



## **New Teacher Center**

New Teacher Center focuses on improving student learning by accelerating the effectiveness of new teachers. NTC partners with states, school districts, and policymakers to implement programs that create sustainable, high-quality mentoring and professional development; build leadership capacity; work to enhance teaching conditions; improve retention; and transform schools into vibrant learning communities where all students succeed.

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# Mentor Selection

The recruitment and selection of mentors is arguably the single most important task facing the teacher induction program's leadership. Just as a growing body of research emphasizes the importance of the classroom teacher with regard to student learning, our twenty-plus years of experience working with beginning teachers and their mentors underscore the importance of the quality of the mentor with respect to new teacher development. The purpose of a quality induction program is not just to retain teachers; intensive induction programs with highly trained and supported mentors can accelerate the development of high-achieving classroom teachers and improve student achievement.

During the initial stages of a program's implementation, it is imperative that an aggressive recruitment effort accompanies the mentor selection process. Veteran teachers are often reluctant to leave the classroom, especially to embrace a role and assume duties that have not existed before. Indeed, we have found that those exemplary veteran teachers who are most attached to the classroom are those whose commitment to their students and to their practice may well serve to make them ideal mentor candidates. The New Teacher Center suggests that programs aggressively recruit mentors. Just posting an announcement and listing the job qualifications is not enough, as it leaves the application process up to chance. Program leaders, site administrators, and mentors need to actively search for and contact strong classroom teachers with those qualities they know will lead to successful mentoring.

Veteran teachers who are selected to support the development of novice colleagues are assuming a significant and potentially very powerful leadership role in schools and school districts. They are becoming on-the-job teacher educators who are influencing, very directly, the professional norms and teaching practices of a cadre of new teachers that will be educating the entire next generation of students in our schools. Thus, it is crucial for program leaders to be very clear about exactly what norms and instructional practices they want to establish in

schools and classrooms and select mentors accordingly. Are programs maintaining the status quo or are they developing a new kind of teacher—one who performs at the highest standards and is able to meet the needs of all students?

Mentors, if carefully selected, can help create new norms of collaboration, inquiry, and ongoing learning. The positive, empowered professional model they present to new teachers conveys the standards of performance expected by the school and the system as a whole. Mentors' attitudes and beliefs about students and about the role of teachers in the academic lives of their students are as important as the discrete skills of teaching and subject-matter or grade-level expertise. Mentors who model a dedication to their own professional growth, who are curious about their practice and are constantly seeking to improve it, who work well with colleagues to create schools that are true communities of learners, who hold themselves personally accountable for the academic success of their students—these are the mentors who will make a difference.

Induction programs will rise or fall on the success of their mentors. No amount of administrative guidance will substitute for the face-to-face teaching and learning that happen when mentors meet with beginning teachers to talk about their practice. Selecting mentors with extraordinary interpersonal skills and with prior experience working collaboratively with colleagues is essential. Specific mentoring and coaching skills will be learned through the intensive and ongoing mentor professional development that is at the heart of a comprehensive induction program. This professional development will also help mentors learn to use their classroom expertise and subject-matter knowledge in ways that help them fulfill the role of teacher of teachers—an “educative” mentor.

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## Recruitment Tips

The mentor also has an important role outside the realm of mentor-novice interactions. Quality mentors help to establish new relationships with site administrators and serve as models of professional leadership. Their work with new teachers conveys a professional commitment to the next generation of colleagues that can influence an entire school community. In addition, their professional poise, sense of purpose, and successful work communicate to other stakeholders (parents, students, fellow teachers, union leaders, administrators, university faculty) the integrity and validity of the induction program as a whole. The mentors' professional reputations become, in the aggregate, the reputation of the induction program itself, and the program's credibility and development rest upon their success.

The selection process should be as inclusive as possible. Site administrators, union leaders, veteran teacher leaders, and others can help recruit and select the finest candidates possible. Their knowledge of practicing, quality veteran teachers can help ensure that the pool of candidates is sufficiently large such that quality can be maintained. The selection criteria, along with the roles and responsibilities associated with the position, need to be clearly conveyed across the educational community, and the process for selection must be clearly understood. Having a variety of stakeholders present on the selection committee is important, but their participation in the selection process makes it incumbent upon the program leaders to ensure that the vision of a "quality mentor" is commonly held across the interview panel, and that the selection criteria are understood and accepted by all.

- **Identifying Candidates**

Once program leaders have established the selection criteria and the qualities they are looking for in good mentors, informal observation and discussion can take place. Having conversations with principals and other teachers, mentors, or coaches can often lead to identifying possible mentors. A personal invitation to apply to the program extended to an identified candidate might follow. Care needs to be taken to explain to the candidate that there is an open and rigorous selection process, conducted by a representative committee, and that the invitation to apply is the first in a sequence of events and will not necessarily lead to a job offer.

- **So You Want to Be a Mentor**

Some districts hold an information session, open house, or reception, inviting teachers who may be interested in becoming a mentor. Program information can be shared and mentors currently working with beginning teachers can provide "testimonials" about their collaborative work.

- **A Day in the Life of a Mentor**

A meeting or workshop showing "a day in the life of a mentor" is another way of providing a detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of the mentor. This works well with a media presentation and a follow-up question and answer period.

- **Event Participation**

Inviting potential candidates to a mentor training, a beginning teacher workshop facilitated by mentors, or a mentor meeting is another way for teachers to consider mentoring possibilities. Or a candidate could shadow another mentor during an observation or conversation with a beginning teacher.

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# Mentor Selection Criteria

Mentor selection criteria include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Recognized as exemplary classroom teacher and excellent professional role model.
2. Completed at least 5 years' successful classroom teaching experience.
3. Demonstrates interpersonal and communication skills.
4. Holds credibility with peers and administrators.
5. Projects respect for multiple perspectives.
6. Experienced success working with linguistically and ethnically diverse students and with special population students.
7. Demonstrated commitment to personal and professional growth and learning.
8. Willing to participate in professional preparation to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to be effective.
9. Willing to engage in formative assessment processes, including non-evaluative, reflective conversations with beginning teachers about formative assessment evidence.
10. Willing to work collaboratively and share instructional ideas and materials with beginning teachers.
11. Conveys knowledge of beginning teacher development.
12. Demonstrates strong literacy and numeracy skills in elementary grades.
13. Demonstrates strong academic literacy, knowledge and skills in secondary grades.
14. Has strong subject-matter knowledge and pedagogy.
15. Demonstrates commitment to improving the academic achievement of all students.

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# Mentor Roles and Responsibilities

Mentor roles and responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, the following. These will be adapted to the district and program context.

- Develop a trusting and reflective professional partnership with new teachers.
  - Maintain confidentiality as outlined by the mentor program.
  - Provide weekly, on-site support to each new teacher, approximately 1–2 hours per teacher per week.
  - Coach and assist new teachers with curriculum development, classroom management, instructional strategies, lesson planning, assessment of student performance, and all aspects of their professional development.
  - Assist new teachers in developing an individual learning plan based on professional teaching standards and district requirements. Assist the teachers in making periodic adjustments to the plan after receiving feedback from formative assessments and similar sources.
  - Assist the new teachers in developing and maintaining an individual portfolio to document growth using formative assessment processes.
- Plan, participate in, and facilitate support and professional development activities for beginning teachers.
  - Participate in the professional development activities for mentors, including an orientation, trainings, and meetings.
  - Participate in and complete a training for mentors to acquire the skills necessary to use evidence-based formative assessment data to develop increasingly positive performances in the skills, abilities, and knowledge outlined in the professional teaching standards.
  - Confer with experienced colleagues and local school leaders as appropriate to assist with beginning teacher support.
  - Provide feedback on program effectiveness to site administrators and program leaders.
  - Comply with district reporting procedures.



## Instructional Mentor

### **Position Summary**

(District Name) mentors provide instructional mentoring to new teachers (years 1-3) in grades K-12. Mentors are encouraged to engage in 60 minute weekly visits with their new teacher. These visits will include activities such as classroom observations, lesson planning, instructional support, and conferencing time.

Individuals selected for the position of Instructional Mentor attend ongoing professional development throughout the school year.

Our mentoring work in (District Name) is grounded in New Teacher Center's (NTC) formative assessment system. NTC is a national non-profit organization dedicated to improving student learning by accelerating the effectiveness of teachers and school leaders. Through the common professional development using the formative assessment system, Instructional Mentors not only have the opportunity to work for the children of (District Name) but also are able to join a broader national movement dedicated to improving teaching and learning.

### **Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:**

#### *Interactions with new teachers*

- Establish and maintain a trustful, confidential and non-evaluative relationship with new teachers to help develop their autonomy as professionals
- Assist new teachers in reflecting on and analyzing their practice and reviewing student work to inform instruction and enhance student achievement
- Use knowledge of equity principles to deepen new teachers' application of standards
- Model, as appropriate, innovative teaching methodologies through techniques such as co-teaching and demonstration lessons; provide opportunities for new teachers to observe exemplary practice by arranging classroom visitations
- Encourage new teachers to identify instructional resources and support throughout the entire school community; incorporate technology and analysis of data to advance both ear teacher learning and classroom practice
- Promote collegiality and build community among new teachers by providing professional development.

#### *Interactions with Principals and Site Leadership*

- Invite ongoing collaboration with principals and district staff to ensure coherence between mentoring activities and school, network or district expectations

#### *Individual professional growth*

- Fully participate in mentor professional development, including Professional Learning Series, and Mentor Forums.





## Induction Program Leader Expectations

The primary focus of an Induction Program Leader is to create and implement a comprehensive, collaborative support system of new teacher and principal induction. This includes: program development, management and evaluation; designing, marketing, and presentation of professional development sessions for mentors; leadership and public relations with all district stakeholders and partners; coordination within the induction program team; collaboration with New Teacher Center (NTC) and supervision of support staff. The position requires a strong background in curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional development, leadership, and communication skills.

RESPONSIBILITY	SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS
Development & Ongoing Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provide leadership in planning, developing, scheduling, implementing, and evaluating all induction program components. (NTC will provide consultation in the preparation and launch of the induction program.)</li> <li>○ Coordinate and deliver, as needed, NTC mentor teacher and principal professional development, including forums and other consortium networks as applicable.</li> <li>○ Identify potential issues and problems within the induction program, and work with NTC client lead to develop district appropriate solutions.</li> </ul>
Relationship Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Work to establish new teacher induction and mentoring as integral to talent development work in school district.</li> <li>○ Collaborate with superintendents, site administrators and other district administrators. Convene stakeholders on a regular basis for quality, consistency, and alignment.</li> <li>○ Serve as the liaison between induction mentors, the school district and NTC.</li> <li>○ Participate in NTC client engagement meetings with district leadership.</li> </ul>
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lead the hiring process for mentors and co-presenters, including the review of applications and the orientation process.</li> <li>○ Manage and oversee mentor supervision and deployment.</li> <li>○ Allocate sufficient resources to support program implementation.</li> <li>○ Provide regular one-on-one supervisory meetings with each induction team member.</li> </ul>

RESPONSIBILITY	SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS
Quality Control & Data Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Observe mentors through regular field visits.</li> <li>○ Manage programmatic goal setting.</li> <li>○ Design and conduct periodic program evaluations. Present reports to leadership team and NTC with recommendations for program modification.</li> <li>○ Support data collection and data analysis for program improvement in conjunction with NTC.</li> </ul>
Knowledge Management & Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Publish regular program-wide communications.</li> <li>○ Develop induction program resources.</li> <li>○ Facilitate the sharing of best teaching and assessment practices among participating cohorts.</li> </ul>
Administrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Distribute material resources to each participating organization.</li> <li>○ Oversee and administer budget, operations, procedures and NTC contract delivery as appropriate.</li> <li>○ Provide regular, responsive availability via phone and email.</li> </ul>
NTC-Specific Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Facilitate communication between NTC and the school district(s), serving at the primary point of contact.</li> <li>○ Participate in an appropriate capacity at NTIN and other NTC-led events.</li> <li>○ When appropriate, host site visits for NTC clients and interact with district-specific funders.</li> </ul>