NEW TEACHER DEVELOPMENT
Boston Public Schools

Office of Educator Effectiveness
Mentoring and Induction Toolkit for Administrators
Principals and headmasters are essential to the retention and development of excellent teachers. This toolkit aims to support administrators committed to promoting student achievement through effective mentoring and induction programs for teachers.

On behalf of Boston’s children, we thank our principals and headmasters for all that they do.

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Dear Principals and Headmasters,

The Department of Teacher Development and Advancement is excited to present you with this Mentoring and Induction Toolkit, a resource designed to support your efforts orienting and inducting novice and other incoming teachers to your school community and building. We hope that the tools and templates that follow will help you prepare for the school induction efforts throughout the year.

Boston Public Schools has invested significantly in efforts to support beginning teachers, particularly in their first year of teaching. In a recent teachers’ contract, BPS and the Boston Teachers Union collaborated to redesign the mentoring model for new teachers and created the New Teacher Developer Program. Since then, our team of New Teacher Developers has provided mentoring and professional development designed to accelerate the skills and knowledge of our newest teachers.

However, we know from research findings in Boston and other urban school districts that your role as a school leader is paramount to the success of beginning teachers and often the determining factor in whether a teacher will decide to continue teaching: first-year teachers who have school induction programs are approximately twice as likely to remain at their schools at the end of their first year as are first-year teachers with no induction program. And even more importantly, induction has been shown to dramatically improve the skills of new teachers, with second-year teachers even gaining skill levels comparable to those of fourth-year teachers who have not benefited from an induction program.

“As mentor teachers, we remember all the questions and anxieties we had during those first days in the classroom. Our administrators and colleagues were an integral part of quelling our anxiety, answering our questions, providing resources and materials, and steering us toward professional development that would improve our practice. This made us stronger and more confident teachers and set us on the road to building meaningful relationships with both students and colleagues. On behalf of our beginning teachers, we thank you for your commitment to developing our teachers to be the best educators they can be for Boston’s children.”

Best wishes for a terrific school year.

Sincerely,

Boston Public Schools,
New Teacher Developers

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HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

In this document, induction refers to the processes of welcoming and supporting all teachers new to a school’s building and community. These incoming teachers may include recent graduates and career-changers new to the profession, BPS veterans with experience elsewhere in the district, and teachers with experience in other districts or at independent or charter schools. Though the needs of incoming teachers vary, an effective induction program can ensure that all teachers are equipped to help students achieve.

Part One of this toolkit provides background information for principals and headmasters committed to building and strengthening induction programs throughout Boston Public Schools. The section highlights the benefits of investing in induction programs, cites the Massachusetts state standards for such programs, and describes how BPS as a district seeks to meet and exceed those standards.

Certain aspects of induction look the same for everyone: all incoming teachers, experienced or not, must learn the locations of their new school’s photocopiers, the elements of its improvement plan, and so on. An orientation before the school year can meet many of these needs; others must be addressed on an ongoing basis. Part Two of this toolkit addresses the administrator’s role in induction.

Incoming faculty members who are also new to teaching require more intensive support. These novice teachers must adjust simultaneously to the school and to teaching itself. The component of induction meant specifically to help novices hone their teaching skills is called mentoring in this document. Though one-on-one relationships between novice teachers and their mentors can accomplish much of what mentoring entails, effective mentoring must be a whole-school effort. Part Three of this toolkit addresses the administrator’s role in mentoring.

The appendices are comprised of ready-made “reproducibles” such as worksheets and informational handouts.
**Why Induction?**

Effective induction programs contribute to the sense of community and purposeful school culture that students and teachers need in order to excel. They foster growth not only among incoming and novice teachers but also among returning and veteran faculty members, who hone leadership skills and reflect on their own practice as they mentor and collaborate with their colleagues. Finally, they raise retention rates, curbing the cultural, academic, and financial losses associated with high turnover among teachers.

**Induction in Massachusetts**

The 1993 Education Reform Act [Chapter 71, Section 38G] and the Massachusetts Regulations for Educator Licensure [603 CMR 7.00] require districts to provide systems of support for all incoming and novice educators. The regulations place special emphasis on mentoring for novices, even making participation in a mentoring program a prerequisite for the Professional License.

According to DESE, districts are encouraged to develop programs that meet the spirit of the statute and the basic standards included in the regulations while taking into account their own unique needs and characteristics. Each district’s induction program must include, at a minimum, the following components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For all incoming teachers</th>
<th>• An orientation program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For novice teachers</td>
<td>• Assignment to a trained mentor within the first two weeks of teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Assignment of a support team that shall consist of, but not be limited to, the mentor and an administrator qualified to evaluate teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Release time for both the mentor and novice teacher, to be used for regular classroom observations and other mentoring activities</td>
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</table>

[603, CMR 7.12 (2)]

In addition, districts may choose to offer mentoring and other services to experienced teachers who have recently moved to a new content area or grade level or are returning to the classroom after a hiatus from teaching. Teachers in their second and third years of practice may also continue to receive mentoring and other supports if a district so desires.

As a district, Boston Public Schools works to meet or exceed the state standards for induction in a variety of ways. The central office takes the lead in some of these endeavors, while school administrators such as principals and headmasters are responsible for other aspects of induction. The table below illustrates the alignment between certain BPS initiatives and the state standards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State standard for induction</th>
<th>District’s means of meeting standard</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation programs for all incoming teachers</td>
<td>BPS holds New Teacher Institute; school administrators hold site-based orientations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment of each novice teacher to trained mentor within the first two weeks of teaching</td>
<td>BPS and school administrators collaborate to match every novice teacher with New Teacher Developer (NTD). Mentoring continues through teacher’s third year or attainment of permanent status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment of a support team for each novice teacher that shall consist of, but not be limited to, the mentor and an administrator qualified to evaluate teachers</td>
<td>School administrators ensure establishment and maintenance of support teams in year one. In years two and three, support systems change to meet the assessed needs of individual teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Release time for both the mentor and novice teacher, to be used for regular classroom observations and other mentoring activities</td>
<td>School administrators ensure that sufficient release time is scheduled; NTDs facilitate cross-site visits and inform teachers about district-wide professional development opportunities.</td>
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All these efforts and more form what BPS calls collectively its New Teacher Development Program.

**Induction in Boston: the New Teacher Development Program**

A product of collaboration between Boston Public Schools and the Boston Teachers Union, the New Teacher Development Program is designed to complement and support the efforts of individual principals and headmasters throughout the district. Though the program includes a New Teacher Institute that acts as an orientation for all teachers new to BPS, the hallmark of the New Teacher Development Program is its focus on mentoring novice teachers. The Program aims to provide a seamless system of support and development designed to facilitate the growth of beginning teachers through their attainment of permanent status. This system relies in large part on New Teacher Developers, whose roles were piloted in 2005-2006 and then expanded district-wide for the 2006-2007 school year.

**The New Teacher Development Program at a glance:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Mission:</strong></th>
<th>To accelerate the academic success of BPS students through rigorous instructional mentoring to novice teachers.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vision:</strong></td>
<td>The Boston Public Schools’ New Teacher Development Program will be nationally recognized as the premier urban mentoring program by developing and retaining those teachers whose skill and excellence result in optimal student achievement. We will accomplish this goal via rigorous instructional mentoring, modeling, professional development, and advocacy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Components:** | 1. Orientation for incoming teachers  
2. Mentoring for novice teachers  
3. Ongoing professional development for all teachers |

The three key components of the New Teacher Development Program are described below.

1. **Orientation for incoming teachers**

   The district holds a New Teacher Institute for all teachers new to Boston Public Schools in August of each year. In addition, principals and headmasters should hold school-based orientations for all teachers new to their buildings at the beginning of every school year. Resources to aid in planning and running school-based orientations appear in Part Two of this toolkit.

2. **Mentoring for novice teachers**

   Each novice teacher in BPS is paired with a New Teacher Developer (NTD). This mentor may be a full-time NTD, one selected through a central process administered by BPS and the Boston Teachers Union. Full-time NTDs are released from all teaching responsibilities so that they may focus solely on mentoring. Each is assigned to up to 14 novice teachers and works weekly with each one. Full-time NTDs also design and lead professional development for early-career teachers. The NTDs in turn receive intensive professional development from the New Teacher Center and engage in weekly NTD Forums. Full-time NTDs start in mid-August to facilitate New Teacher Institute workshops and assist novice teachers with preparations for the school year.

   Alternatively, a novice BPS teacher may be mentored by a part-time NTD—a full-time teacher who also acts as a mentor within the school building. Each school is responsible for hiring part-time NTDs, who may be assigned up to two novice “mentees” but work best when the ratio is kept at 1:1. Using part-time NTDs instead of full-time ones is suggested at schools with only one or two novice teachers on the faculty. Resources meant to help school administrators establish and maintain effective mentoring programs in their schools appear in Part Three of this toolkit.

   For the 2013-2014 school year, BPS revamped the New Teacher Development Program to ensure that all novices receive the mentoring they need through their second and third years of teaching. Accordingly, there are now two separate pathways to permanent status, each designed to meet unique needs. These are depicted in the chart at the end of this section.
3. Ongoing professional development for all teachers

The New Teacher Development Program also provides professional development opportunities meant to build a network of support and foster ongoing dialogue between novice teachers and veterans. The menu of options helps teachers design effective learning environments, meet the needs of English language learners and other special populations, integrate technology into their practice, promote equity in diverse classrooms, and more. Current offerings include:

**Effective Teaching Seminars:** Taught by New Teacher Developers, these seminars are designed to help first-year teachers cultivate effective instructional strategies, reflect on their practice, and collaborate with colleagues.

**Advancing Practice Course in Assessment and Monitoring Student Progress:** Participants in this course, generally second-year teachers, examine the critical role assessment plays in monitoring student learning and planning effective instruction. The course introduces teachers to a variety of tools that facilitate assessment, student feedback, and data analysis.

**Advancing Practice Course in Differentiating Instruction:** This course helps second-year teachers learn strategies for differentiating instruction while prompting them to examine their beliefs about education and effective teaching. In collaborating with colleagues to plan lessons and analyze data, participants explore the complexities, tensions, and joys of teaching multi-ability and multicultural classes.

**BPS Online Mentoring Program:** BPS Online Mentoring provides online support for early career teachers during their second and third year of teaching. BPS Online Mentoring allows new teachers to build relationships, receive support from an experienced educator, and reflect on their teaching, both online and in person.

**Other opportunities:** These include teacher networks, book studies, and book clubs.

Professional development for first-, second-, and third-year teachers is designed to complement the mentoring they receive, as illustrated in the chart below.
Exemplary Teacher/Cross Site Visits (Years 1 & 2)

These job-embedded professional learning experiences are facilitated by the New Teacher Developers. These visits build the instructional practice of teachers through structured classroom observations, reflections, and planning processes that link their learning to their own teaching contexts.

Induction and Retention Support to Proficiency for New Teachers

**PERMANENT TEACHER**

**MENTORING**
- Educators rated proficient or exemplary
  - BPS ONLINE MENTORING PROGRAM
- Educators rated less than proficient
  - 50 HOURS OF ADDITIONAL MENTORING*

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**
- ADVANCING PRACTICE COURSES
- CROSS-SITE VISITS
- COMPETENCY-BASED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**YR 3**
- BPS ONLINE MENTORING PROGRAM
- 50 HOURS OF ADDITIONAL MENTORING*

**YR 2**
- BPS ONLINE MENTORING PROGRAM
- IN-SCHOOL MENTORS BY CONTENT/GRADE LEVEL

**YR 1**
- FULL TIME NEW TEACHER DEVELOPER
- EFFECTIVE TEACHING SEMINARS
- CROSS-SITE VISIT FACILITATED BY NTD

**NOVICE PROVISIONALS**

*For educators in high-need areas and teachers of color
This section of the toolkit provides administrators with induction resources to use with all incoming faculty and staff, from novice teachers to veterans transferring out of other schools and districts. Of course, incoming teachers benefit from the same administrative practices that help all teachers thrive: fostering collegiality, encouraging family and community engagement, establishing clear expectations, promoting equity and excellence, and valuing lifelong learning and ongoing professional development. This document, however, focuses exclusively on how to meet needs unique to teachers in an unfamiliar work environment.

The section begins with a list of best practices for administrators committed to providing excellent induction experiences for all incoming teachers. It then provides several concrete resources to aid in planning an effective induction program: a timeline of action steps, a checklist for topics to cover at a school-based orientation, and a sample agenda for a two-hour orientation session.

### Best Practices for Administrators

- Be explicit about your goals for school-based induction and invite incoming teachers to share their goals in return.
- Share not only formal information about policies and norms but also informal stories that highlight the history and culture of the school and its community.
- Be proactive: ask incoming teachers “How can I make your life easier?”
- Encourage incoming teachers to be proactive: ensure that they know where to direct questions and concerns.
- Treat induction as an ongoing process, with orientation as only the first step in that process.
- Enlist exceptional veteran teachers, teachers inducted the previous year, grade level and department heads, support staff, specialist teachers, students, families, and community members in your induction efforts.

### Timeline of Action Steps

**June**

- Ask teachers completing their first year in the building to identify veteran faculty members who were especially helpful in welcoming and orienting them to the school and community. Seek out those veterans, thank them for their professionalism and collegiality, and invite their formal or informal involvement in the next year’s induction process.
- Ask teachers completing their first year in the building to help evaluate the induction process as they experienced it and plan the next year’s process accordingly.

**July**

- Assign course loads, classrooms, and rosters equitably so that incoming teachers do not end up in unfairly difficult circumstances.
- Delegate responsibilities for the coming year’s induction process. Consider appointing a New Teacher Coordinator, a welcome committee, student ambassadors, and so on.
August
• Ensure that teachers new to the district attend BPS’s New Teacher Institute. Participate in the Institute’s luncheon.
• Inform incoming teachers when they will have access to the school and their classrooms. Communicate teaching assignments as soon as possible to alleviate anxiety, and—if applicable—distribute keys to the building, classrooms, storage areas, bathrooms, and so on.
• Hold a school-based orientation for all teachers new to the school. Resources for planning orientation sessions appear in the next subsection of this toolkit.

September
• Set aside some time at the first whole-staff meeting to introduce incoming teachers to their new colleagues.
• Hold an off-site event for all faculty members to encourage community-building in a fun, low-pressure context.
• Invite students and families to a reception designed to welcome incoming teachers.
• Establish a routine such as weekly breakfasts or coffee hours that will allow incoming teachers to get to know the school’s leadership team, support staff, returning teachers, students, family and community members, School Site Council members, and one another.
• Ensure that incoming teachers have time set aside at least biweekly to check in with an administrator or designated veteran teacher with any questions or concerns they might have. These check-ins should take place in a “safe” environment unrelated to performance evaluations.
• Review the school’s performance evaluation tools and processes with incoming teachers and invite them to share any questions or concerns they have regarding evaluations.

October–December
• Provide coverage so that incoming teachers can observe their colleagues’ classes. Note that this is helpful not only for novice teachers but also for experienced teachers who are unfamiliar with the school’s cultural, academic, and professional norms. Ensure that observers have time set aside in their schedules for debriefing with the teachers they observe.
• Ask grade-level and department heads to share how their teams have supported and will continue to support incoming teachers. Share each team’s best practices with the others.
• Ask returning teachers to share with their new colleagues some best practices for communicating with the school’s community in an effective and culturally proficient manner.
• Continue biweekly check-ins and any regularly scheduled community events such as breakfasts or coffee hours.

January–May
• Continue check-ins as needed. Continue regularly scheduled community events.
• Remind returning teachers that induction is an ongoing process and ask them to continue supporting teachers new to the building as best they can.
• Remind incoming teachers that induction is an ongoing process and ask them to continue seeking out help, asking questions, and sharing concerns as necessary.
CHECKLIST OF TOPICS FOR SCHOOL-BASED ORIENTATION

THE BIG PICTURE
✓ School’s history, mission, leadership vision, Quality Schools Improvement Plan
✓ School culture/values/philosophy, behavioral norms, approach to discipline
✓ Professional development scope and sequence, instructional leadership team vision

EXPECTATIONS (AND HOW TO MEET THEM)
✓ Legal considerations: mandatory reporting, sexual harassment policies, etc.
✓ Contract provisions: work hours, worker’s compensation, vacation/sick/personal days, etc.
✓ Accountability measures: unit/lesson plan submission, performance evaluation, etc.
✓ Guidelines for instruction: curricula, state standards/frameworks, homework policies, etc.
✓ Approaches to assessment: exam schedules, grading policies, progress reports, report cards, etc.
✓ Classroom management: reporting attendance, dealing with disciplinary infractions, etc.
✓ Students out of class: bathroom visits, calling home, office errands, lunch/free periods, etc.
✓ Supervisory/administrative duties: breakfast, lunch, hallway, buses, etc.
✓ Professional expectations: committee membership, professional development, dress code, etc.
✓ Special occasions: scheduling of events, assemblies, field trips, un/planned absences, substitutes
✓ Emergency protocols: fire drills/evacuation, medical crises, threats/violence/interventions

RESOURCES (AND HOW TO USE THEM)
✓ Student supports: social worker, guidance counselor, nurse, tutors, advisers, support team, etc.
✓ Faculty supports: help with technology, custodial staff, librarian, instructional coach, etc.
✓ Family engagement: contact information, translation support, telephone, conference room, etc.
✓ Special populations: IEPs, paraprofessionals, special education coordinator, ELL supports, etc.
✓ Outside the classroom: contact information for extracurricular activities and community partners
✓ Technological resources: computer lab, Internet policies, audiovisual equipment, email, etc.
✓ Material resources: classroom supplies, textbooks, reimbursement, copiers, printers, library
✓ Logistical information: parking, keys, school map, school calendar, bell schedule, secure storage
✓ Faculty/staff roster: names, photographs, positions, contact information, location in building
✓ Welcome package: materials with school logo, student letters/artwork, local lunch spots, etc.
### SAMPLE AGENDA FOR TWO-HOUR ORIENTATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DURATION</th>
<th>CONTENT</th>
<th>MATERIALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td><strong>ICEBREAKER</strong></td>
<td><strong>FOR YOU</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Conduct a group whip-around. Ask each participant to share his or her name, teaching assignment, and reasons for being drawn to the field of education and to your school.</td>
<td>• Note-taking supplies if desired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>FOR TEACHERS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td><strong>THE BIG PICTURE</strong></td>
<td><strong>FOR YOU</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Discuss the history of the school and its community as well as your own professional history.</td>
<td>• Note-taking supplies if desired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Explain your vision for the school, for its students and teachers, and for the upcoming school year.</td>
<td><strong>FOR TEACHERS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ask incoming teachers to share their perspectives on this vision and mission. What resonates with their prior experiences? What aspects of the vision and mission do they think will be the most challenging to realize?</td>
<td>• School’s vision or mission statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>FOR YOU</strong></td>
<td>• Whole School Improvement Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Note-taking supplies if desired</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td><strong>EXPECTATIONS</strong></td>
<td><strong>FOR TEACHERS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use the checklist above to discuss expectations for incoming teachers in their first days of school and beyond.</td>
<td>• Individual class/room/duty assignments if not already distributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ask the group to share their own expectations, questions, and concerns.</td>
<td>• If applicable, hall passes and forms for scheduling events/absences/etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Keep in mind that some but not all of the group may have attended BPS’s New Teacher Institute and that some but not all may have prior teaching experience. Consider holding a supplementary orientation session designed especially for incoming teachers with no teaching experience. Resources for inducting novice teachers appear in the Part Three of this toolkit.</td>
<td>• Staff handbook and any other documentation of school policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>FOR YOU</strong></td>
<td>• State curriculum frameworks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Checklist above</td>
<td>• Sample lesson/unit plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Computer and projector to show grading/attendance software, etc.</td>
<td>• Performance evaluation form(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Note-taking supplies if desired</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DURATION</td>
<td>CONTENT</td>
<td>MATERIALS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>RESOURCES • Use the checklist above to discuss resources that incoming teachers can use in their first days and beyond. • If the session is held at your school site, take the group on a tour of the building. • Ask incoming teachers to share any relevant questions and concerns.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FOR TEACHERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• School map, calendar, and bell schedule • If applicable, keys and parking passes • If applicable, forms for referring students to support team, requesting supplies/reimbursement, etc. • Faculty/staff roster • List of extracurricular activities and community partners • If desired, welcome package</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>ONGOING INDUCTION PLAN • Communicate your plan for continuing to support incoming teachers throughout the school year. • Solicit requests from incoming teachers regarding what continued supports they would like provided.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>FOR TEACHERS</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• If applicable, schedule or outline of year-long induction process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>CLOSING • Set a date and time for a next gathering. This may be a community breakfast, a coffee hour with the school’s leadership team, a reception with students and family members, or any other event. • Reiterate your excitement for the upcoming school year and the role that incoming teachers will play in realizing your school’s mission and vision.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FOR TEACHERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Personal calendars</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART THREE: MENTORING

This section of the toolkit focuses on meeting needs specific to novice teachers. Of course, novice teachers are also incoming teachers, and they need all the supports detailed in the previous section in order to thrive in their new work environment. In addition, however, they need to develop their teaching practice. That need is the focus of this section.

The section begins with a list of guiding principles to keep in mind throughout the mentoring process. It then breaks down the responsibilities of site administrators in mentoring novice teachers. Finally, it reproduces the previous section’ timeline of action steps for induction, this time alongside another column devoted specifically to mentoring.

Guiding Principles for Mentoring

• It is natural for novice teachers to struggle; what is essential is that they learn from their mistakes and respond effectively to feedback.
• Novice teachers and their supporters should be proactive rather than waiting for problems to arise before acting.
• Effective mentors provide professional coaching, not just emotional support, for novices.
• The mentoring relationship should be safe, confidential, and distinct from official performance evaluation processes.
• Mentors need training and support to succeed in their new roles just as novice teachers do.
• Mentoring does not end after a teacher’s first year; it is an ongoing process.

An Administrator’s Responsibilities

Because this toolkit is meant specifically for principals and headmasters, it focuses on the administrator’s role in novice teacher development. This role involves five major tasks, which are listed here and detailed more fully in the subsections that follow.

• Utilizing district resources and initiatives such as full-time NTDs and PD seminars
• Identifying potential part-time NTDs and support team members within the school
• Working to ensure effective relationships between novice teachers and their mentors
• Leading each novice’s support team and providing direct feedback on teaching practice
• Continually evaluating, reporting on, and improving the school-based mentoring program

Note: Depending on a school’s leadership structure and the number of novice teachers on its faculty, many aspects of these tasks may be handled by a Mentor Coordinator instead of by a principal or headmaster directly. The Mentor Coordinator could be another administrator or a teacher who is released from certain teaching responsibilities and/or provided with a stipend. Nevertheless, the school leader must take an active role in teacher development. At a minimum, this role involves meeting regularly with each novice’s support team, ensuring that all formal evaluations are performed by a qualified administrator, and maintaining a school culture conducive to professional growth for all teachers. For the sake of simplicity, the suggestions below are written as if principals and headmasters will be working without a separate Mentor Coordinator.
**Utilizing district resources**

State guidelines stipulate that training for mentor teachers occur primarily at the district level. Accordingly, BPS maintains a cohort of full-time New Teacher Developers (NTDs) who are available to mentor novice teachers across the district. In most cases, novice teachers in your building will be mentored by these full-time NTDs. (Less frequently, a novice will be paired with a part-time NTD instead. Guidelines for choosing part-time NTDs appear under the heading “identifying potential mentors” below.)

It is your responsibility to ensure that every novice teacher on your faculty is matched with a full- or part-time NTD within the first two weeks of each school year. Matches should not be arranged before the year begins because the personal and professional needs of both mentors and mentees must be considered during the process. Contact Tamika Estwick at the New Teacher Development Program office (testwick@boston.k12.ma.us) for more information on matching novice teachers with mentors.

In addition, administrators should encourage NTDs and their mentees to attend district-wide training and professional development seminars throughout the school year and summer. To maximize the benefits of such offerings, stay informed and tailor your school-based supports to complement the district-provided ones.

**Identifying potential mentors**

When full-time NTDs are not available, novice teachers are mentored by part-time NTDs selected by school leaders on a site-by-site basis. In addition, novice teachers should be assigned not only a formal mentor but also a school-based support team. This team is led by the principal or headmaster and by the novice’s formal mentor, but it may also include other experienced teachers in the building, recently retired faculty members, specialists such as literacy coaches, and even external parties such as union representatives and professional development providers. Administrators should therefore be adept at identifying experienced faculty and staff members who would make effective NTDs and support team members for novice teachers. It is important that these potential supports be in place—that relevant personnel be recruited, trained, and held in reserve—at all times so that they are ready immediately whenever a novice teacher joins the faculty.

Keep in mind that excellent teachers of children are not necessarily effective mentors for adults. **Appendix A** in this toolkit is a worksheet meant to help you identify potential mentors and support team members on your faculty. The worksheet could also be distributed among faculty, staff, and even students to enable a more democratic selection process.

**Cultivating effective mentoring relationships**

Administrators must support mentors’ work in their buildings if it is truly to benefit novice teachers and their students. Some aspects of this support are logistical: ensuring that mentors’ schedules are compatible with their mentees’, providing release time or other forms of compensation or recognition for mentors’ services, and granting mentors access to documents like performance evaluations, curriculum maps, school improvement plans, and MCAS data. Other important responsibilities include meeting regularly with mentors and mentees, helping pairs determine the scope and sequence of their activities for the year, and sharing feedback on novices’ teaching practice with their mentors.

**Appendix B** in this toolkit details the roles and responsibilities of mentors and mentees in novice teacher development. **Appendix C** is meant to help mentoring pairs focus their work on the Massachusetts Professional Standards for Teachers. Both appendices are ready-made reproducibles that can be distributed to novice teachers and their mentors directly.
Coaching and supporting novice teachers

Mentoring novice teachers, like inducting incoming teachers, should be a whole-school effort. The site administrator’s role in this effort is threefold: first, establishing a culture of collaboration and professional growth throughout the school; second, heading each novice teacher’s support team; and third, personally supporting and evaluating all novice teachers in the building.

Suggestions for support teams appear in handout form as Appendix D. Other ways in which administrators can engage directly in the process of novice teacher development include:

- Ensuring reasonable working conditions: for example, assigning a moderate teaching load and making novice teachers’ duty assignments their meetings with their NTDs
- Taking novice teachers’ classes so that they can observe their colleagues
- Suggesting experienced faculty members whom novices might observe
- Arranging regular meetings at which all novices in the building can get together and support one another
- Encouraging novice teachers to focus on one or two important skills at a time rather than trying to master everything at once
- Helping teachers reflect not only on challenges but also on successes—and the reasons for those successes
- Explaining in detail the performance evaluation process you will be using with teachers
- Observing and providing concrete, focused feedback on a regular basis
- Setting clear expectations for performance and growth at each stage of the school year

Appendix E in this toolkit is an article that support teams might use to inform their planning for the year. Appendix F is an article summarizing the role of the principal or headmaster in novice teacher development.

Evaluating and improving mentoring programs

The state requires districts to submit the following data on their mentoring programs: program activities, number and complete list of beginning teachers served, number and complete list of trained mentors, number of classroom observations made by mentors, number of hours mentors and beginning teachers spend with each other, hiring and retention rates for beginning teachers and participant satisfaction. Data such as these will also benefit administrators seeking continually to strengthen their schools’ mentoring practices. School leaders should therefore ensure that mentors and mentees in their buildings both document and reflect upon their activities throughout the year.

Weekly logs should be kept to record how many hours are devoted to various types of mentoring activities. In addition, all relevant personnel—novice teachers, mentors, other support team members, administrators, and perhaps students—should be surveyed or interviewed regarding the perceived impact of the mentoring program, their levels of satisfaction with the program, and their assessments of its strengths and weaknesses. The resulting data, combined with data from observations and performance evaluations if desired, should be used in annual program evaluations designed to inform ongoing improvements to mentoring at your school. The annual BPS New Teacher Induction Survey is distributed in May-June, we ask that administrator and beginning teachers provide us with feedback to enhance the quality of the program.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time frame</th>
<th>Induction (for all incoming teachers)</th>
<th>Mentoring (for novice teachers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| June       | • Ask teachers completing their first year in the building to identify veteran faculty members who were especially helpful in welcoming and orienting them to the school and community. Seek out those veterans, thank them for their professionalism and collegiality, and invite their formal or informal involvement in the next year’s induction process.  
• Ask teachers completing their first year in the building to help evaluate the induction process as they experienced it and plan the next year’s process accordingly. | • Conduct a program evaluation of the year’s mentoring processes using data from observations, surveys, interviews, meeting minutes, etc.  
• Ensure that a cohort of trained veterans is on hand to serve as part-time NTDs or support team members for any novice teachers who join the faculty the next fall. Contact BPS’s New Teacher Development Program office if additional training for your faculty is required. |
| July       | • Assign course loads, classrooms, and rosters equitably so that incoming teachers do not end up in unfairly difficult circumstances.  
• Delegate responsibilities for the coming year’s induction process. Consider appointing a New Teacher Coordinator, a welcome committee, student ambassadors, and so on. | • Use the conclusions of the program evaluation to plan the next school year’s mentoring program.  
• When assigning schedules and duties, do your best to ensure that novice teachers have time for mentoring and support team meetings. |
| August     | • Ensure that teachers new to the district attend BPS’s New Teacher Institute. Participate in the Institute’s luncheon.  
• Inform incoming teachers when they will have access to the school and their classrooms. Communicate teaching assignments as soon as possible to alleviate anxiety, and—if applicable—distribute keys to the building, classrooms, storage areas, bathrooms, and so on.  
• Hold a school-based orientation for all teachers new to the school. | • Supplement your school-based orientation with a special meeting for all incoming novice teachers. Arrange for such meetings to recur regularly during the school year—perhaps once a month or so. |
**TIMELINE OF ACTION STEPS (Cont’d)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time frame</th>
<th>Induction (for all incoming teachers)</th>
<th>Mentoring (for novice teachers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| September  | • Set aside some time at the first whole-staff meeting to introduce incoming teachers to their new colleagues.  
• Hold an off-site event for all faculty members to encourage community-building in a fun, low-pressure context.  
• Invite students and families to a reception designed to welcome incoming teachers.  
• Establish a routine such as weekly breakfasts or coffee hours that will allow incoming teachers to get to know the school’s leadership team, support staff, returning teachers, students, family and community members, School Site Council members, and one another.  
• Ensure that incoming teachers have time set aside at least biweekly to check in with an administrator or designated veteran teacher with any questions or concerns they might have. These check-ins should take place in a “safe” environment unrelated to performance evaluations.  
• Review the school’s performance evaluation tools and processes with incoming teachers and invite them to share any questions or concerns they have regarding evaluations. | • Ensure that each novice teacher is matched with a mentor (part- or full-time NTD) and provided with a support team within the first two weeks of school. Contact BPS’s New Teacher Development Program office for help with this if necessary. If using part-time NTDs, decide how they will be compensated or accommodated in exchange for their mentoring services.  
• Establish a schedule whereby mentors and mentees meet at least once a week and each novice’s support team (including you) meets regularly—perhaps once every two weeks or so.  
• Establish ways of documenting mentoring activities: weekly logs, a system for keeping support team meeting minutes, etc.  
• Encourage all mentors and mentees to take full advantage of district-sponsored professional development seminars and other training and resources.  
• Continue to meet regularly with all novice teachers as a group. |
| Time frame          | Induction (for all incoming teachers)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Mentoring (for novice teachers)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| October – December  | • Provide coverage so that incoming teachers can observe their colleagues’ classes. Note that this is helpful not only for novice teachers but also for experienced teachers who are unfamiliar with the school’s cultural, academic, and professional norms. Ensure that observers have time set aside in their schedules for debriefing with the teachers they observe. • Ask grade-level and department heads to share how their teams have supported and will continue to support incoming teachers. Share each team’s best practices with the others. • Ask returning teachers to share with their new colleagues some best practices for communicating with the school’s community in an effective and culturally proficient manner. • Continue biweekly check-ins and any regularly scheduled community events such as breakfasts or coffee hours. | • Observe novice teachers regularly and provide them and their mentors with honest, concrete feedback designed to help them master the Massachusetts Professional Standards for Teaching. • Complete novices’ performance evaluations in a timely and transparent manner and share the results with their mentors. • Continue to meet regularly with each support team. • Continue to meet regularly with all novice teachers as a group. |
| January – May       | • Continue check-ins as needed. • Continue regularly scheduled community events.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | • Continue to observe and provide formative feedback to novice teachers. • Continue to meet regularly with each support team. • Continue to meet regularly with all novice teachers as a group.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
APPENDIX A: IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL MENTORS

Directions: As you read each descriptor, jot down the names of 2-3 teachers on the faculty who come to mind. When done, circle any names that appear repeatedly.

Exhibits excellent content knowledge: ______________________________________________________

Is reflective and purposeful in teaching: _____________________________________________________

Embraces a variety of teaching styles and methods: ____________________________________________

Teaches to a variety of learning styles and needs: ______________________________________________

Fulfills professional responsibilities to colleagues: _____________________________________________

Utilizes the district’s professional resources: _________________________________________________

Knows the school’s community well: _______________________________________________________

Is willing and able to invest time in others: __________________________________________________

Is able to maintain a confidential relationship: ________________________________________________

Is energetic and friendly: __________________________________________________________________

[fill in a descriptor of your choice below]

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX B: THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

The mentor’s responsibilities:

- Provide instructional support. Use the Massachusetts Professional Standards for Teachers to craft a “curriculum” that helps novices master one or two skills at a time over the course of a school year.
- Provide professional support. Novice teachers need to be informed of school policies and procedures, particularly regarding standards and procedures for teacher evaluation. Mentors should be a resource for information on evaluation and professional practice.
- Provide personal support. Mentors can help relieve the stress on first-time teachers by introducing them to other faculty members and helping them put problems in perspective.
- Maintain a confidential relationship with every mentee. It is important that novices be able to discuss problems openly with their mentors so that any issues are addressed and resolved in a timely and informed manner.
- Serve as a liaison. Mentors should have the knowledge and skills to refer mentees to other teachers and educational resources and expose them to a variety of perspectives and instructional practices both within the mentee’s school and at other school sites.
- Serve as a resource. Inform mentees of opportunities and supports provided by various professional associations, including the BPS New Teacher Development Program office.

The mentee’s responsibilities:

- Play an active role in the mentoring relationship. Offer critical reflections on your practice and help to identify areas in which assistance is needed.
- Seek out help. Utilize your support team and other colleagues as resources, be forthright in communicating classroom issues, and remain open to feedback in order to develop as a professional.
- Observe experienced teachers at work. Adhere to a schedule that allows you to observe a variety of experienced teachers, and keep a log to record and reflect on the diversity of their pedagogical methods.
- Participate regularly in programs organized for beginning teachers. These include peer support groups, professional development seminars, and beginning teacher workshops.
- Keep a running record of how you spend your time with your mentor for program evaluation purposes.

Suggested activities for mentoring pairs:

- Co-planning lessons and co-teaching classes
- Observing each other employing various teaching strategies
- Completing mock performance evaluations for each other
- Planning for special events (open house, field trips, etc.)
- Conferencing with students and families together
- Analyzing and grading student work together
- Bring both challenges and successes to the support team for discussion
APPENDIX C: ALIGNING MENTORING ACTIVITIES TO TEACHING STANDARDS

Mentors and mentees may use these worksheets in a variety of ways. Suggestions:

- Either together or separately, go through the worksheets noting which indicators the novice seems comfortable with and which are areas of concern. Use the results to determine the focus of future mentoring activities.
- Observe an exemplary veteran teacher. Focusing only on one standard at a time, note on the relevant worksheet what the experienced teacher does to indicate proficiency in meeting the standard being studied. The novice teacher may do this alone or with a mentor.
- Have the mentor observe the mentee. Focusing only on one standard at a time, note on the relevant worksheet what the novice teacher does or does not do to indicate proficiency in meeting the standard being studied.
- Use the worksheets to brainstorm strategies for attaining proficiency in each indicator. Work these strategies into daily planning and practice a few at a time.

Standard I: Curriculum, Planning, and Assessment. The teacher promotes the learning and growth of all students by providing high-quality and coherent instruction, designing and administering authentic and meaningful student assessments, analyzing student performance and growth data, using this data to improve instruction, providing students with constructive feedback on an ongoing basis, and continuously refining learning objectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators of Proficiency</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and the pedagogy it requires by consistently engaging students in learning experiences that enable them to acquire complex knowledge and skills in the subject.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Demonstrates knowledge of the developmental levels of students in the classroom and the different ways these students learn by providing differentiated learning experiences that enable all students to progress toward meeting intended outcomes.</td>
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<td>• Designs units of instruction with measurable outcomes and challenging tasks requiring higher-order thinking skills that enable students to learn the knowledge and skills defined in state standards/local curricula.</td>
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<td>• Develops well-structured lessons with challenging, measurable objectives and appropriate student engagement strategies, pacing, sequence, activities, materials, resources, technologies, and grouping.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indicators of Proficiency</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Designs and administers a variety of informal and formal methods and assessments, including common interim assessments, to measure each student’s learning, growth, and progress toward achieving state/local standards.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Organizes and analyzes results from a variety of assessments to determine progress toward intended outcomes and uses these findings to adjust practice and identify and/or implement appropriate differentiated interventions and enhancements for students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Individually and with colleagues, draws appropriate conclusions from a thorough analysis of a wide range of assessment data to improve student learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Regularly shares with appropriate colleagues (e.g., general education, special education, and English learner staff) conclusions about student progress and seeks feedback from them about instructional or assessment practices that will support improved student learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Based on assessment results, provides descriptive feedback and engages students and families in constructive conversation that focuses on how students can improve their performance.</td>
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**GENERAL NOTES, OBSERVATIONS, OR PLANS FOR ATTAINING PROFICIENCY IN STANDARD I:**
**Standard II: Teaching All Students.** The teacher promotes the learning and growth of all students through instructional practices that establish high expectations, create a safe and effective classroom environment, and demonstrate cultural proficiency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators of Proficiency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Consistently defines high expectations for the quality of student work and the perseverance and effort required to produce it; often provides exemplars, rubrics, and guided practice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Consistently uses instructional practices that are likely to motivate and engage most students during the lesson.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Uses appropriate practices, including tiered instruction and scaffolds, to accommodate differences in learning styles, needs, interests, and levels of readiness, including those of students with disabilities and English learners.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Uses rituals, routines, and appropriate responses that create and maintain a safe physical and intellectual environment where students take academic risks and most behaviors that interfere with learning are prevented.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Develops students’ interpersonal, group, and communication skills and provides opportunities for students to learn in groups with diverse peers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Consistently creates learning experiences that guide students to identify their strengths, interests, and needs; ask for support when appropriate; take academic risks; and challenge themselves to learn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Consistently uses strategies and practices that are likely to enable students to demonstrate respect for and affirm their own and others’ differences related to background, identity, language, strengths, and challenges.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Anticipates and responds appropriately to conflicts or misunderstandings arising from differences in backgrounds, languages, and identities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indicators of Proficiency</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Clearly communicates and consistently enforces specific standards for student work,</td>
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<tr>
<td>effort, and behavior.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Effectively models and reinforces ways that students can master challenging material</td>
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<tr>
<td>through effective effort, rather than having to depend on innate ability.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Consistently adapts instruction, materials, and assessments to make challenging</td>
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<tr>
<td>material accessible to all students, including English learners and students with</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disabilities.</td>
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**GENERAL NOTES, OBSERVATIONS, OR PLANS FOR ATTAINING PROFICIENCY IN STANDARD II:**
**Standard III: Family and Community Engagement.** The teacher promotes the learning and growth of all students through effective partnerships with families, caregivers, community members, and organizations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators of Proficiency</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Uses a variety of strategies to support every family to participate actively and appropriately in the classroom and school community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Consistently provides parents with clear, user-friendly expectations for student learning and behavior.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Regularly updates parents on curriculum throughout the year and suggests strategies for supporting learning at school and home, including appropriate adaptation for students with disabilities or limited English proficiency.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Regularly uses two-way communication with families about student performance and learning and responds promptly and carefully to communications from families.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Always communicates respectfully with families and demonstrates understanding of and sensitivity to different families’ home language, culture, and values.</td>
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**GENERAL NOTES, OBSERVATIONS, OR PLANS FOR ATTAINING PROFICIENCY IN STANDARD III:**
**Standard IV: Professional Culture.** The teacher promotes the learning and growth of all students through ethical, culturally proficient, skilled, and collaborative practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators of Proficiency</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Regularly reflects on the effectiveness of lessons, units, and interactions with students, both individually and with colleagues, and uses insights gained to improve practice and student learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Proposes challenging, measurable professional practice, team, and student learning goals that are based on thorough self-assessment and analysis of student learning data.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Consistently seeks out and applies, when appropriate, ideas for improving practice from supervisors, colleagues, professional development activities, and other resources to gain expertise and/or assume different instruction and leadership responsibilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Consistently and effectively collaborates with colleagues in such work as developing standards-based units, examining student work, analyzing student performance, and planning appropriate intervention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Consistently contributes relevant ideas and expertise to planning and decision making at the school, department, and/or grade level.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Within and beyond the classroom, consistently reinforces schoolwide behavior and learning expectations for all students, and contributes to their learning by sharing responsibility for meeting their needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Demonstrates sound judgment reflecting integrity, honesty, fairness, and trustworthiness and protects student confidentiality appropriately.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consistently fulfills professional responsibilities; is consistently punctual and reliable with paperwork, duties, and assignments; and is rarely late or absent from school.</td>
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**GENERAL NOTES, OBSERVATIONS, OR PLANS FOR ATTAINING PROFICIENCY IN STANDARD IV:**
APPENDIX D: THE SUPPORT TEAM

The support team’s responsibilities:

- Provide team support for the novice teacher that supplements what the one-on-one mentoring relationship provides.
- Meet regularly with the novice teacher to answer questions, address concerns, and provide a range of perspectives wider than what a single mentor can provide.
- Ensure that both the novice teacher and the mentor understand the criteria and process used for performance evaluations and are aware of the school’s expectations for them.
- Ensure that the novice teacher is aware of the professional development and training she or he will receive—including participation in courses, conferences, and peer support groups.
- Help facilitate the mentoring relationship both logistically and substantively.
- Monitor the progress of the mentoring relationship and help mentoring pairs with any challenges they face over the course of the school year.

Suggested activities for support teams:

- Read and discuss case studies and articles such as those included here as Appendices E-F
- View and discuss student work and means of assessing it formatively and summatively
- Help mentoring pairs brainstorm ways in which to address MA teaching standards
- Role-play difficult situations such as arise in classes and in conferences with families
First-year teaching is a difficult challenge. Equally challenging is figuring out ways to support and assist beginning teachers as they enter the profession. Since 1988 the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project has been working to support the efforts of new teachers. After supporting nearly 1,500 new teachers, a number of developmental phases have been noted. While not every new teacher goes through this exact sequence, these phases are very useful in helping everyone involved—administrators, other support personnel, and teacher education faculty—in the process of supporting new teachers. These teachers move through several phases from anticipation, to survival, to disillusionment, to rejuvenation, to reflection; then back to anticipation. Here’s a look at the stages through which new teachers move during that crucial first year. New teacher quotations are taken from journal entries and end-of-the-year program evaluations.

**Anticipation Phase**

The anticipation phase begins during the student teaching portion of pre-service preparation. The closer student teachers get to completing their assignment, the more excited and anxious they become about their first teaching position. They tend to romanticize the role of the teacher and the position. New teachers enter with a tremendous commitment to making a difference and a somewhat idealistic view of how to accomplish their goals. “I was elated to get the job but terrified about going from the simulated experience of student teaching to being the person completely in charge.” This feeling of excitement carries new teachers through the first few weeks of school.

**Survival Phase**

The first month of school is very overwhelming for new teachers. They are learning a lot and at a very rapid pace. Beginning teachers are instantly bombarded with a variety of problems and situations they had not anticipated. Despite teacher preparation programs, new teachers are caught off guard by the realities of teaching. “I thought I’d be busy, something like student teaching, but this is crazy. I’m feeling like I’m constantly running. It’s hard to focus on other aspects of my life.”

During the survival phase, most new teachers struggle to keep their heads above water. They become very focused and consumed with the day-to-day routine of teaching. There is little time to stop and reflect on their experiences. It is not uncommon for new teachers to spend up to seventy hours a week on schoolwork.

Particularly overwhelming is the constant need to develop curriculum. Veteran teachers routinely reuse excellent lessons and units from the past. New teachers, still uncertain of what will really work, must develop their lessons for the first time. Even depending on unfamiliar prepared curriculum such as textbooks is enormously time consuming.

“I thought there would be more time to get everything done. It’s like working three jobs: 7:30-2:30; 2:30-6:30, with more time spent in the evening and on weekends.” Although tired and surprised by the amount of work, first-year teachers usually maintain a tremendous amount of energy and commitment during the survival phase, harboring hope that soon the turmoil will subside.

**Disillusionment Phase**

After six to eight weeks of nonstop work and stress, new teachers enter the disillusionment phase. The intensity and length of the phase varies among new teachers. The extensive time commitment, the realization that things are probably not going as smoothly as they want and low morale contribute to this period of disenchantment. New teachers begin questioning both their commitment and their competence. Many new teachers get sick during this phase.

Compounding an already difficult situation is the fact that new teachers are confronted with several new events during this time frame. They are faced with back-to-school night, parent conferences, and their first formal evaluation by the site administrator. Each of these important milestones places an already vulnerable individual in a very stressful situation.

Back-to-school night means giving a speech to parents about plans for the year that are most likely still unclear in the new teacher’s mind. Some parents are uneasy when they realize the teacher is just beginning and many times pose questions or make demands that intimidate a new teacher.

Parent conferences require new teachers to be highly organized, articulate, tactful and prepared to confer with parents about each student’s progress. This type of communication with parents can be awkward and difficult for a beginning teacher. New teachers generally begin with the idea that parents are partners in the learning process and are not prepared for parents’ concerns or criticisms. These criticisms hit new teachers at a time of waning self-esteem.

This is also the first time that new teachers are formally evaluated by their principal. They are, for the most part, uncertain about the process itself and anxious about their own competence and ability to perform. Developing and presenting a “showpiece” lesson is time-consuming and stressful.
During the disillusionment phase classroom management is a major source of distress. “I thought I’d be focusing more on curriculum and less on classroom management and discipline. I’m stressed because I have some very problematic students who are low academically, and I think about them every second my eyes are open.”

At this point, the accumulated stress of the first-year teacher, coupled with months of excessive time allotted to teaching, often brings complaints from family members and friends. This is a very difficult and challenging phase for new entries into the profession. They express self-doubt, have lower self-esteem and question their professional commitment. In fact, getting through this phase may be the toughest challenge they face as a new teacher.

Rejuvenation

The rejuvenation phase is characterized by a slow rise in the new teacher’s attitude toward teaching. It generally begins in January. Having a winter break makes a tremendous difference for new teachers. It allows them to resume a more normal lifestyle, with plenty of rest, food, exercise, and time for family and friends. This vacation is the first opportunity that new teachers have for organizing materials and planning curriculum. It is a time for them to sort through materials that have accumulated and prepare new ones. This breath of fresh air gives novice teachers a broader perspective with renewed hope.

They seem ready to put past problems behind them. A better understanding of the system, an acceptance of the realities of teaching, and a sense of accomplishment help to rejuvenate new teachers. Through their experiences in the first half of the year, beginning teachers gain new coping strategies and skills to prevent, reduce, or manage many problems they are likely to encounter in the second half of the year. Many feel a great sense of relief that they have made it through the first half of the year. During this phase, new teachers focus on curriculum development, long-term planning and teaching strategies.

“I’m really excited about my story writing center, although the organization of it has at times been haphazard. Story writing has definitely revived by journals.” The rejuvenation phase tends to last into spring with many ups and downs along the way. Toward the end of this phase, new teachers begin to raise concerns about whether they can get everything done prior to the end of school. They also wonder how their students will do on the tests, questioning once again their own effectiveness as teachers. “I’m fearful of these big tests. Can you be fired if your kids do poorly? I don’t know enough about them to know what I haven’t taught, and I’m sure it’s a lot.”

Reflection

The reflection phase beginning in May is a particularly invigorating time for first-year teachers. Reflecting back over the year, they highlight events that were successful and those that were not. They think about the various changes that they plan to make the following year in management, curriculum and teaching strategies. The end is in sight, and they have almost made it; but more importantly, a vision emerges as to what their second year will look like, which brings them to a new phase of anticipation. “I think that for next year I’d like to start the letter puppets earlier in the year to introduce the kids to more letters.”

It is critical that we assist new teachers and ease the transition from student teacher to full-time professional. Recognizing the phases new teachers go through gives us a framework within which we can begin to design support programs to make the first year of teaching a more positive experience for our new colleagues.
Role of the Principal In Beginning Teacher Induction

January 2011

Anne Watkins, Senior Director, Teacher Induction

While principals have focused primarily on the operations and management aspects of running a school, there has been a recent shift toward the more powerful role of educational leader. The positive impact of a leader who creates a caring learning community focused on student success is evident to all, including beginning teachers. Research reveals that inadequate support from school administration is one of the three most often reported causes of a new teacher’s decision to leave the profession (Richard Ingersoll). Susan M. Johnson’s and Sarah Birkeland’s study “Project on the Next Generation of Teachers” reports: “If given the choice between a school where they could earn a significantly higher salary and one with better working conditions, teachers would choose the school with better working conditions by a margin of 3 to 1.” Principals who are knowledgeable about the issues affecting new teachers, proactive in supporting them, and committed to professional growth do make a significant difference.

Principals also play a critical role in induction by setting the stage for beginning teacher and mentor success, and because new teachers are often placed in classrooms teaching students who most need optimal learning experiences, it is even more important that principals understand and support induction. This practice brief offers ideas and possible ways the principal can support teacher induction.

Principals can:

• Be aware of the challenges beginning teachers face. NTC has identified six “attitudinal phases” most beginning teachers experience during their first year of teaching—anticipation, survival, disillusionment, rejuvenation, reflection, and anticipation. Like mentors, principals who know these phases and when they occur can tailor their support throughout the school year. By noticing how they coincide with specific events and responsibilities, such as parent conferences and the grading cycle, a principal can be prepared to better meet the needs of their beginning teachers. Regularly conferring with mentors and beginning teachers about the support needed can help them thrive.

• Remind the staff that the new teacher is still learning. In the past, there has been a perception that teachers graduate from pre-service programs as fully-formed teachers, prepared for all the responsibilities they will face. Challenges were not talked about and teachers were expected to keep their mistakes to themselves. Today we have begun to embrace the norm of life long learning for all educators. Principals can reinforce this by articulating it explicitly—to all staff, especially new teachers. This can provide a culture of safety in which to take risks and embrace learning throughout their professional lives.

• Value and articulate the vitality that new teachers bring to their school. New teachers can be hesitant to share their thinking publicly—during staff meetings or in conversations with principals—heeding the adage that new teachers should be quiet during their first years. Building a community where every person is valued, including the newest members of the staff—their understanding of current innovations in teaching strategies and thinking, competence with new technology, and their energy and optimism—goes a long way to make a new teacher feel appreciated and respected.

• Understand the components of an effective induction program and integrating it into the overall school goals and professional development plans. Truly effective and sustained induction programs are integral to schools and districts. A principal’s ability to explain the components of induction to staff, parents, and the school community and see induction as part of the infrastructure of the school strengthens support for novice teachers. By communicating regularly with district induction leaders, principals can stay current with new requirements, guidelines, and protocols.

• Know the role of the mentor. In the past, and still in many places, a mentor assumed the role of “buddy”, lending an empathetic ear and offering a kind and supportive word. While emotional support is important in building
trust, to accelerate beginning teacher growth, mentors must do much more. Instructional mentors focus their support on teaching and learning. Mentors must have a clear picture of effective teaching, be able to talk about best pedagogical practice and content, balance beginning teachers’ immediate concerns and long term growth, and collaboratively build inquiry and reflection as a part of best practice. The principal who knows the strategies and tools that comprise mentor and beginning teacher work—classroom observations, analyzing student work, accessing school and community resources, planning lessons—avoids misunderstandings and aligns support. Knowing the role and responsibilities of both mentor and new teacher sends a clear message of support and respect.

Site policies, structures and procedures that support beginning teachers

There are numerous ways a principal can model support for beginning teachers.

- Introduce new teachers to their colleagues. Principals might show new teachers around the school and hold a welcome lunch.

- An initial conversation about philosophy, expectations of student learning, clarifying goals, strengths and areas for focus can lay the foundation for a collegial relationship. Discussing goals, strengths, and challenges helps the principal discover how best to support each new teacher. The principal can explain expectations, the evaluation process, and timeline. As much as possible principals can align the teacher’s assignment to their strengths, keep the class sizes as small as possible, and keep the most challenging students from being disproportionately placed in beginning teachers’ classrooms. Holding regular meetings with new teachers builds trust and support, provides critical information, and allows for necessary questions.

- According to recent MetLife Surveys of the American Teacher, most new teachers say they are very satisfied with their relationships with other teachers. Teachers who are most likely to leave the profession are those who are less satisfied than others with their school relationships. They are less likely to strongly agree that their principal created an environment which helped them be an effective teacher, asked for their suggestions, showed appreciation for their work, and treated them with respect. They enter the profession expecting the principal to help them become better teachers. (MetLife survey reference, see resources)

Mentor and Principal Relationship—Communication, Collaboration and Coordination

Little is more important in building effective induction programs than the principal and mentor relationship. Principals can inform mentors about school needs, goals, procedures, policies, and practices, and how best to navigate the school context. They can keep mentors aware of their concerns and offer suggestions for support. Mentors can explain their role, share sample formative assessment tools, articulate expectations for beginning teachers, and note beginning teacher professional development offered by the induction program. Beginning teachers can benefit from this alignment between the principal and mentor support.

- Principals can schedule regular meetings with mentors. These meetings can be brief check-ins or longer conferences that let principals know the types of support their new teachers are receiving, offer suggestions, and ask questions. Mentors aim to build strong relationships between beginning teachers and principals. Three-way meetings allow mentors to strengthen these interactions so beginning teachers can grow as professionals and assume leadership roles.

- Mentors can make certain that principals understand the rationale for and support confidentiality between a beginning teacher and mentor. In order for beginning teachers to take the necessary risks to grow, they must feel safe. Thus, they must trust that the relationship between
themselves and their mentor is confidential. A principal who understands and respects this confidentiality fosters a community of trust. Involved principals develop effective three-way relationships that sanction confidentiality and clearly demonstrate that everyone is working toward a common goal—successful teaching and learning.

**Formative Assessment Intersects with Principal Supervision and Evaluation**

Formative assessment is a key component in successful induction. It is ongoing, responsive to teacher developmental needs, collaborative, aligned with professional teaching standards, and based on multiple data sources. Valuable summative assessment has the same characteristics and is a part of a complete system of assessment. Just as effective student assessment includes ongoing, formative feedback as well as a final, summative assessment, the same holds true for teachers, mentors and administrators. Often, induction program formative assessment systems are separate from district evaluation. There are a number of ways principals and mentors can integrate teacher assessment:

- **Align professional goal setting.** Ideally, the goal setting process is the same in the induction program and district. Because induction programs are often created and added to district programs, two different processes can often exist. Over time, many induction programs have had a positive impact on improving a district’s structures, including protocols for setting and working toward professional goals. If beginning teachers experience aligned district and induction goal setting, including the same language and structures, it sends a message that induction is an important part of a district’s mission.

- **Principals can assess beginning teacher growth and effectiveness.** Traditionally, principals have been regarded primarily as teacher evaluators and many administrator preparation programs have not included teacher formative assessment in the curriculum. When principals recognize the power of formative assessment to improve teacher effectiveness and accelerate growth, it becomes a priority to support ongoing learning. Regular classroom visits focused on a teacher’s goals and sanctioning time for self-assessment, send the message of commitment to effective instruction and optimal learning for all students.

**Influencing the system**

While there must be system-wide support for induction, principals can do much to influence the system. A principal who advocates for making reasonable working conditions for new teachers district policy, can change the status quo. Principals who share data of mentor support that resulted in better teaching and learning, with stakeholders such as other principals, union representatives, district administrators, the community and the media, are exercising their leadership in profound ways. Leadership used in such a powerful way can have a significant influence on sustaining and growing our profession.

**Inquiry Questions**

1. How does your induction program communicate with principals about new teacher support? What other strategies can be put in place?

2. What are examples of how some principals in your schools support new teachers? What other strategies can you suggest and help to implement?

3. How can you support principals in including formative assessment in the evaluation process for new teachers? Can the district evaluation protocols be aligned with and integrated into your induction program’s formative assessment?

4. How can principals become allies in cultivating or reinforcing system norms of lifelong learning, appropriate working conditions, and valuing new teacher voices?
Case Study: Collaboration for New Teachers

Like a conductor who brings the musicians together to perform a symphony, or a basketball coach who encourages the team from the sideline throughout a game, a principal’s role is to identify, maximize and coordinate all the available resources to run a school. My life as a principal was full, and at times overwhelming. I was handed the keys and given my marching orders—do everything I can to raise student achievement. My school was part of a district deep into sanctions of No Child Left Behind.

The district provided many coaches for classroom teachers. They came in and out of my school; most rarely interacted with me. In the craziness before school opened, I agreed to meet with Marina, the beginning teacher mentor assigned to the school. At the time, I could not imagine the degree to which she would support my vision for the school, the staff, and most importantly, our students.

As Marina and I sat down, I asked: “What can I do for you?” In her own way she responded: “let me share with you what I can do for you”.

Marina asked about my goals for the school. As we talked, I realized that her support would help the beginning teachers, and me achieve these goals. She filled me in on her teaching experience, the number of teachers she would be supporting, and the amount of time she would meet with each. Marina shared the formative assessment cycle that she and the beginning teachers would use to improve practice, the beginning teacher’s and her responsibilities, and the professional development she would receive to hone her mentoring skills. We ended the conversation by discussing mentor and beginning teacher confidentiality—clarifying what Marina could share with me, what could I share with her, and the importance of giving these teachers a safe, trusting environment within which to grow. I left this brief and focused conversation realizing that I had a colleague who was committed to the same goal as I was: supporting teachers to improve student learning.

During that year, Marina and I met every three weeks. With each meeting, our interactions became more focused. We planned intensive support uniquely necessary for a beginning teacher. I didn’t have time to provide the in-depth support for my new teachers, for back-to-school night, preparation for parent conferences, and the district evaluation process.

At a third grade data team meeting, I noticed that Amanda, a beginning teacher, had analyzed her students’ assessment results in surprising detail and depth, identifying student needs and implications for her need to differentiate her instruction. As she shared her “data story,” Amanda’s colleagues took interest in the assessment tool and protocol she used. I realized that this was a tool Marina had shared with me. From that time forward, I was more closely aligned with Marina in supporting the new teachers as well as their more experienced colleagues.

The role of principal is challenging and often isolating. Marina’s support for my new teachers made my job easier and more collaborative. Marina reinforced my special responsibility to support teachers in the critical first years of their professional lives.

—Mike Heffner, Vice President, Leadership Development, NTC

Resources


About the New Teacher Center

The New Teacher Center is a national organization dedicated to improving student learning by accelerating the effectiveness of teachers and school leaders. NTC strengthens school communities through proven mentoring and professional development programs, online learning environments, policy advocacy, and research. Since 1998, the NTC has served over 49,000 teachers and 5,000 mentors, touching millions of students across America.
A core value of the Boston Public Schools New Teacher Development Program is a commitment to high quality professional development for every New Teacher Developer (NTD) and beginning teacher in the program. Major objectives include: providing critical orientation and support to beginning teachers; accelerating the development of beginning teachers’ skills and knowledge in teaching practice and student learning based on the use of the Rubric of Effective Teaching; helping beginning teachers fulfill induction requirements towards earning a Massachusetts Department of Education Professional teaching license; and supporting and advancing the leadership skills and mentoring skills of all NTDs.

As with any partnership, each member contributes to the effectiveness of the results of a shared endeavor. As a site administrator, you play a critical role in the development of a successful partnership with the BPS New Teacher Development Program on behalf of the NTDs, Beginning Teachers, and their students achieving to their highest potential.

As a BPS site administrator, I agree to support beginning teachers, NTDs, and the New Teacher Development Program to the best of my ways including, but not limited to, the following:

**Support of Beginning Teachers**
- Conduct an initial orientation for beginning teachers to inform them about school resources, personnel, procedures, and policies, including health and safety codes and procedures.
- Introduce beginning teachers to school staff members.
- Encourage a community of learning that focuses on the Massachusetts academic standards, performance levels for students, and the BPS Dimensions of Effective Teaching.

**Support of NTDs**
- Facilitate the participation of beginning teachers and New Teacher Developers in the New Teacher Development program (e.g., time to meet).
- Communicate regularly (at least once every 4-6 weeks) with NTDs in order to understand the program’s goals, the formative assessment process, and upcoming seminars/trainings for beginning teachers and NTDs.
- Respect the confidential nature of the relationship between beginning teachers and their NTDs.
- Refrain from asking NTDs to take on any administrator or evaluator tasks or responsibilities.
- For Full-time NTDs, provide a mailbox and working space that includes a desk, a chair, and storage space for items such as a coat and bag.
- For Part-time NTDs, ensure that the NTDs attend the mandatory professional development events, which are dedicated to enhancing NTD skills and knowledge in support of their work with beginning teachers.

**Support of the New Teacher Development Program**
- Participate in breakfast meetings hosted by the New Teacher Development Program that will include the following content:
  - The Formative Assessment System
  - Beginning teacher development
  - Working conditions that optimize beginning teachers’ success
  - How to assist beginning teachers in challenging situations
  - The role of the NTD and the relationship between the NTD and beginning teacher, as well as the relationship between the NTD and site administrator
  - Feedback on the New Teacher Development Program
  - Communicate questions or concerns about the New Teacher Development Program with New Teacher Development Program administrators, including the Director of Teacher Development and the Senior Program Manager of New Teacher Development.
- Participate in the program evaluation process.

Site Administrator’s Signature: ________________________________________ Date: ______________

School: ________________________________________

After signing this Letter of Commitment, please return a copy to:
TAMIKA ESTWICK
Office of Teacher Effectiveness – New Teacher Development Program
Boston Public Schools, 26 Court Street, 6th Floor, Boston, MA 02108 or 617-635-9083 (fax)
A core value of the BPS New Teacher Development Program is a commitment to high quality individualized professional growth for every teacher in the program. Major objectives include: providing critical orientation and support to beginning teachers; accelerating the development of their skills and knowledge in teaching practice and student learning based on using the Rubric of Effective Teaching; and fulfilling induction requirements towards earning a Massachusetts Department of Education Professional teaching license.

As with any partnership, each member contributes to the effectiveness of a shared endeavor and each participating Beginning Teacher plays a key role in his or her success.

**My responsibilities as a Beginning Teacher in the BPS New Teacher Development Program:**

- Develop an on-going collaborative relationship with my New Teacher Developer (NTD) based upon reflections of my teaching practice.
- Open my classroom to visits from and participate in weekly meetings with my NTD.
- Demonstrate classroom applications of the Rubric of Effective Teaching.
- Engage in the New Teacher Center Formative Assessment System to guide my growth as a teacher.
- Grant permission to the New Teacher Development Program to collect completed Formative Assessment System work as artifacts of practice for the sole purpose of enhancing general support provided to all New Teacher Developers and Beginning Teachers. I understand that this will only be used in the aggregate to make improvements to the New Teacher Development Program, will not be shared with my principal/headmaster, and will not be used to evaluate my performance as a teacher.
- Attend professional development recommended as part of the Professional Goals Setting process and my Individual Professional Development Plan.
- Communicate questions or concerns about the New Teacher Development Program to my NTD or the program administrators.
- Share my feedback through local and state program evaluations and surveys.

I, ____________________________________________, have read the Beginning Teacher responsibilities as described above and understand the expectations for fully participating in the New Teacher Development Program this year. I understand that these are the program requirements I must meet to receive a certificate confirming the receipt of mentoring support and a recommendation for a Massachusetts Department of Education Professional teaching license. If, for any reason, I am unable to fully complete program requirements, I understand that I will need to contact my NTD, the New Teacher Development program leaders, and my principal/headmaster.

Beginning Teacher’s Signature: ___________________________ Date: ______________

After signing this Letter of Commitment, please return a copy to:

**TAMIKA ESTWICK**
Office of Teacher Effectiveness – New Teacher Development Program
Boston Public Schools, 26 Court Street, 6th Floor, Boston, MA 02108 or 617-635-9083 (fax)
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **What is the New Teacher Development (NTD) program?**
   The New Teacher Development program was established during the 2006-2007 school year and provides intensive in-classroom support to novice teachers. NTDs visit novice teachers in their classrooms each week during school hours to model, co-teach, observe, or assist them in planning and preparing for their lessons. NTDs also receive comprehensive professional development from the New Teacher Center.

2. **The NTD Program provides support for novice teachers through Full-time and Part-time NTDs. In what ways are these two roles different?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of the Roles</th>
<th>FT NTD</th>
<th>PT NTD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Novice Teachers Assigned</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Across four to five school sites</td>
<td>One school site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular In-Classroom Support</td>
<td>2.5hrs/week with each teacher</td>
<td>2.5hrs/week with each teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New teachers are assigned mentors</td>
<td>Mid-August-January</td>
<td>October-January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection Process</td>
<td>Joint BTU/BPS screening team</td>
<td>School personnel subcommittee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **I have a new teacher who is struggling, can I get a NTD?**
   NTDs are primarily assigned to novice teachers.

4. **I have a long-term substitute, can I get a NTD?**
   NTDs are primarily assigned to novice teachers, however if there is capacity we are willing to accommodate administrators as best as we can.

5. **Is there flexibility in the PT or FT NTD model at my school?**
   We recommend the FT NTD model for schools with three or more new teachers.

6. **How are Full-time NTDs assigned to novice teachers? When are assignments made?**
   Assignments are made to best support a novice teacher’s needs while at the same time considering the NTD’s expertise and workload. Assignments may be closely related to a NTD’s area of expertise or may invite a NTD to work in new areas. Geographic locations of the novice teachers’ schools are also factors in the assignment process. Full-time NTD assignments as soon as possible and as close to the beginning a new teacher’s employment as can be done, however, assignments are not made past February of a school calendar year.

7. **How can I use an NTD at my schools?**
   If an NTD has a caseload of three or more new teachers at a building they are strongly encouraged to participate in ILT, grade-level teams, common planning or coaches’ meetings. You can also engage your NTD’s expertise in other related school activities that impact your school culture, but more so the development of your novice teachers.

8. **Can the NTD share notes from observation of beginning teachers with the administrator?**
   The New Teacher Developer role is non-evaluative and any data gathered is confidential and should not be used to inform the evaluation of new teachers.

9. **Is the Full-time NTD school year different from a regular school year?**
   Yes. Full-time NTDs start in mid-August and complete their responsibilities two weeks before the end of the school year.

10. **Is there mentoring beyond the first year?**
    Yes. Teachers in their second year receive 50 hours of mentoring based on their evaluations at the end of the first year. Teachers who receive less than proficient on their evaluations, receive school based mentoring, teachers’ proficient and above receive support through the BPS Online Mentoring Program.

11. **With whom do I follow up for more information?**

   Please contact Tamika Estwick in the Office of Educator Effectiveness
testwick@boston.k12.ma.us • 617-635-9203
Mission Statement
As the birthplace of public education in this nation, the Boston Public Schools is committed to transforming the lives of all children through exemplary teaching in a world-class system of innovative, welcoming schools. We partner with the community, families, and students to develop in every learner the knowledge, skill, and character to excel in college, career, and life.

Non-Discrimination Policy
The Boston Public Schools does not discriminate in its programs, activities, facilities, employment, or educational opportunities on the basis of race, color, age, disability, gender, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation and does not tolerate any form of discrimination, intimidation, threat, coercion, and/or harassment that insults the dignity of others by interfering with their freedom to learn and work.

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