



Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP)

Approved by the
Transylvania County Schools
Board of Education

Tanya Dalton, Board Chair

Date

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Date

I. Introduction

The Transylvania County Board of Education (the “Board”) believes that every child deserves a highly qualified teacher and that every teacher deserves to work in a supportive environment that promotes high standards and encourages high levels of professional performance. Toward that end, the Board establishes a Beginning Teacher Induction Program, as outlined in State Board of Education Policy TCED-016, designed to support beginning teachers throughout the induction period and this Beginning Teacher Induction Program Plan (the “Plan”) to guide the operation and administration of that program.

The plan aligns to the State’s Beginning Teacher Support Program standards through:

Standard 1: Systematic Support for High Quality Induction Programs – This standard is designed to promote the commitment of all stakeholders in seeing mentoring and induction programs succeed. Key program elements include the creation of an institutional plan, demonstrating institutional commitment, and support and principal engagement.

Standard 2: Mentor Selection, Development, and Support – This standard articulates the process and criteria for mentor selection, discusses mentor roles and responsibilities, and delineates foundational mentor training. Key program elements include mentor selection, defining the role of mentors, and mentor professional development.

Standard 3: Mentoring for Instructional Excellence – Mentors are given protected time to provide beginning teachers with support to achieve success in the areas set forth by the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards. Key program elements include providing time for mentors and beginning teachers, ensuring mentoring is focused on instruction, and addressing issues of diversity.

Standard 4: Beginning Teacher Professional Development- Professional development is provided to beginning teachers that orients them to their new career and supports their efforts to meet the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards. Key program elements include structured orientation to the school site, as well as professional development designed to meet the unique needs of beginning teachers that is aligned with the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards, and the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation System.

Standard 5: Formative Assessment of Candidates and Programs – New teachers and mentoring programs are monitored and supported using a formative assessment system to guide their work. Key program elements include formative assessment systems and program evaluation

II. Beginning Teacher Support Program

Transylvania County Schools' Beginning Teacher Induction Program shall be coordinated by the school district's Director of Human Resources ("Director") consistent with the guidelines established by the Plan. Revisions to the Plan are necessary in order to comply with state regulations governing the Beginning Teacher Support Plan (BTSP) and, most importantly, to better respond to the needs of new teachers, mentors and other stakeholders. The program's mission provides support during a time of personal and professional growth as well as fostering the skills and practices required for effective teaching. The North Carolina Standards for Beginning Teacher Support inform the development of our local support process.

Assisting Beginning Teachers

The school district shall employ multiple, proactive mechanisms to identify and address the services and technical assistance needs of beginning teachers. These include, but are not limited to:

- **Direct feedback from Beginning Teacher Induction Program participants**, gathered through surveys, focus groups, reflection journals, and structured check-ins to ensure teacher voice is consistently represented in decision-making.
- **Input from district administrators, school administrators, and mentor teachers**, with regular opportunities for collaborative discussion and needs assessment, ensuring that observations and on-the-ground insights inform support structures.
- **Review of current research and best practices** from professional organizations, academic journals, and state and national networks, in order to align local efforts with evidence-based strategies that promote beginning teacher success and retention.
- **Analysis of Beginning Teacher Professional Development Plans (PDPs)** to identify common areas of growth and tailor professional learning opportunities that directly support teacher development goals.
- **Examination of summary reports and performance data from the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System (NCEES)** to recognize trends, highlight strengths, and address areas requiring additional support at both the individual and district levels.
- **Ongoing consultation and guidance from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), regional education agencies, and higher education partners**, ensuring alignment with state expectations and leveraging external expertise and resources.
- **Regular evaluation of support systems** to measure effectiveness, adjust strategies, and ensure continuous improvement in services provided to beginning teachers.

Principals shall actively support the successful induction and ongoing professional growth of all beginning teachers by:

- **Identifying and recommending highly qualified mentor teachers** who demonstrate strong instructional practice, professional integrity, and a commitment to supporting colleagues.
- **Thoughtfully and strategically assigning mentor teachers** to beginning teachers, ensuring alignment in grade level, subject area, or instructional context whenever possible.
- **Providing timely, specific, and constructive feedback** to beginning teachers based on classroom observations, instructional walkthroughs, and professional conversations.
- **Offering individualized professional support and assistance**, including differentiated resources, coaching, and access to professional development aligned with each teacher's unique needs.
- **Creating and maintaining optimal working conditions** that foster beginning teacher success, including manageable teaching assignments, access to resources, and opportunities for collaboration.
- **Providing consistent moral support, encouragement, and recognition** throughout the induction period to help beginning teachers build confidence, resilience, and a strong sense of belonging within the school community.

Orientation of Beginning Teachers

All beginning teachers in Transylvania County Schools shall receive information regarding the nature, scope, and requirements of the district's Beginning Teacher Induction Program; available services and training opportunities; the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards; the teacher evaluation process; the process for achieving continuing licensure; requirements for all required licensure tests; required working conditions guidelines and, other such topics as provided by State Board policy TCED-016. These topics will be featured among the agenda items and activities associated with the school district's annual New Teacher Orientation, attendance at which is required of all licensed teachers newly employed within the school district each year. For those beginning teachers who are hired during the school year and who are therefore unable to attend New Teacher Orientation, this information will be provided through individual consultation between the teacher and the Director or designee within the teacher's first ten (10) days of employment.

Mentor Selection, Training, and Assignment

Selection

Transylvania County Schools recognizes that the training, selection, and assignment of qualified mentors is essential to ensure a positive induction experience for all beginning teachers. All beginning teachers are assigned a mentor according to State Board policy TCED-016 and N.C. Gen. Stat. § 115C-296(e). Mentors are trained in accordance with standards set by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Mentors are selected due to their success as highly effective teachers. Transylvania County Schools will follow these guidelines for mentor selection:

- Rated at least “proficient” level on NCEES (Ratings of proficient or higher on all five standards on the most recent summative evaluation, or on Standards 1 and 4 on an abbreviated evaluation).
- The principal shall determine which mentor teacher best meets the needs of each new teacher and shall assign the most appropriate mentor teacher to the new teacher, with priority consideration for mentors rated as “distinguished” or “accomplished.”
- Any teacher who is assigned to be a mentor to a BT must meet eligibility requirements in the year of the assignment. No mentor whose evaluation falls below the “proficient” level may continue to serve as a mentor to a BT, regardless of existing mentor-mentee relationships.
- A teacher may be a mentor at a different school building from which the mentor is assigned if the principals of each school and the mentor teacher approve the assignment, the mentor is rated at least “accomplished” (received ratings of accomplished or higher on three of five standards including Standard 4 on the most recent summative, or on Standard 4 on an abbreviated evaluation), and the BT’s principal maintains a record of the reasons for selecting the mentor from a different school building.

The function of the mentor is to provide formative feedback to assist in the refinement and development of essential instructional skills and practices. The mentor will help the beginning teacher build an understanding and appreciation of the school and community culture. The mentor will participate in quarterly district-level BTSP meetings and will provide assistance to the beginning teacher throughout the program by providing logistical and emotional support. In accordance with best practices, an attempt will be made to maintain the same mentor teacher for the entire initial licensure period of the beginning teacher.

Training

The Director shall provide for the local training of aspiring mentor teachers. When local training options are not immediately available, the Director is authorized to approve, on a case-by-case basis, an alternative to local training provided through the Western Region Education Service Alliance (WRESA) or other appropriate agency or institution. All training, whether it is provided locally or by a third-party agency or institution, shall teach participants the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to be effective instructional coaches, emotional supports, and organizational guides to those teachers entering the profession, and shall be aligned to the North Carolina Mentor Standards established by State Board policy TCED-016. The Director, other district leaders, and school administrators shall be available to serve as resources and support persons to all practicing mentors.

Assignment

The Director shall maintain a list of teachers selected and trained to serve as mentor teachers. Principals shall assign each beginning teacher a mentor teacher from the list of qualified mentor teachers within ten (10) days of employment with the school district. Principals shall annually report all mentor assignments to the Director by August 31. The Director shall maintain a roster of beginning teachers and their assigned mentors for a period of five (5) years.

Program Overview

The **Beginning Teacher Induction Program** is designed to orient, support, and nurture beginning teachers as they enter the profession and grow into accomplished educators. The program provides a **continuum of differentiated support across the first three years of teaching**, ensuring that teachers receive the guidance, resources, and professional learning necessary for long-term success.

- **Year 1: Orientation** — Focus on successful entry into the profession and the school district, with emphasis on foundational practices and reflective collaboration.
- **Year 2: Professional Learning** — Emphasis on structured professional reading, reflection, and dialogue to deepen instructional practice and reflective habits.
- **Year 3: Action Research** — Engagement in classroom- and school-based inquiry projects that synthesize learning, promote collaboration, and build leadership capacity.

This progressive structure supports teachers in developing a strong foundation of practice, cultivating reflective skills, and emerging as confident teacher leaders.

Year 1: Orientation

The first year provides a **comprehensive introduction to both the district and the teaching profession**, helping beginning teachers establish a solid foundation for effective practice.

- **Structured Meetings:** First-year teachers will participate in four after-school meetings (4:00–6:00 p.m.), facilitated by the Director in collaboration with district instructional leaders. Agendas will balance district-identified priorities with participant-identified needs.
- **Content Focus:** Sessions will address topics of critical relevance to novice teachers, such as:
 - North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards
 - Classroom management and building positive student relationships
 - Grading and assessment practices
 - Effective communication with parents, colleagues, and administrators
 - Accessing instructional resources and technology tools
- **Reflective Practice:** Meetings will include structured opportunities for guided discussion with mentors, fostering collaborative problem-solving and reflective thinking.

Expected Outcomes:

By the end of Year 1, beginning teachers will be able to:

- Articulate their roles and responsibilities as professional educators;
 - Demonstrate sound understanding of core instructional practices; and
 - Engage in meaningful collaboration with colleagues across the district.
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Year 2: Professional Learning

The second year builds upon prior experiences by deepening professional knowledge and reflective practice through structured reading and dialogue.

- **Structured Meetings:** Four after-school meetings (4:00–6:00 p.m.), facilitated by the Director and district leaders, will guide discussion and reflection.
- **Content Focus:** Participants will read and reflect on selected articles from professional journals. Readings will be distributed in advance to allow thoughtful engagement prior to group discussion.
- **Collaborative Reflection:** Teachers will engage in reflection circles that connect research-based strategies with classroom practice, fostering peer-to-peer support and professional dialogue.

Expected Outcomes:

By the end of Year 2, beginning teachers will be able to:

- Locate, analyze, and apply professional literature to inform practice;
 - Engage in individual and group reflection to support instructional growth; and
 - Participate in substantive professional conversations with colleagues across the district.
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Year 3: Action Research

The third year provides a **culminating experience** that empowers teachers to conduct action research projects, strengthening their instructional practice while developing leadership skills.

- **Structured Meetings:** Third-year teachers will participate in an introductory session early in the school year, facilitated by the Director and district leaders, to review expectations, timelines, and available supports.
- **Project Design:** Teachers will conduct action research individually or in small groups. Projects will be developed around a **SMART goal** (Strategic, Measurable, Achievable, Results-oriented, Time-bound) and must be approved by both the principal and the Director prior to implementation.
- **Inquiry Process:** Projects will follow a cycle of diagnosis, research, intervention, and evaluation to improve teaching and learning outcomes.

Expected Outcomes:

By the end of Year 3, beginning teachers will be able to:

- Apply research-based processes to identify and solve instructional challenges;
- Collaborate and communicate effectively with colleagues around professional practice;
- Demonstrate proficiency in meeting all North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards; and
- Begin to assume leadership roles within their schools and classrooms.

III. Beginning Teacher Evaluation

Orientation: Within two weeks of a teacher's first day of work in any school year, the principal will provide the teacher with a copy of directions for obtaining access to the following:

- rubric for Evaluating North Carolina Teachers,
- State Board of Education policy governing teacher evaluations, and
- a schedule for completing all the components of the evaluation process.

Copies may be provided by electronic means. While a formal meeting is not required, supervisors may choose to hold this orientation as a group meeting at the beginning of each school year and/or individually as staff is added throughout the year.

Teacher Self-Assessment: Teachers rate their own performance using the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System's Rubric for Evaluating Teachers. This may be used during the post-observation conference.

Pre-Observation Conference: Before the first formal observation, the principal shall meet with the teacher to discuss the teacher's self-assessment based on the Rubric for Evaluating North Carolina Teachers, the teacher's most recent Professional Development Plan, and the lesson(s) to be observed. The teacher will provide the principal with a description of the lesson(s). The goal of this conference is to prepare the principal for the observation. Pre-observation conferences are not required for subsequent observations.

Observation(s): The principal or evaluator will observe the teacher in the classroom. Observations can be either announced or unannounced. The first observation for every teacher will be a formal observation. Probationary teachers are required to have four formal observations during the school year, one of which is conducted by a peer. The observations must have appropriate spacing, with two occurring in the first semester and the summative evaluation to be completed by the end of the school year.

Post-Observation Conference: The principal or evaluator will schedule a post-observation conference no later than 10 school days after the observation to discuss the teacher's performance. The conference will be based on the information from the pre-observation conference and the observation should be a vehicle for identifying areas of strength and areas in need of improvement.

Summative Evaluation Conference: The evaluator should provide specific performance feedback to the teacher based on the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards, evaluator observations, and artifacts submitted or collected as part of the evaluation process. To provide an overall rating for a specific standard, the evaluator uses his or her best judgment based on formal and informal observations as well as other evidences.

Professional Development Plan: Every beginning teacher is required to develop a Professional Development Plan (PDP) in collaboration with his/her principal and mentor teacher. The plan is based on the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards and must include goals, strategies, and

assessment of the beginning teacher's progress in improving professional skills. In developing the plan, the beginning teacher, principal and mentor should begin with an assessment of the beginning teacher's knowledge, dispositions, and performances. Formative assessment conferences should be held at the beginning, middle, and end of each school year to reflect on the progress of the beginning teacher in meeting the goals established for professional growth. During the formative assessment conferences signatures of the BT, mentor, and principal are required. The PDP should be updated on an annual basis.

IV. Licensure and Working Conditions

Beginning Teachers will be assigned in their area of licensure. Once a continuing license has been earned in one teaching area, additional teaching areas do not require a BTSP experience. The beginning teacher must follow NC State Board of Education requirements for all required license tests. Teachers who hold an Initial License are eligible to convert to a continuing license once overall required coursework has been successfully completed, all NC State Board of Education approved examinations have been passed, and the teacher completes three successful years of teaching. Teachers with fewer than three years of teaching experience, however, are required to continue participating in a Beginning Teacher Support Program regardless of their licensure status. For licensing purposes, a “year” is determined by no less than the workdays indicated by the State Board policy in a full-time permanent position.

Transylvania County Schools is committed to promoting optimum working conditions for beginning teachers. Toward that end, and consistent with standards established by State Board policy TCED-016, each beginning teacher shall:

- Be assigned teaching responsibilities in his or her area(s) of licensure;
- Be assigned a qualified mentor, preferably in close proximity to the beginning teacher and, when possible, in the same area(s) of licensure as the beginning teacher;
- Participate in an orientation that includes state, district, and school expectations;
- Be assigned teaching responsibilities that limit instructional preparations to the greatest extent possible;
- Be assigned limited instructional duties and only be assigned extracurricular responsibilities consistent with N.C. Gen. Stat. § 115C-47(18a) and local Board policy 7405, “Extracurricular and Non-Instructional Duties”; and,
- Be assigned, to the greatest extent practical, a limited number of exceptional or difficult students.

V. Program Evaluation

The school district, through the Director, shall continually monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Beginning Teacher Induction Program. Monitoring will include, but is not limited to the following activities: (1) professional development plans evaluation, (2) communication and feedback processes

between beginning teachers, mentors, curriculum and instruction team and principals and, (3) monitoring of teacher turnover data and survey results, including local survey data and the North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions survey, (4) monitoring and peer review by North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. TCS will demonstrate proficiency by collecting data and evaluating progress via annual self-assessments and peer reviews. These data will be collected for the State of the Teaching Profession report. In addition, the completion of the recent graduate survey by the Beginning Teacher (BT) and the employer survey by the principal of the school during the BT's first year of teaching as part of the requirements to measure the performance of Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) stated in GS 115C-269.35. The surveys must be completed at the end of the first year of teaching.

VI. Personnel Records

Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 115C-319, - 320, -321, and -325(b), the Superintendent shall maintain a personnel file for each teacher that contains a copy of each PDP, each observation report, and each summary evaluation completed throughout the beginning teacher's employment with the school district, along with other such records required by law or policy. The contents of the beginning teacher's personnel file are subject to confidentiality rules established by the applicable statutes.

Upon written authorization of the beginning teacher, the Director shall provide for the timely transfer of the contents of the beginning teacher's personnel file, in whole or in part as designated by the request, to successive employing public-school districts, charter schools, or non-public institutions in North Carolina.