Beginning Teacher Support Program and Mentoring Plan

2012-2013

Introduction:

In accordance with NC State BOE Policy TCP-A-004, the Lee County Schools Beginning Teacher (BT) Support Program provides for: new teacher orientation accompanied by a three-year induction period; BT assignment within the area of licensure supported by a trained mentor; an annual BT Professional Development Plan; attention to teacher working conditions; a full time Licensure Specialist and Beginning Teacher Coordinator; training in the NC Professional Teaching Standards and the NC Educator Evaluation System; and annual systemic evaluation of the BT Support Program.

Components:

1) Using a combination of local, state, and federal funds, Lee County Schools will provide for the efficient management of the BT Support Program by employing one full-time Licensure Specialist and one full-time Beginning Teacher Coordinator to serve the district, and offering non-monetary incentives to trained Lead Mentors and Mentor Buddies at the school level. Lead Mentors who also serve as Lead Teachers for the school district will be assigned to mentor Lateral Entry (LE) BTs and English as a Second Language (ESL) BTs.

2) The Licensure Specialist will explain and facilitate the Conversion Process for BTs in traditional and alternative routes to licensure by collaborating with the Beginning Teacher Coordinator to document participation in the licensure process and verify eligibility.

3) The Beginning Teacher Coordinator will design and administer training and support services for Beginning Teachers and Mentors including: formal three day New Teacher Orientation prior to the beginning of the school year and as needed during the year; monthly professional development at the district level for all BT1s, BT2s, and BT3s via Beginning Teacher Focus Sessions; and NC Educator Evaluation System training and NC Mentor Training aligned with the NC Professional Teaching Standards. The Beginning Teacher Coordinator will also monitor and document BT participation in the three-year licensure process leading to the SPII license.
4) Optimum working conditions for BTs as outlined by the State Board of Education (SBE) will be monitored by the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, the Beginning Teacher Coordinator, and school principals. The Beginning Teacher Coordinator, Lead Mentors, and Mentor Buddies will conduct cycles of coaching and assistance; share instructional materials, best practices, and relevant information; cultivate professional dialogue; and gather data to ensure that all Beginning Teachers are receiving appropriate support.

5) The Beginning Teacher Coordinator will implement online Mentor Training in compliance with guidelines identified by the SBE. The BT Coordinator will conduct online Mentor training during spring and summer 2012 utilizing the North Carolina Mentor Program: Beginning Teacher Guidelines for the 21st Century Professional. Additional teachers will be invited to attend Mentor Training upon the recommendation of their principals in accordance with the Characteristics of Mentors from State Board Policy QP-A-004. The six-hour training will emphasize the revised NC Mentor Standards, the Mentoring Rubric for Self-Assessment, and the Rubric for Evaluating the Mentor Program. The Beginning Teacher Coordinator will sustain professional development for Mentors each quarter through a combination of online and face-to-face opportunities. The online Mentor Training is designed to be self-sustaining and will remain under the direction of the Beginning Teacher Coordinator for future trainings. Only teachers who have been trained in the new mentor standards will be formally assigned to mentor Beginning Teachers.

6) The Mentor and principal will collaborate to support the BT in formulating a Professional Development Plan. The BT, Mentor, and principal will review and sign off on the PDP at the beginning of the year, mid year, and end of year. Additional support may be in the form of the Beginning Teacher Coordinator, Lead Mentors, Mentor Buddies, and other teacher leaders sharing instructional materials, best practices, and relevant information; cultivating professional dialogue; and gathering data to ensure that all Beginning Teachers are receiving appropriate support.

7) Teacher Orientation must occur within two weeks of a teacher’s first day. The principal and/or the principal’s designee are required to provide the Beginning Teacher with training in the NC Educator Evaluation System and the Teacher Training Packet containing: the Teacher Evaluation Calendar, the Rubric for Evaluating North Carolina Teachers, and SBE Policy TCP-C-004. All of these items and supporting documents may be accessed from the Lee County Schools web page.
8) The Professional Development Plan (PDP) will be introduced to Beginning Teachers during the three-day Teacher Orientation. The Beginning Teacher Coordinator will provide an overview of the PDP process and coach Mentors and BTs in formulating SMART goals based upon the Self Assessment using the Rubric for Evaluation of NC Teachers. Throughout the school year, the Mentor will collaborate with the principal to support the professional growth of the BT according to goals outlined in the Professional Development Plan. The BT, Mentor, and principal will review and sign off on the PDP at the beginning of the year, mid year, and end of year.

9) To ensure consistency and sustained support for Beginning Teachers, the Beginning Teacher Coordinator will conduct district-level professional development tailored specifically to address stages of Beginning Teacher growth. BTs are required to attend monthly Beginning Teacher Focus Sessions to become familiar with the school system, learn best practices for management and instruction, and grow into more effective teachers- demonstrating they are learners, leaders, partners with families, and reflective practitioners. All Beginning Teacher Focus Sessions are aligned with the NC Professional Teaching Standards.

10) The Beginning Teacher Coordinator, Mentors, and principals facilitate documentation for Beginning Teachers throughout the licensure process. The principal and Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources maintain a cumulative Beginning Teacher file that contains the PDP and evaluation reports. The Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and principals meet quarterly to discuss Beginning Teacher progress and collect documentation for the personnel files.

11) The Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Licensure Specialist provide for the timely transfer of Beginning Teacher files and documents to successive LEAs upon authorization of the Beginning Teacher.

12) In order to ensure quality, effectiveness, and efficient management of the Beginning Teacher Support Program, the Beginning Teacher Coordinator will collect data from a variety of sources:

   a) BT surveys soliciting feedback of the New Teacher Orientation, Beginning Teacher Focus Sessions, and school-level BT support;

   b) NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey soliciting Beginning Teacher feedback regarding the LCS support systems for new teachers and overall satisfaction;
c) Mentor surveys and Mentor Self Assessment Rubric soliciting feedback of the Mentor Program and growth as a mentor leader;

d) Mentor Training surveys soliciting feedback on the quality of the online training experience and sustained professional development offered online each quarter throughout the school year;

e) Rubric for Self Assessing the Beginning Teacher Program completed annually as a pre- and post-analysis of the program;

f) Five Year Peer Review Process soliciting feedback from surrounding LEAs regarding the LCS program.

The Beginning Teacher Coordinator will collect, analyze, and share the data with various stakeholders including BTs, Mentors, Principals, LEA Administrators, BOE, community groups, etc. in order to create multiple pathways for collaboration and instill a shared vision to better support Beginning Teachers.

13) The BT Support Program and Mentor Plan will be formally presented to the Board of Education annually.

Conclusion:

The Lee County Schools Beginning Teacher Support Program and Mentoring Plan focuses on quality induction for new teachers with an emphasis on mentoring, sustained support, optimal working conditions, and professional growth. The plan is aligned with the NC Professional Teaching Standards, the NC Mentor Standards, the NC Educator Evaluation System, and the Lee County Schools mission, goals, and Race to the Top initiatives. The plan incorporates strategies for not only meeting minimal requirements, but aspiring towards excellence in the growth and support of our 21st century professionals.