

Mentoring New Teachers

Why go this route?

- Research indicates that beginning teachers who are mentored are more effective teachers in their early years. Mentored novice teachers tend to focus on student learning sooner and leave teaching at a lower rate.
—National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996
- “To reduce high teacher turnover rates that impose heavy costs on schools, we must improve working conditions, insist on effective teacher preparation and provide support for new teachers.”
—Linda Darling Hammond
- “Whether children find learning a joy or a drudgery often depends on the teacher’s repertoire of strategies, and whether a teacher develops those strategies depends on professional preparation and a solid support system.”
—Patricia Wasley
- Because teacher retention is important to school success.
- Because 50% of new teachers leave the profession within 5 years.

You’ll Know You’ve Arrived When...

- New teachers are contacted after hire, before the first day of school.
- Each new teacher has an active and competent mentor.
- Mentors and new teachers have time to observe and reflect together.
- Regular orientation meetings are designed to nurture the professional growth of new teachers.

Construction Zone



It’s about TIME

- Mentor teachers should plan to devote at least an hour per week to observation and reflection.
- New teachers will need an hour per week with their mentors, and an after school orientation meeting each month.
- End the year with preliminary preparation for next fall.




Potential COSTS

- Professional development facilitators vary from \$500 to \$1500 per day.
- Substitute teachers to provide observation and consultant time for mentors and mentees.
- \$25–\$100 for books and materials for new teacher workshops.



The Process

*A step-by-step guide
to integrating new teachers
into a Learning Community
of professional teachers.*

NOTE: Steps marked with a  are accompanied by one or more inserts, included in this packet.

- 1 Decide to create a mentoring program** for new teachers in your building or district.
INSERTS for Step 1 (A-G) provide a definition and numerous explanations and support materials for beginning a teacher mentoring program.
 - 2 Recruit as mentors experienced and competent teachers** who are capable of being role models for new teachers.
Organize an orientation for mentors describing (or developing with them) the expectations for mentor involvement. See “Resources” for possible sources for mentor training programs. INSERT for Step 2 is a self-reflective checklist to help candidates decide.
 - 3 Recruit a “New Teacher Orientation Committee”** to plan orientation meetings in the building once a month starting in the fall.
INSERTS for Step 3 (A-H) offer suggested content ideas for professional development topics, observation pointers, a planning calendar, a problem-solving model (article on “Breaking through Isolation with New Teacher Groups”) and a sample agenda for new teacher orientation meetings. The article included as INSERT I for Step 3 (“What New Teachers Need to Learn”) will help the committee focus on ideas for retention and also serve as a catalyst for discussion at the first gathering.
Ask staff in the spring to make a list of the top ten reasons why it’s great to work at your school (see INSERT K for Step 3 for a form), and distribute it at the first new teacher orientation meeting, or include it with the letter sent to teachers after they have been assigned to your school (see INSERT for Step 5).
 - 4 Create schedules** that allow mentors and new teachers to meet weekly, new teachers to observe veteran teachers, and new teachers to improve their practice without being overburdened.
See INSERT for Step 4 for ideas.

Begin the orientation process.
 - 5 Call to welcome new teachers** and send a letter explaining the mentoring program as soon as confirmation is received that they have been hired.
Set a time, as soon as possible, to give them their schedules and supplies. INSERT for Step 5 is a sample letter to send to new teachers.
 - 6 Assign each new teacher to a mentor** and provide both with the “Expectations” outlined in INSERT for Step 6 (or your alternative).
 - 7 Set up a one-day new teacher orientation session** before the beginning of school. **INSERTS for Step 7 (A-F) include a questionnaire for new teachers, getting acquainted activities, checklists, and a glossary. Check collective bargaining agreements for conditions for setting up such a program.**
 - 8 Continue orientation and mentoring support during the year.** **INSERTS for Step 8 (A and B) suggest ways to stay on track.**
 - 9 Celebrate and evaluate!** Ask for suggestions for improvement next year. **INSERTS for Step 9 (A and B) include questions and a rubric for the evaluation. Give new teachers and their mentors some relaxed time together at the end of the year.**
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Getting more mileage from mentoring new teachers

How supporting new teachers with mentors can benefit your school in regard to the following initiatives:

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

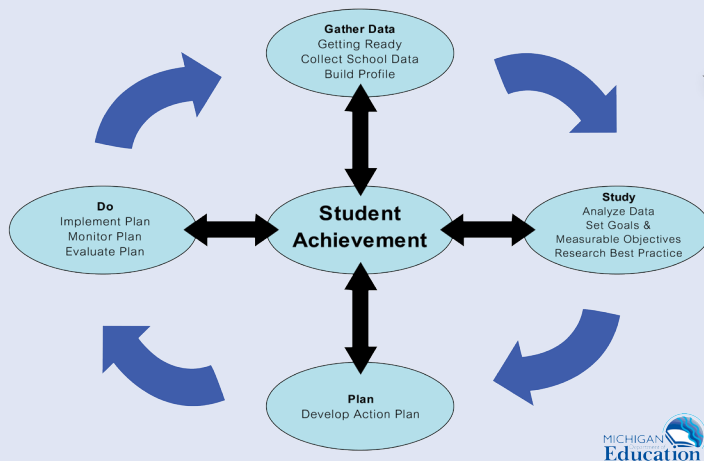
- ESEA includes provisions stating that all teachers in core academic areas must be highly qualified. It also requires that newly hired teachers in Title I programs or schools be highly qualified. (U.S. Department of Education, NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND: A TOOLKIT FOR TEACHERS, p. 11, ED PUBS, Washington, D.C., 2003)

State Accreditation System

- In addition to achievement data, Michigan's accreditation system includes measures which are closely linked to teacher quality. Instructional quality, is specifically defined as the process the school uses to improve the quality of instruction provided to students. Mentoring is such a process.

Michigan Continuous School Improvement Process (Mi-CSI)

Michigan School Improvement Framework



The support of new teachers is key in the continuous school improvement process. Through mentoring, teachers will be able to develop skills, knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs necessary to create a culture with high levels of learning for all.



Resources

Books, Articles, Websites

A Better Beginning: Supporting and Mentoring New Teachers

Marge Scherer (Editor). Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 1999.

Designed for mentors who want new teachers to succeed and who need good strategies for helping make that happen.

Change Handbook: Group Methods for Shaping the Future

Peggy Holman and Tom Devane. Bennett-Koehler Publishers, 1999.

Holman and Devane have assembled 18 proven group methods for helping groups shape their futures. Chapter 15 addresses appreciative inquiry.

A First Year Teacher's Guidebook, 2nd Edition

Bonnie Williamson. Dynamic Teaching Company, 1998.

An instructional manual for new teachers, this book details a classroom management system and includes preparations for the first day, month and year of teaching. Also included is information on rural, urban and multi-cultural students; dealing with stress; threats and violence; technology in the classroom and much more. Very practical, and lots of fun.

The First Days of School: How to Be an Effective Teacher

Harry Wong. Harry Wong Publications, 1998.

Very practical, research-based strategies for both new teachers and seasoned veterans. This one is a classic that "vets" will want to discuss with new teachers.

Mentoring New Teachers, 3rd Edition

H. Portner. Sage Publishers-Corwin, 2008.

Pathwise Framework Induction Program for Beginning Teachers

Educational Testing Service (ETS)

www.teachingandlearning.org

Port Huron Public Schools Teacher Induction Program is a nationally recognized model

Teacher Mentor Training Guide

www.teacher-mentoring-resources.com

ASSIST website:

<http://assist.educ.msu.edu/ASSIST/>

People

Intermediate School Districts/RESAs can serve as a resource.

For more information, contact:

Michigan Department of Education

Office of Education
Improvement and Innovation
517-241-3147

School Improvement Unit
517-373-8480

Curriculum and Instruction Unit
517-241-4285

Office of Assessment
and Accountability
517-373-0048

Office of Early Childhood
and Family Services
517-241-3592

Office of Field Services
517-373-3921

Office of Professional Preparation
and Teacher Certification
517-373-7861

Office of Special Education
and Early Intervention Services
517-373-9433

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Compliance With Federal Law

The Michigan Department of Education complies with all Federal laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination, and with all requirements and regulations of the U.S. Department of Education.



www.michigan.gov/mde