induction and mentoring plans, in providing training and professional development for mentors, and in offering professional development for beginning teachers. A consortium is especially desirable in a region where resources are limited and school district efforts to offer a quality program would therefore be hampered.

Portions of the text of this document were written by professional staff members of the New Teacher Center (NTC) at the University of California, Santa Cruz. The NTC has active partnerships with several states—including South Carolina—on induction and mentoring initiatives, and all of the NTC resource information and texts are shared among those states. The final draft of this document was edited by the external editor for the SDE in consultation with DEQL professional staff.

KEY ELEMENT 1

Local Induction and Mentoring Program Leadership

All school and district administrators must demonstrate a commitment to improving student achievement through the development and implementation of an induction and mentoring program that effectively delivers support and formative assessment services to all beginning teachers. It is only through the sound and purposeful leadership of the local administrators that the induction and mentoring programs across South Carolina will be able to function in a manner commensurate with the state initiative's overriding rationale, design, and goals.

A. District Leadership Responsibilities

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS

- 1.A.1 District administrators must demonstrate commitment to the induction and mentoring program through the clear and appropriate allocation of authority and sufficient resources to support implementation.
- 1.A.2 District administrators must provide professional development for school administrators so that they have a working knowledge of the components of the induction and mentoring program, the formative assessment process, and development of professional growth and development plans for beginning teachers.

The specific content of these professional development activities must ensure that school administrators

- a. become knowledgeable about beginning-teacher development;
- b. explore ways to provide time for beginning teachers to meet and network with one another and with more experienced teachers in an environment that encourages open dialogue;
- c. become knowledgeable about the working conditions that maximize opportunities for the success of beginning teachers;
- d. are able to take effective steps to improve or overcome challenging aspects of beginning teachers' work environments;
- e. understand the mentor selection process and requirements;
- f. understand the mentor's role in the induction process;
- g. are able to communicate to the mentor the areas of professional development that are recommended for a particular beginning teacher; and
- h. understand and respect the confidentiality that must exist between the mentor and the beginning teacher.

- 1.A.3 District administrators must clearly specify the roles and responsibilities of all personnel involved in the implementation and oversight of their induction and mentoring program.
- 1.A.4 District administrators must monitor and evaluate on an annual basis the quality of their induction and mentoring trainings, the quality of their professional development offerings, and the implementation of their induction and mentoring program.
- The district must use all individuals who are currently participating in its induction and mentoring program—all district and school program administrators, all mentors, and all beginning teachers—as sources of information for its annual evaluation.
 - The district must use multiple methods of evidence gathering, using both informal and formal methods (e.g., surveys, interviews) for its annual evaluation.
 - The district must provide the technology services that are necessary for the collection, compilation, and analysis of the data collected for its annual evaluation.
- 1.A.5 District administrators must establish an induction and mentoring leadership team who are responsible for the overall direction of the program.
- Members of the district leadership team must include representatives from the district offices of professional development, curriculum and instruction, and human resources; selected school sites; and teacher education programs at colleges and/or universities in the state.
 - Members of the district leadership team must be individuals who
 - a. have demonstrated the depth of knowledge and understanding necessary to implement an induction and mentoring program;
 - b. are knowledgeable regarding the ADEPT Performance Standards and the state's academic standards for each discipline;
 - c. participate in ongoing professional development, research, and technical support activities; and
 - d. are knowledgeable regarding the makeup and dynamics of professional learning communities.

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM

- 1.A.6 The district leadership team must meet regularly to discuss the development and implementation of the district's induction and mentoring program and the process for its annual evaluation.

- 1.A.7 The district leadership team must establish and maintain for the annual evaluation of its induction and mentoring plan a system for the regular collection of feedback from all participants in the program regarding all central factors of the program's implementation.
- 1.A.8 The district leadership team must analyze the results of the feedback from all participants in the induction and mentoring program; share their data with the appropriate district and school administrators, mentors, and beginning teachers in a systematic way; and use the data as the basis for making any needed changes in the program.
- 1.A.9 The district leadership team must establish ongoing partnerships with professional personnel in the teacher education programs at selected colleges and/or universities in the state to facilitate the development of appropriate professional growth opportunities for the district's beginning teachers.
- 1.A.10 The district leadership team must establish and foster opportunities for open communication among the program coordinator, the district and school administrators, and mentors and must regularly seek formative feedback from them.
- 1.A.11 The district leadership team must make the effort to navigate organizational bureaucracies and to work effectively within political arenas to support mentors and beginning teachers.
- 1.A.12 The district leadership team must develop a written list of all available district incentives for teachers to become mentors—stipends, release time, reduced or eliminated duty assignments, certificate renewal credits, and so on.
- 1.A.13 The district leadership team must clearly define its members' individual roles and responsibilities in order to establish effective working relationships, coordinate their efforts, allocate resources wisely, foster the professional learning community, and support each other's success.
- 1.A.14 The district leadership team must work collaboratively with school administrators to establish within each of the district's schools a professional learning community that provides a culture of support for the work to be done between the beginning teachers and mentors.

School administrators should be encouraged to carry out the following types of activities to support the induction and mentoring program in their schools:

- a. conducting an initial orientation for beginning teachers to inform them about school resources, personnel, procedures, and policies;
- b. introducing beginning teachers to the school staff and including them in the school's professional learning community;

- c. working to focus the attention of the professional learning community on the state academic standards and the ADEPT Performance Standards;
- d. providing opportunities for interaction between the mentor and the assigned beginning teacher;
- e. ensuring that school-level professional development activities related to induction occur on a consistent basis;
- f. facilitating the participation of beginning teachers and mentors in school-level professional development activities by providing substitute teachers, time, meeting space, stipends, and/or other such supportive measures;
- g. securing basic supplies, textbooks, and computer software for beginning teachers; and
- h. supporting the beginning teacher's active participation in the induction and mentoring program evaluation.

1.A.15 The district leadership team must operate under the direction of the induction and mentoring program coordinator.

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

1.A.16 The district must appoint an induction and mentoring coordinator to serve as the program's primary administrative contact person.

- The district must accord the induction and mentoring program coordinator adequate time, resources, and authority necessary to oversee the details of the program design and implementation.
- The district must ensure that the role and responsibilities of the induction and mentoring program coordinator are appropriate to the scope of the program.
- The district must require that the induction and mentoring program coordinator successfully complete all required initial training for mentors and must strongly encourage him or her to attend all advanced training.

1.A.17 The program coordinator must carry out the following responsibilities:

- a. overseeing the development and implementation of the district's plan for induction and mentoring;
- b. directing the operation of the district induction and mentoring leadership team and overseeing the roles and responsibilities of its individual members;
- c. functioning as the DEQL and CERRA contact person for all induction and mentoring program information, updates, surveys, and training;

- d. collaborating with designated staff members of the DEQL and CERRA to coordinate and supervise all state trainings and professional development opportunities conducted for the district's mentors;
- e. monitoring resource allocations on a regular basis and making the necessary adjustments;
- f. collaborating and communicating on an ongoing basis with at least one other educational organization/unit from among the state's K–12 educator organizations (e.g., Palmetto State Teachers Association, South Carolina Education Association, South Carolina Association of School Administrators).
- g. coordinating and aligning the requirements of his or her district's induction and mentoring program by collaborating with at least one institution of higher education in the state and/or other educational groups operating in the area (e.g., district consortia, educational research firms, teacher organizations, parent groups, subject matter projects, community organizations, foundations, regional organizations, funded projects, local businesses);
- h. collaborating with school administrators in supervising the duties and activities of mentors;
- i. communicating the program's rationale, goals, and design to school administrators and others responsible for employing, assigning, and supporting beginning teachers;
- j. coordinating the collection, compilation, and analysis of the program evaluation data collected from the district administrators, school administrators, mentors, and beginning teachers involved in the induction and mentoring program; coordinating the review and dissemination of induction and mentoring program evaluation information; and implementing needed changes in the program on the basis of those results; and
- k. ensuring that all beginning teachers, mentors, and administrators complete the annual DEQL-CERRA survey and that the schools and district use the survey results for program improvement.

1.A.18 The program coordinator must submit to the SDE a listing of all educators in his or her district who have successfully completed the DEQL and CERRA initial mentor training. This list—which must include *full* names as well as South Carolina professional educator certificate numbers—must be submitted within two weeks after the dates on which the training sessions occurred. (The SDE will maintain a record of all educators who have successfully completed state mentor training.)

B. School Leadership Responsibilities

- 1.B.1 School administrators must participate in an overview of the induction and mentoring program to be sufficiently familiar with the model in order to support and reinforce the vision and purpose of induction and mentoring.
- 1.B.2 School administrators must make an active effort to reduce the demands made on beginning teachers and to improve or overcome challenging aspects of their work environments by taking such steps as the following:
 - a. limiting the number of students as well as the number of course assignments they are given;
 - b. assigning them a very limited number of extracurricular duties, if any at all;
 - c. giving them limited responsibility for challenging (e.g., low-performing, disciplinary-problem) students; and
 - d. providing them with additional instructional resources and materials.

KEY ELEMENT 2

District Program for Beginning Teachers

The term “beginning teacher” refers to three specific groups of educators:

- those who are employed under an induction contract (i.e., the one-year nonrenewable contract for individuals who are in their first year of teaching) and are therefore participating in the district induction program,
- those employed under an annual contract who are receiving diagnostic assistance, and
- those employed under an annual contract who are undergoing an ADEPT formal evaluation.

A. Mentor-Guided Formative Assessment Process

Within the context of these guidelines, the term “formative assessment” refers to the ongoing cyclical process during which a beginning teacher examines his or her professional practice with the guidance of a mentor. Formative assessment data are used to identify the teacher’s strengths and challenges so that the appropriate assistance and guidance can be provided to him or her. Formative assessments are usually conducted collaboratively by the mentor and the beginning teacher in response to the teacher’s developmental needs. An essential component of the induction and mentoring process, the mentor-guided formative assessment is directed toward the goal of the teacher’s professional growth and a resulting rise in the level of student learning.

The formative assessment process consists of four steps:

- During the first step, objective performance data are collected from multiple sources that may include not only direct observation of the teacher’s classroom performance but also examination of his or her lesson plans and classroom assessments as well as samples of his or her students’ work.
- During the second step in the process, the teacher collaborates with his or her mentor to analyze the performance data that has been collected and to reflect on them in terms of the ADEPT Performance Standards.
- As the third step in the process, the beginning teacher and his or her mentor work together to develop the teacher’s professional growth and development plan.
- Implementation of the teacher’s professional growth and development plan occurs during the fourth step of the process, after which the formative assessment cycle begins again.

- 2.A.1 The district must ensure that sufficient time is allotted for mentors and beginning teachers to consider formative assessment evidence and to develop planned systematic opportunities for the teachers to improve their teaching.
- 2.A.2 The district must ensure that its mentor-guided formative assessment process offers multiple opportunities for beginning teachers to learn and demonstrate their knowledge, understanding, and application of the ADEPT Performance Standards and the state's academic standards within the context of their teaching assignments.
- 2.A.3 The district must ensure that the formative assessment process is used *solely* to guide the professional development and mentoring of beginning teachers. These data are not appropriate for teacher evaluation or employment decisions and must not be confused with summative evaluation for personnel purposes (e.g., employment, contract status).
- 2.A.4 The district must ensure that its mentor-guided formative assessment process includes the use of the mentoring tools (e.g., the continuum for teacher development, the coaching process, the analysis of student work) that every mentor has learned during his or her initial training.
- The mentoring tools must be used to help the beginning teacher master such professional duties as the following:
 - a. being constantly aware of his or her classroom management techniques and interactions with the students,
 - b. engaging in a process of structured inquiry and reflection upon his or her classroom practice,
 - c. assessing his or her teaching on the basis of the continuum of teacher development,
 - d. analyzing the academic work of his or her students,
 - e. assessing his or her students in terms of their progress and need for further instruction, and
 - f. developing lesson plans with attention to differentiating instruction.
- 2.A.5 The district must use a mentor-guided formative assessment process that requires the mentor to explain and model for the beginning teacher the professional protocol for
- a. communicating effectively with students' families,
 - b. working effectively with community leaders and resources, and
 - c. role-modeling appropriate behavior and conduct in the community and the classroom.

- 2.A.6 The district must use a mentor-guided formative assessment process that requires the mentor to assist the beginning teacher in the creation of a professional growth and development plan.

B. Professional Growth and Development Plans

The district must establish as a basic component of its induction and mentoring program the creation of a written professional growth and development plan for every beginning teacher in the first year of his or her employment in South Carolina's public school system.

- 2.B.1 The district must ensure that each mentor works with his or her assigned teacher to develop and implement a professional growth and development plan that is specifically designed to facilitate the teacher's transition into the profession as well as to cultivate the full measure of the teacher's individual professional potential and thereby to raise the achievement level of the students whom the teacher teaches.
- Each beginning teacher's professional growth and development plan must be developed on the basis of his or her individual skills and needs as evidenced not only by his or her prior training and experience but also by the results of his or her mentor-guided formative assessment.
 - Each beginning teacher's professional growth and development plan must establish professional goals that are attainable through the successful completion of the induction program and the interactions that occur during mentor-guided activities.
 - Each beginning teacher's professional growth and development plan must establish specific goals that are linked to the state's academic standards and the ADEPT Performance Standards.
- 2.B.2 The district must ensure that each mentor, in collaboration with the appropriate school administrators, works with his or her assigned teacher to review, update, and revise the teacher's individual professional growth and development plan on an annual basis.
- 2.B.3 The district must ensure that each mentor uses the results of his or her assigned teacher's formative assessment as the guide for the monitoring and ongoing revisions of the teacher's professional growth and development plan.
- 2.B.4 The district must provide opportunities for professional growth (e.g., induction-program seminars, school-based trainings) that are guided by the established goals of the beginning teacher's annual professional growth and development plan.

- 2.B.5 The district must coordinate formal professional development opportunities for beginning teachers that integrate the process of individualized support and assistance provided to these teachers by mentors and other members of the professional learning community.
- 2.B.6 The district must conduct professional development activities for beginning teachers that support their gaining the knowledge and skills they need to fully meet the ADEPT Performance Standards and to effectively teach the state's academic standards.

C. Program for Induction-Contract Teachers

State Board of Education Regulation 205.1, Part III, Item B

Each local school district must develop and implement a plan to provide induction-contract teachers with comprehensive guidance and assistance throughout the school year. District induction plans must comply with the State Board of Education's guidelines for assisting induction-contract teachers and must be approved by the State Board of Education prior to implementation.

The district must establish and fully implement a program for induction-contract teachers that operates as a basic component of its induction and mentoring program and meets all state-stipulated requirements set forth in this guidelines document.

- 2.C.1 The district must distribute—either in hard copy or in electronic form—the detailed description of its program for induction-contract teachers to all appropriate district and school administrators, all induction-contract teachers, and all their assigned mentors at the beginning of each school year.
- 2.C.2 The district must conduct at the beginning of the school year one or more sessions in which the activities, procedures, and requirements of its induction program are explained to and discussed with its induction-contract teachers.
- 2.C.3 The district must assign to appropriate individuals the responsibility for explaining to its induction-contract teachers, both orally and in writing, specifically what teachers must do in order to successfully complete the induction program. These explanations must include all locally established criteria and requirements.
- 2.C.4 The district must distribute to its induction-contract teachers *in writing* the following items and must discuss these items with its induction-contract teachers at the beginning of the school year:
 - a. the district's policies, procedures, benefits, and calendar;

- b. the state's ADEPT Performance Standards and the district's approved teacher evaluation system (including the special areas, as applicable); and
- c. the requirements for professional educator certification, certificate renewal, and *highly qualified* status as outlined in the No Child Left Behind Act.

The following are examples of other relevant information that may also be provided to new teachers:

- the school's strategic plan and expectations for teacher involvement in implementing the plan;
- the teacher-oriented and student-oriented services available in the district and the community;
- the social, cultural, and economic characteristics of the community being served by the district;
- services and referral procedures related to special education and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages);
- discipline policies and procedures;
- classroom management techniques; and
- the state's and the district's technology requirements.

2.C.5 The district must establish and carry out in a timely manner a logical sequence of steps for furnishing each of its induction-contract teachers with specific school-related information pertaining to key aspects of his or her grade or school level (i.e., elementary, middle, or secondary) and/or his or her special certification area (i.e., school guidance counselor, library media specialist, and speech-language therapist).

2.C.6 The district must develop and provide to each of its induction-contract teachers a written description of its mentoring program. The description must include a reference to this guidelines document, the *South Carolina Induction and Mentoring Program: Implementation Guidelines*, including the Web address at which the document is available.

2.C.7 The district must establish and implement procedures to ensure that opportunities are provided for

- a. each induction-contract teacher to observe his or her mentor and other experienced teachers in the classroom;
- b. each mentor to observe in the classroom and provide formative feedback to his or her induction-contract advisee; and

- c. each induction-contract teacher to meet regularly with his or her mentor (based on need but at least once per month) in sessions devoted to reflection on teaching; specific areas where improvement is needed; school-related procedures, assignments, or issues; collaborative projects; and/or planning for professional development activities.
- 2.C.8 The district must ensure that all induction-contract teachers within a school, the district, and/or the multidistrict consortium interact as a group to share information, ideas, and suggestions about teaching. These interactions should occur regularly and consistently and may be face-to-face meetings, online exchanges, and so on and should promote a growing network among the individual members of the professional learning community.
- 2.C.9 The district must ensure that all induction-contract teachers have the opportunity to interact with experienced teachers so that they can
- a. work collaboratively on problems that focus on student learning and
 - b. observe and reflect on each others' work in a structured time setting and can serve as critical friends in support of each other.
- 2.C.10 The district must require that its school and district administrators use multiple data sources to make personnel decisions about induction-contract teachers. Administrators are strongly discouraged from conducting formal evaluations of induction teachers.
- 2.C.11 The district must require that its school and district make each induction-contract teacher and his or her assigned mentor fully aware of any problems or concerns that exist with regard to the teacher's performance and the consequences that may result from those problems. The mentor must be furnished with all the specific information he or she needs to guide the development of the assigned induction-contract teacher.
- 2.C.12 The district must establish and carry out clear procedures for reconsidering mentor and induction-contract teacher assignments in a timely manner when either the mentor or the induction teacher is dissatisfied with the pairing.
- 2.C.13 The district must establish a procedure for addressing how the needs of the induction-contract teacher are best served if a change in the mentor-advisee pairing is made.

D. Program for Annual-Contract Teachers

- 2.D.1 The district must provide mentoring for annual-contract teachers who either are scheduled to receive diagnostic assistance or are scheduled for the ADEPT formal evaluation. The major purpose of mentoring teachers at the annual-contract level is to give them sustained support and assistance in order to improve their teaching performance and to ensure their ongoing professional development.
- 2.D.2 The district must establish and implement procedures for the appropriate school administrator (or his or her designee) to review all official information regarding each particular beginning teacher's performance at the induction-contract level and to share any significant parts of that information—especially regarding areas of growth and development that are recommended—with that teacher's mentor at the annual-contract level.
- 2.D.3 The school administration must ensure that regular opportunities are provided for each annual-contract teacher to meet with his or her mentor in sessions devoted to such matters as
 - a. the practice of continually reflecting on one's teaching;
 - b. specific areas where improvement is needed;
 - c. school-related procedures, assignments, and issues;
 - d. collaborative projects; and
 - e. plans for other professional development activities.
- 2.D.4 The district must establish and carry out clear procedures for reconsidering mentor and annual-contract teacher assignments in a timely manner when either the mentor or the teacher is dissatisfied with the pairing.
- 2.D.5 The district must establish a procedure for addressing how the needs of the annual-contract teacher are best served if a change in the mentor-advisee pairing is made.

KEY ELEMENT 3

District Plan for Mentors

A. Selection and Assignment of Mentors

The district must select and assign mentors to beginning teachers on the basis of a fair, well-articulated process that is centered in the state-stipulated requirements set forth in this guidelines document, is communicated to all participants in the program, and is monitored consistently.

- 3.A.1 The district must require that in every case a teacher who is selected to become a mentor
- a. holds a valid South Carolina professional teaching certificate;
 - b. has a minimum of one year's successful teaching experience in South Carolina at the continuing-contract level;
 - c. has expressed interest in becoming a mentor;
 - d. has the recommendation of a school administrator;
 - e. has the recommendation of another teacher in the district;
 - f. has demonstrated proficiency in the use of computer technology;
 - g. is a current practitioner or has been employed in a South Carolina public school system within the past five years; and
 - h. has successfully completed all required mentor training and activities.
- 3.A.2 The district must ensure that in every case a teacher who is selected to become a mentor has been evaluated on the basis of the degree to which he or she
- a. has knowledge of beginning-teacher professional development and effective adult learning strategies;
 - b. is conversant with the ADEPT process;
 - c. has knowledge of researched-based instructional strategies and effective student assessment based on the state's academic standards;
 - d. understands and appreciates the importance of an educator's having a thorough command of the subject matter and skills that he or she is teaching;
 - e. understands and appreciates the importance of literacy in the teacher as well as the student and therefore underscores the necessity that language, as both reading and writing, be emphasized in every classroom;

- f. has a record of exemplary teaching and professional conduct that allows him or her to serve as a role model;
- g. has effective interpersonal and communication skills;
- h. has a demonstrated commitment to his or her own professional growth and learning;
- i. has the willingness and the ability to participate in professional preparation to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to be an effective mentor;
- j. has the willingness and the ability to engage in nonevaluative assessment processes, including the ability to hold planning and reflective conversations with beginning teachers about their classroom practice;
- k. has the willingness and the ability to work collaboratively and share instructional ideas and materials with beginning teachers; and
- l. has the willingness and the ability to deepen his or her understanding of cultural, racial, ethnic, linguistic, and cognitive diversity.

3.A.3 The district must establish and implement procedures to ensure that opportunities are provided for

- a. each mentor to observe in the classroom and to provide formative feedback to his or her assigned beginning teacher(s);
- b. each mentor to be observed in the classroom by his or her assigned beginning teacher(s); and
- c. each mentor to meet regularly—based on need but at least once per month—with his or her assigned beginning teacher(s) in sessions devoted to reflection on teaching; specific areas where improvement is needed; school-related procedures, assignments, or issues; collaborative projects; and/or planning for professional development activities.

3.A.4 The district must use at least two of the following three factors when matching a mentor with the beginning teacher:

- a. matching areas of certification (*matching* certification is *required* for special-area educators),
- b. matching or close grade levels in teaching, and/or
- c. physical proximity to one another on the school campus.

3.A.5 The district must ensure that mentors are assigned to the beginning teachers in a timely manner, before the teachers start teaching—or, in the case of late hires, not more than two weeks after their start date.

- The district should make every effort to make the most effective pairing based on
 - a. compatibility between the mentor's and the beginning teacher's grade levels and/or subject areas,
 - b. the mentor's and the beginning teacher's geographic proximity to one another's school,
 - c. the mentor's ability to understand and appreciate any personal conditions that affect the beginning teacher's special needs in the working environment, and
 - d. the mentor's ability to understand and appreciate any preservice experience that could affect the teacher's classroom performance.
- 3.A.6 The district must assign no more than two teachers per school year to a mentor who has a full teaching load.
- 3.A.7 The district must not allow a mentor to serve as an evaluator for any of his or her assigned teachers.
- 3.A.8 The district must require that mentors keep confidential any information resulting either from their observations of a beginning teacher or from their interactions with a beginning teacher that could be used to evaluate teacher performance or to make contract or employment decisions. Mentors may, however, share their mentoring activity logs with administrators, supervisors, and/or evaluators to document the ongoing types of assistance and collaboration that have occurred between the mentor and the beginning teacher.
- 3.A.9 The district must establish and carry out clear procedures for reconsidering mentor and beginning teacher assignments in a timely manner when either the mentor or the beginning teacher is dissatisfied with the pairing.

B. Professional Development for Mentors

Administered by the DEQL in collaboration with CERRA, the mentor professional development program consists of three components, which are to be implemented as funding becomes available: initial mentor training for all mentors, advanced mentor training for mentors whom the district selects, and continuous professional development for all mentors.

- Initial and advanced mentor trainings will be led by the staffs of the DEQL and CERRA.
- The district program coordinator will coordinate the initial and advanced trainings for his or her district through the offices of the DEQL or CERRA.

- The district program coordinator in collaboration with the DEQL and CERRA will supervise the initial and advanced mentor trainings.

3.B.1 The district must collaborate with the DEQL and CERRA to plan and conduct continuous professional development for mentors that focuses on the knowledge and skills that mentors need in order to

- a. identify and respond to the diverse needs of beginning teachers;
- b. guide beginning teachers by employing the strategies that are most appropriately to be used with adult learners;
- c. engage in mentoring conversations that include reflective questions about teaching practice, direct feedback, and other types of coaching;
- d. assist beginning teachers in understanding the local context for teaching that is created by the relationship between the school and the community;
- e. assist beginning teachers in understanding their role in the professional learning community;
- f. support beginning teachers in understanding the nature and scope of their professional responsibilities;
- g. appreciate the dynamics of professional learning communities and work closely with all members including administrators, parents, veteran teachers, and other beginning teachers;
- h. use formative assessment to assist beginning-teacher development in relation to the ADEPT Performance Standards;
- i. use observation as a method of data collection and analyze those data appropriately;
- j. use the evidence from formative assessments fairly and equitably with beginning teachers to assist in the development of their individual professional growth and development plans;
- k. assist beginning teachers in working with diverse students; and
- l. analyze multiple sources of data, including classroom observation, journals, collaborative logs, surveys, student work, lesson plans, and student assessments.

INITIAL MENTOR TRAINING

3.B.2 The district must require that all mentors successfully complete initial mentor training, pending state funding, on the date established by the SBE. Prior to the availability of funding that is specifically earmarked for induction and mentoring, districts are encouraged to continue the training and development of their mentors using funds now available from sources such as ADEPT and Title II, Part A.

- The initial training will be conducted over the course of three days. One day of the initial training, led by the DEQL, will be devoted to familiarizing mentors with the state's retention efforts and the current research on mentoring. Two days of the training, coordinated by CERRA, will be devoted to the Foundations in Mentoring training, developed by the New Teacher Center at the University of California, Santa Cruz. This nationally recognized program has been adapted to address South Carolina's ADEPT Performance Standards and requirements.
- Mentors may be eligible to receive up to a maximum of 20 renewal credits upon their successful completion of the initial training. These credits may be applied toward the renewal of the mentor's professional teaching certificate.

ADVANCED MENTOR TRAINING

3.B.3 The district must select experienced mentors for advanced training and must ensure that every selected mentor fully qualifies for this training by

- a. having served as a mentor for at least one school year,
 - b. having received successful performance reviews as a teacher and as a mentor, and
 - c. being recommended for advanced mentor training by the building principal or the district's induction and mentoring coordinator.
- Advanced mentor training, which will be coordinated through CERRA, will involve instructional coaching and other mentoring skills as well as the refining of mentor behaviors and dispositions.
 - Mentors may be eligible to receive up to a maximum of 60 renewal credits upon their successful completion of the South Carolina advanced mentor training. These credits may be applied toward the renewal of the educator's professional teaching certificate.

CONTINUOUS MENTOR TRAINING

3.B.4 The district must require that all of its mentors participate in continuing professional development, over and above the initial training.

- Continuous professional development for mentors may be conducted by the DEQL, CERRA, or the district, depending on the needs of the particular mentors.
- After they have completed their initial training, mentors enter a five-year cycle during which they must complete a minimum of 15 contact hours of professional development activities related to mentoring (e.g., district, state, or national academies; seminars, workshops, and conferences on induction and/or mentoring). The district will use its renewal credit plan to determine the acceptable renewal credit for each mentor.
- A mentor's failure to achieve 15 contact hours of mentoring professional development within five years after the initial training will result in the removal of his or her name from the SDE's list of state-trained mentors.
- Up to 60 credits that a mentor earns in professional development activities for mentors may be applied toward the renewal of his or her professional certificate. The district's renewal credit coordinator, or his or her designee, will determine the appropriateness of particular activities for renewal credits.

KEY ELEMENT 4

District Plan for Program Evaluation

Each district's induction and mentoring plan must have a comprehensive system of formative program evaluation that addresses all program requirements, involves all program participants as well as other stakeholders, and leads to substantive improvements. The district's induction and mentoring program coordinator will coordinate all evaluation activities in collaboration with the district leadership team.

- 4.1 The district must establish and implement a procedure for continuously evaluating and improving its induction and mentoring program.
- 4.2 The district must require that its program coordinator and district leadership team establish and maintain a system using both informal and formal methods (e.g., interviews, surveys) to collect feedback on a regular and ongoing basis from all participants in the induction and mentoring program with regard to the quality and effectiveness of the central factors of the program's implementation.
- 4.3 The district must ensure that evaluations of its induction and mentoring program include, *at a minimum*, feedback from school and district administrators, mentors, and induction-contract teachers and from turnover and SDE teacher-survey data as reported on the school and district report card.
- 4.4 The district must establish and implement a procedure for administering the annual DEQL-CERRA teacher assistance and support survey to all mentors, all teachers served by mentors, and all school administrators who work directly with mentors.
- 4.5 The district must ensure that all beginning teachers, mentors, and administrators complete the annual DEQL-CERRA survey and must ensure that the schools and district use the survey results for program improvement.
- 4.6 The district must formulate and describe in clear terms the approach it will follow in reviewing, analyzing, and using the survey results to improve its induction program.
- 4.7 The district must require that its program coordinator and district leadership team
 - a. analyze and process all program-evaluation data that has been collected;
 - b. employ a systematic method to share the program-evaluation data with all school and district administrators involved in the program, all mentors, and all beginning teachers; and
 - c. use their analysis of the program-evaluation data—particularly the strengths and needs of beginning teachers that they identify—to form the basis of adjustments and improvements in the district's program design.

Glossary

ADEPT (Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teaching). South Carolina's statewide system for monitoring and enhancing the quality of professional teaching. ADEPT is centered in a set of integrated performance-based standards that establish the expectations for what teaching professionals should know, be able to do, and be responsible for accomplishing on an ongoing basis.

CERRA (Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement). A state organization funded by the General Assembly to address issues related to educator recruitment, retention, and advancement through precollegiate and preservice programs, mentoring, and reform efforts designed to identify and support accomplished teacher leaders. Working cooperatively with other organizations to promote the teaching profession in South Carolina, CERRA has the central mission of providing leadership in the ongoing endeavor to identify, attract, place, and retain well-qualified individuals for the teaching profession in South Carolina. In doing so, CERRA responds to the state's changing needs for teachers from underrepresented populations, in critical subject fields, and in underserved geographical areas.

DEQL (Division of Educator Quality and Leadership). The division of the SDE that includes the Office of Educator Certification, the Office of Educator Preparation, Support, and Assessment, and the Office of School Leadership. With its mission of ensuring educator excellence in South Carolina, the DEQL is responsible for administering the Induction and Mentoring Program as well as ADEPT.

highly qualified. The term used in the federal No Child Left Behind Act to describe a teacher who has a bachelor's degree or higher, has demonstrated content competence, and holds full state certification. For more information, see the definition adopted by the SBE on the DEQL Web site at <http://www.sctechners.org>.

professional learning community. A school culture in which experienced and beginning teachers and administrators interact as colleagues to address their common goals and concerns. Meeting on a regular basis—both formally and informally—they support one another in their continued growth as educators and in their ongoing commitment to the goal of raising the level of student achievement.

structured inquiry. The process by which the mentor asks guiding questions to lead the beginning teacher in the analysis of a lesson, a procedure, a management technique, and so forth.

summative evaluation. The standardized process designed to examine the extent to which a teacher meets the performance standards and achieves the desired outcome of improving student achievement. The purpose of summative evaluation is to provide accountability and quality assurance. Summative evaluation results are useful in determining professional development needs, identifying outstanding teachers, and making personnel decisions related to contract and employment issues. In the induction and mentoring program, the mentor does not participate in the summative evaluation process.

APPENDIX

ADEPT Requirements for Induction

The following ADEPT guidelines for induction apply to all classroom-based teachers as well as to all special-area educators (i.e., library media specialists, school guidance, counselors, and speech-language therapists).

The purpose of the induction program is to facilitate beginning teachers' successful transition into professional practice. The primary emphasis during this time is on the *assisting* component of ADEPT. As a part of the ADEPT assistance process, school districts must make certain that beginning teachers are knowledgeable about the ADEPT system. However, the assistance process is not limited to providing these teachers with instruction in the ADEPT Performance Standards. Its ultimate goal is, of course, to help these teachers meet or exceed these performance expectations as part of their everyday practice.

Specifically, the school districts must develop and implement plans to ensure that each induction-contract teacher understands

- ◆ what “good teaching” looks like in terms of the particular ADEPT Performance Standards that are appropriate for classroom-based teachers, library media specialists, school guidance counselors, and speech-language therapists;
- ◆ the ways in which the district will provide written and oral formative feedback to the teacher regarding his or her performance in regard to each of the ADEPT Performance Standards, and the frequency (i.e., at least twice per year) with which this feedback will be provided;
- ◆ the district’s criteria for determining whether or not to recommend the teacher for reemployment the following year and whether to place the teacher on formal evaluation or diagnostic assistance if he or she is to be reemployed the following year;
- ◆ the ADEPT formal evaluation process that each teacher must successfully complete during the annual-contract year, including
 - ❖ the components of the formal evaluation process,
 - ❖ the criteria for successfully completing the ADEPT formal evaluation, and
 - ❖ the ways in which the ADEPT formal evaluation results will be used (e.g., to determine eligibility for advancement to a professional teaching certificate and a continuing contract, to make employment decisions, to guide in developing/refining teachers’ professional growth and development plans, to inform teacher preparation programs).