

Thomasville City Schools

Beginning Teacher Support Plan for NC SBE Policy TCED-016

Introduction

In accordance with Policy TCED-016 (formally TCP-A-004/LICN-004), the State requires that each LEA develop an annual plan and provide a comprehensive program of support for beginning teachers. The plan must have Board of Education approval and must meet the Beginning Teacher Support Programs Standards. Additionally, the plan must demonstrate its alignment to the standards and be assessed according to the continuum. The Beginning Teacher Support Program includes initially licensed classroom teachers who hold an initial license during their first, second and third years of the required induction period. All beginning teachers (BTS) receive a multi-layered system of support in Thomasville City Schools (TCS) including an assigned mentor, administrators, the Assistant Director of Human Resources and central office staff. TCS holds a strong commitment to the support of our new teachers, and we believe that our Beginning Teacher Support Program reflects this commitment. We know that it is vital for new teachers to feel honored, appreciated, and supported, and we have designed a plan that offers these things to our teachers.

Beginning Teacher (BT) Identification and Verification

It is a coordinated effort for the Department of Human Resources to provide an effective and accurate process to identify, verify, and document the licenses of BTs. 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). BTs are eligible to convert to a continuing license once all required coursework has been successfully completed, all NC State Board Exams have been passed, and three years of teaching have been completed. Teachers with fewer than three years of teaching experience, however, are required to continue participating in the Beginning Teacher Support Program regardless of their licensure status.

TCS follows all NCSBE requirements for all required licensure tests. State regulations governing the completion and submission of the annual Teacher Turnover Report is completed by the HR Department. Once a BT has completed the program requirements and obtained a continuing license, additional teaching areas will not require supplementary participation in a BTSP.

The Human Resources Department verifies and documents the years of teaching experience and area of licensure for each new hire. When a teacher is hired with three or less years of experience, they are

considered to be a Beginning Teacher and will participate in the BTSP. Beginning teachers are assigned to teach in their area of licensure. Three years of teaching experience, of at least six months each, are required in the Beginning Teacher Support Program.

Eligibility for a Continuing License

The Chief Human Resources Officer in conjunction with the Assistant Director of Human Resources explains and facilitates the License Conversion Process for BTs in traditional and alternative routes to licensure. The process for ensuring that teachers are given an assignment in the area of licensure rests on the Assistant Director of Human Resources and the Chief Human Resources Officer. The plan for documentation of required licensure tests requirements and the process for license conversion (coursework, exams passed, and three years of teaching) is processed by the Chief Human Resources Officer. The Assistant Director of Human Resources will meet with BTs a minimum of two times yearly to discuss their individual progress towards meeting licensing requirements. All employment and licensure records are maintained in the office of Human Resources for security purposes. The final documentation is housed in each employee's personnel file. The proof of burden is the responsibility of the employee. Data regarding Beginning Teachers for the State of the Teaching Profession in NC Report is collected and aggregated by the Chief Human Resources Officer.

Formal Orientation

TCS requires that all first year teachers and any second or third year teachers who are new to the district attend a formal orientation within two weeks of their first day of work in any school year. First year teachers attend for three days and second and third year teachers attend for one. Per NC SBE Policy, at minimum, orientation includes the following topics:

- State Board of Education's Mission and Goals;
- TCS goals, policies, and procedures;
- NC Professional Teaching Standards and NC Educator Evaluation System (NCEES);
- TCS program services and professional development;
- TCS Beginning Teacher Support Program;
- Required working conditions guidelines;
- Licensure/conversion process

- NC curriculum standards and TCS curriculum resources;
- Safe and appropriate use of seclusion and restraint of students.

BTs also attend a benefits session where they receive information on insurance and relevant employment benefits. They are given access to the Beginning Teacher site that houses information including: tips for new teachers, State and Local Policies, NC Professional Teaching Standards, the North Carolina Teacher Code of Ethics, and other supplementary materials. All handouts and presentations from Beginning Teacher Orientation, BT meetings, and Professional Development are also stored on this site. Sign-in sheets for BT orientation are kept on file by the Assistant Director of Human Resources. Beginning teachers who are unable to attend the summer orientation, participate in comparable sessions that are held within ten days of their hire date.

Optimum Working Conditions for Beginning Teachers

The administration of Thomasville City Schools offers full support for our Beginning Teachers. Each principal understands new teachers will be given optimum working conditions, including limited non-instructional duties, a fair schedule, a qualified mentor, and adequate resources for teaching. As the instructional leader, the principal assures that new teachers will also be given adequate assistance and support needed throughout the three-year licensure process. To ensure Beginning Teachers have the opportunity to develop into capable teachers, principals are kept up to date with the required optimal working conditions for new teachers.

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. For those Beginning Teachers who are requesting additional extracurricular assignments, they are required to put this request in writing and submit this to the principal showing their intent. Copies of these written requests are kept on file by the Assistant Director of Human Resources.

Mentor Teacher Selection and Training

In compliance with the North Carolina State Board policy (GS 115C-296(e)) on mentor selection and assignment, Thomasville City Schools ensures that each BT is assigned a mentor and that mentors maintain regular contact with the BT. The assigning of mentors begins during the summer as beginning teachers are hired so that mentors can support and participate in Beginning Teacher Orientation. Assignments of mentors are made based on teaching areas, PLCs, proximity, schedules, and personalities.

TCS recognizes the need for mentors to possess knowledge, skills, and a positive attitude to be effective instructional coaches, logistical and emotional support, and organizational guides for beginning teachers. Mentors are trained in accordance with the NC Department of Public Instruction program based on the NC Mentor Standards. Mentors will focus their primary support on improving instruction and learning.

The mentor must display the qualities of an effective teacher and meet the qualifications that are outlined by the State Board policy that include:

- Rated at least at the "proficient" level on the North Carolina Educator Effectiveness System (NCEES) on all five standards on the most recent summative evaluation, or on standards 1 and 4 for teachers on an Abbreviated Evaluation.
- Retired teachers are eligible to serve as mentors.
- The principal shall determine which mentor teacher best meets the needs of each new teacher and shall assign the most appropriate mentor teacher to that new teacher, with priority consideration for those mentor teachers rated as "distinguished" and "accomplished."
- If a principal determines that a teacher rated as "proficient" or a retired teacher is the most appropriate mentor for a new teacher, the principal shall maintain records of the reasons for that determination and provide documentation to the BT Coordinator.
- TCS will use the most recently available evaluation for teachers who lack an evaluation from the prior year. Teachers without evaluation data for two or more consecutive years shall not be eligible to serve as mentor teachers, unless the mentor is a retired teacher.
- Any teacher who is assigned to be a mentor to a beginning teacher must meet eligibility requirements in the year of the assignment. No mentor whose evaluation falls below the "proficient" level may continue to serve as a mentor to a beginning teacher, regardless of existing mentor-mentee relationships with the beginning teacher.

- A teacher may be a mentor at a different building from which the mentor is assigned if the following criteria are met:
 - The principals of each school and the mentor approve of the assignment.
 - The mentor teacher is rated, through formal evaluations, at least at the "accomplished" level as part of the NC Teacher Evaluation System (received ratings of accomplished or higher on three of five standards including Standard 4 on the most recent summative, or on Standard 4 on an abbreviated evaluation).
 - The new teacher's principal maintains a record of the reasons for selecting the mentor from a different school building.

In addition:

- Mentor selection criteria will include input from a variety of stakeholder groups.
- Mentor selection criteria are clearly articulated by program leadership.
- Process for mentor application and selection is transparent and uniformly applied.
- Mentors receive initial training regarding their role as mentors and their responsibilities in the induction program.
- Mentors receive ongoing training and support to advance their knowledge and skills.
- Mentors have opportunities to participate in professional learning communities of mentoring practice.
- Mentors receive training based on NC Mentor Standards, including knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be effective instructional coaches, emotional supports and organizational guides to those entering the profession.

Throughout the school year, information from the HR Department is disseminated to mentors in a variety of delivery models. Mentors serve as the school-based facilitator to beginning teachers. Mentors are required to meet with first and second year BTs for a minimum of four hours each month and a minimum of two hours each month for third year BTs.

The Assistant Director of Human Resources communicates annually with the mentors prior to the start of the school year. Additional meetings with mentors and beginning teachers are scheduled during the year. Currently, funding is appropriated through the Title II federal budget to compensate mentors of beginning teachers during their first three years of teaching.

Beginning Teacher Professional Development Plan (PDP)

One session of New Teacher Orientation is devoted to training beginning teachers on the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation process which includes the development of the Professional Development Plan. All school-based mentors receive specific training in PDP preparation. Each year beginning teachers are required to develop a PDP in collaboration with their principal (or the principal designee) and mentor. PDPs are based on NC Professional Teaching Standards and must include goals, strategies, and assessment of the BT's progress in improving professional skills.

Formative assessment conferences are held at the beginning, middle, and end of each year, including BT, mentor, and principal to reflect the progress of the BT in meeting their goals. These conferences serve as a way to inform support for BTs who are rated "Developing" or "Not Demonstrated" and as a means to make additions and provide updates to the PDP. Each year BTs should complete any professional development required or prescribed by the district. Signatures of the BT, mentor, and principal are required for each formative assessment conference. PDPs are maintained in the electronic teacher evaluation tool.

Observations

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). Before participating in the evaluation process, all teachers, principals, and peer evaluators must complete training on the evaluation process. Within the first two weeks of a teacher's first day of work in any school year, the teacher will receive a copy, or directions for obtaining a copy of the rubric for evaluating NC teachers, the evaluation policy, and the schedule for completing all components of the evaluation process.

Each BT will complete a self-assessment, rating his/her own performance at the beginning of the year and reflect on his/her performance throughout the year. Prior to the first observation each BT will participate in a pre-conference with the principal to discuss the teacher's self-assessment, most recent PDP, and lesson to be observed. The teacher must provide the principal with a written description of the lesson.

All beginning teachers are observed four times during each school year and evaluated annually. One of these is a peer observation, and three are by a qualified school administrator or designee. Each

observation should last 45 minutes or an entire class period. Each observation completed by an administrator should be followed by a post-conference within ten days to discuss and document the BT's strengths and weaknesses on the rubric.

The NC Rubric for Evaluating Teachers is used for observations and evaluation. Principals are encouraged to provide opportunities for new teachers to observe their mentor and other teachers, for each mentor to have release time to observe his/her mentee, and for peer observers to complete the official peer observations. Substitutes are provided to allow each beginning teacher the opportunity to observe his or her mentor (or another experienced teacher) for a minimum of one class period.

BT1s and BT2s should have at least two of their observations conducted in the first semester of the school year, and if possible, at least one of those observations should be conducted within the first grading period of the school year. The principal should complete at least one of the three annual administrative observations for BT1s and BT2s. Monitored Growth Plans and Directed Growth Plans must be implemented when necessitated by ratings.

Beginning Teacher Support Plan Monitoring

Thomasville City Schools will be monitored for compliance with this policy. Monitoring is completed on a five-year cycle. Technical assistance is provided as necessary to address areas of concern. District representatives will volunteer to participate on BTSP Monitoring Team(s) in other districts.

Beginning Teacher Support Plan Peer Review Process

In order to assist Thomasville City Schools in progressing along the BTSP continuum to provide the highest quality support for beginning teachers, TCS with approved BTSP plans will participate in a regionally-based annual peer review. The Peer Review process includes an annual self-assessment and 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.

Cumulative Beginning Teacher File

The Assistant Director of Human Resources maintains and secures files at the central office for each beginning teacher. When a teacher completes the Beginning Teacher Program documents are placed in

their personnel file. Teacher evaluations, Summary Rating Forms, Professional Growth Plans (PDP), and Record of Activities are stored in the NCEES system. Beginning Teachers are given a folder and checklist during BT Orientation detailing what they should keep for their professional files.

Timely Transfer of Beginning Teacher Files

Upon receiving a written request from a new employer, TCS will provide the requested and required documentation to the new employer in order for the beginning teacher to continue and complete his/her induction period. The transfer of files will be completed within a reasonable timeframe, usually within ten working days. The ten working days can not begin until the BTs last day of employment with TCS.

Recent Graduate Survey

In compliance with GS 115C-269.35, a recent graduate survey will be completed by Beginning Teachers and their principals before the end of the first year of teaching. This survey will serve as part of the requirements used to measure the performance of Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs).

Board of Education Approval

The Thomasville City Schools Board of Education approves the Beginning Teacher Support Program plan as necessitated by General Statute or changes in the Beginning Teacher Support Program at the local level. It will be kept on file for review at the district office.



As outlined in TCED-016, the Beginning Teacher Support Plan is to be approved by the Local Board of Education and the NC Department of Instruction. A copy of the approved Beginning Teacher Support Plan should also be kept on file with Thomasville City Schools.

Beginning Teacher Support Coordinator, Krystal Sanders

Date

Superintendent, Dr. Catherine R. Gentry

Date

School Board Chair, Mr. James R. Carmichael

Date

Approved by TCS Board of Education

Date

Submitted to NCDPI

Date

