



Support From The Start

A 50-State Review of Policies on New Educator Induction and Mentoring

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Executive Summary

Introduction

New teachers really matter. When they struggle, their students suffer. When mentors don't have the time or training to help new teachers, those beginning educators don't have the support they need. School leaders new to the job also need assistance. With quality standards, dedicated funding, protected time and mentor training, states can help school districts to provide the induction and mentoring support that new educators, and their students, deserve.

New Teacher Center's monitoring of state policies around support for new teachers and school principals began with our first report in 2012, using data primarily from the 2010-2011 school year. Our latest report—updated for the 2015-2016 school year—takes stock of policy changes over the last five years and summarizes what actions states have taken to strengthen on-the-job support for beginning educators.

Unfortunately, states have made only limited progress over the past several years. A small handful of states have taken clear steps forward in improving multiple areas of state policy that can lead to greater support for new teachers and principals. Several states have made progress in specific areas of new educator induction.

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Why is support for new teachers and the mentors who work with them so critical for every state and school system? Without strong support and continued growth, many new educators do not stay on the job—and fewer who do can be effective in helping students reach higher academic standards. No matter the quality of their preparation, new teachers encounter many distinct challenges as they navigate their first months and years in the classroom. Their job is too important in children's lives and futures to let them to simply "sink-or-swim" without continued guidance and support. NTC has designed and implemented research-based induction programs to help schools support new teachers since our founding in 1998.

Beginning teachers are, on average, less effective than more experienced ones.¹ High-quality induction programs can accelerate new teachers' professional growth, making them more effective faster. Research demonstrates that comprehensive, multi-year induction programs accelerate the professional growth of new teachers, reduce the rate of new teacher attrition, provide a stronger return on states' and school districts' investment, and improve student learning.²

When NTC published our first comprehensive analysis of state policies on teacher induction in 2012, data suggested that beginning teachers were more common in schools today than at any time in the prior 20 years. In 1987-1988 the typical teacher had 15 years of

experience; by 2007-2008 the typical teacher was in her first year.³ Current data indicate the presence of early-career educators is no less common.⁴ The most recent data show roughly one in five U.S. classroom teachers are in their first three years on the job. But there are signals that more new educators are staying on the job longer.⁵ This is a promising possibility, and it could show that states' and school districts' attention to teacher induction could be starting to address this national challenge. The battle isn't won, however.

Beginning teachers are inequitably found in schools in high-poverty neighborhoods and communities.⁶ But this reality can hinder many schools from effectively addressing the needs of many students of color and those from low-income families. Too many beginning educators in one place can impact student achievement and unfairly put students in these schools at a disadvantage compared to their more advantaged peers. Failure to address this issue will only plague states and school districts further—and burden our society—if we don't make more progress in educating all students to higher levels.

While all schools and students can benefit from more effective teachers, the power of high-quality induction has special significance for schools that serve a disproportionate number of low-income and minority students.

While all schools and students can benefit from more effective teachers, the power of high-quality induction has special significance for schools that serve a disproportionate number of low-income and minority students. In such schools, teacher turnover is generally higher—and sometimes rampant. High-quality induction programs can help to provide the specialized support that new teachers need and transform these schools into strong professional communities where educators want to stay and work—and be more successful in working with students.

Simply put, high-quality induction programs are needed more than ever. State policy must create a supportive context and establish a strong expectation that comprehensive support will be provided to every beginning educator. Policy matters because it heavily influences the provision, design and scope of induction and mentoring for new educators.

We advocate for state policy that prioritizes new educators to help them thrive—and for the first time, we're examining how states can provide supportive teaching and learning conditions that help new teachers serve their students better. More than a decade of research suggests that positive teaching conditions are an important component of successful schools.⁷ Positive working conditions—including trust, collaboration, supportive school leadership and professional learning opportunities—afford educators the chance to continue to learn and grow on the job and to provide instructional excellence to their students. Assessing these conditions through educator perception surveys—such as NTC's Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning (TELL) Survey—may be used by states and districts to monitor schools' progress under the Every Student Succeeds Act, the sweeping federal education law signed by President Obama in December 2015. After all, effective teaching is not just built on a foundation of individual knowledge, skills and abilities—but also upon a culture of support, trust and instructional improvement.



Support From The Start

Still, policy isn't enough. The right laws and regulations won't solve the problems by themselves. That's why NTC urges states to make support for new educators a major priority in both policy *and* practice. Also, we work directly with states and school systems across the country to build stronger support systems for new educators. Our work is evolving and growing as we discover new challenges, review the latest research, and adjust to the changing federal and state education policy landscape.

NTC believes it's important to gauge states' progress and bring attention to research-based practices that will strengthen the field. Certain states have significantly strengthened or overhauled their educator induction policies over the past five years, and we highlight some of those exemplary efforts in this report and in the state policy summaries that accompany it.⁸ Our intention is for this report to be a useful guide for state policymakers and education leaders in improving support for new teachers. We're all in this together.

How the States Are Faring

We slightly adjusted the criteria we use to measure states' policy progress since our first report in 2012. This new report examines how states' policies address nine important criteria in providing high-quality support programs for new teachers, school principals and school administrators and for the mentors who work with them.

Only three states meet NTC's most important criteria for a high-quality system of new teacher support. Connecticut, Delaware and Iowa are the only states that require schools and districts to provide multi-year support for new teachers, require teachers to complete an induction program for a professional license, and provide dedicated funding for new teacher induction and mentoring. These same states also were the only ones to meet these important criteria in the 2012 report. Today, Hawaii also requires and funds a multi-year induction program for teachers and school principals, but not specifically for purposes of educator licensure. But while these four states are pacesetters in several areas of support for new educators, even they do not meet all nine of our main policy quality criteria.

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Just as in 2012, NTC finds that few states have comprehensive policies to require high-quality induction for beginning teachers. Many states still lack adequate support for new school principals, quality standards for educator induction, and ongoing professional development and support for mentors, and many states have only limited mentoring for new teachers. Further, too many states' policies that do exist are implemented poorly or sporadically. A sizable percentage of beginning teachers regularly report in NTC's TELL Surveys that they were not assigned a formal mentor—even in states with a mentoring requirement.⁹

Other Key Findings

Requirements—

- Of the 29 states that now require some type of support for new teachers, barely half (15 states) require support in teachers' first *and* second years. In 2012, 27 states required some type of new teacher support. Most states emphasize support only in teachers' first year on the job—or require no support at all.
- Over the last five years, Indiana eliminated its teacher-mentoring program, and the states of Hawaii, Oklahoma and Vermont enacted new teacher induction or mentoring requirements.
- Nine states require support for new teachers beyond their first two years (usually for three years): Delaware, Hawaii, Louisiana¹⁰, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio (for four years), and Utah.
- Only 20 states require some type of support for first-time school principals. Only six states—California, Delaware, Hawaii, Missouri, New Jersey, and Vermont—require induction or mentoring for first- *and* second-year school principals.

Funding—

- Only 16 states provide some dedicated funding for teacher induction, one fewer than in 2012.
- Since our 2012 report, Hawaii and Washington, began providing induction funding. Three states—Alabama, Kansas, New Jersey—stopped.
- Only nine states provide induction funding to all school districts, and among them only six states (Hawaii, Iowa, North Dakota, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia) provide funding for local induction program costs. The other three states provide funds exclusively for mentor stipends.
- Two states fund statewide teacher induction programs—the Alaska Statewide Mentoring Project and the Kentucky Teacher Internship Program.
- Not included among the 17 states with “dedicated” induction funding,
 - California has appropriated \$490 million in Educator Effectiveness funding for use during the 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years that may be used for beginning teacher and administrator induction and mentoring.
 - Maryland provides resources for educator induction through its school funding formula.
 - Minnesota requires school districts to “set aside” 2 percent of their basic state education revenues for staff development, of which induction and mentoring is an allowable activity.
 - Ohio school districts may use state professional development funds to support resident educator programs.



Quality Mentoring—

- Nearly 30 states articulate which educators are eligible to serve as mentors, and a majority of states have policies in place to structure or guide teacher-mentor selection.
- More than 30 states provide or require initial mentor training, but only 18 also require ongoing professional development for mentors.
- Alaska, Hawaii, Maryland and Washington actively provide or require full-time teacher mentors. A few other states—Idaho, New Hampshire, Ohio—encourage it.
- Twenty-three states require or encourage release time for mentor teachers to conduct classroom observations and provide support during the school day.
- Twelve states establish a minimum amount of weekly or annual mentor contact time for beginning teachers. A half-dozen other states explicitly require regular mentor/mentee interactions in policies and program standards.

Program Quality—

- Eleven states' policies (California, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina) address three key induction program elements: (1) classroom observations of and by beginning teachers; (2) formative assessment of or feedback on teaching from mentors; and (3) participation in a professional learning community or beginning educator peer network. The Alaska Statewide Mentoring Project formatively assesses teachers, conducts monthly classroom observation and uses online forums for new teachers—but these elements are not included in state policy.
- Two states (Maryland and Massachusetts) encourage a reduced teaching load for beginning teachers.

Certification/Licensure—

- Twenty-four states require new teachers to complete or participate in an induction or mentoring program for professional teaching certification—only two more states than we reported in 2012.
- Fourteen states require new school principals and administrators to receive induction or mentoring support on their path to a professional certificate or license.

Program Accountability/Oversight—

- Fifteen states' policies, practices and standards establish the clearest focus on ensuring induction program quality and informing program improvement.
- Oregon state law reserves 2.5 percent of induction funding for program evaluation.

Teaching and Learning Conditions—

- Only two states (Kentucky and North Carolina) have adopted standards for teaching and learning conditions.
- Fourteen states have conducted or provided educator surveys of teaching and learning conditions in recent years, and at least 11 have applied the survey data to school improvement efforts.
- At least nine states have articulated strategies for improving teaching conditions in their teacher-equity plans approved by the U.S. Department of Education in 2015.

More on the Specific Challenges for States

The foundation for beginning educators: Twenty-one states still have no requirement for support for all new teachers. This is down from 23 states five years ago. Using current data, 11 states require only one year of support for new teachers and three states require mentoring or induction of indeterminate length. In the 2015-2016 school year, then, just 15 states require a research-based, multi-year course of support for all beginning teachers.

NTC recommends that states institute multi-year induction programs, or at least a comprehensive grant program for school districts or consortia to develop comprehensive, high-quality local induction programs. New teachers also should be required to complete a high-quality, multi-year induction experience to receive a professional teaching license or certificate. Yet, in 2015-2016, only 24 states connect induction to the teacher credentialing process, up from 22 states in 2010-2011.

Twenty-one states still have no requirement for support for all new teachers. This fact has changed little since our 2012 report when 23 states had none.

Support for school leaders: School administrators play a key role in new teachers' success and growth. When new teachers find supportive, skilled school leaders who can help them grow professionally and improve classroom instruction, they are much more likely to stay at their school and become better instructors themselves. But just as most states lack adequate support for new teachers, few states support school administrators in their first years on the job. Only 20 states require such support in 2015-2016, an increase from 16 states in 2010-2011. But only six states require support extended beyond a school leader's first year on the job. Only 14 states connect induction requirements to their school principal and administrator certification and licensure processes.

How can states improve in this area? By setting policy that all school administrators will receive induction support for their first two years on the job. This policy should include all principals, superintendents, and district administrators. Short of this, states should at least establish a grant program for districts and consortia of districts to support comprehensive, high-quality induction and coaching programs for new administrators.

Setting high expectations, making the right investments: States have made the most progress in setting high standards for teacher-induction programs. Twenty states met this criterion in 2015-2016, compared with 15 states in 2010-2011. The strongest versions of such state induction program standards articulate a vision of instructional mentoring and require school districts to design and implement standards-based programs. After all, the goal of such programs must be not only to help new teachers survive, but to thrive as professionals, delivering high-quality instruction and meeting the social and emotional needs of their students.



Support From The Start

Support for new teachers benefits from dedicated funding. And funding should not be restricted to mentor stipends alone. Local districts can share the investment in this endeavor. States can start with targeted grant programs that build support for new teachers over time, but should scale up to a statewide program.

Dedicated state funding is needed to establish new educator support as a state interest and priority. Sixteen states provide funding for induction or mentoring in 2015-2016, one fewer state than in the 2010-2011 school year. But only 11 of these states provide resources statewide or operate state-level programs; the other five operate competitive or otherwise limited grant programs. And some states still reserve all such funding for mentor stipends. In 2015-2016, three states that provide induction funding restrict it to mentor stipends, compared to six in 2010-2011. Up from eight states five years ago, 10 states now have authorized dedicated induction funding in state law, but have not appropriated the money for it.

The need for great mentors: A critical factor in assisting new teachers is the quality of the mentor. Our criteria pose several key questions for states: Are mentors selected based on specific guidelines aligned with research and knowledge? Are mentors provided their own support in beginning their role, and do they have good professional learning as they move along? And are mentors' caseloads of new teachers manageable, and do they include time for mentors and teachers to collaborate?

States should set explicit criteria for the selection of mentors, including evidence of teaching excellence and an ability to serve effectively as a mentor. States also need to ensure mentors get the initial and continuing training they need for their specific role.

A critical factor in assisting new teachers is the quality of the mentor.

Merely assigning new teachers a mentor—the age-old “buddy system”—does not meet the needs of new educators. Schools have done this for a long time with little apparent impact. More research and best practices now exist for teacher-mentors, enabling states and districts to provide them more effective guidance and training.

Mentors should be assigned to new teachers at the start of the school year. In selecting mentors, schools should attend to the subject and grade level of new teachers—but not be overly restrictive with such requirements. The best mentor for a particular teacher may be down the hall—or working in another school. Mentors, whether they're full-time instructional coaches or classroom teachers who perform this role atop a full teaching load, need appropriate time to meet with and observe teachers during the school day. State policy should support regular interaction between mentors and beginning teachers. Mentors' caseloads should also be flexible, depending on their role and the needs of new teachers.

Making the entire system of support for new teachers work requires more from states than simply monitoring local school systems' compliance with program rules. Program success should be measured at both the state and local levels, and evaluations should

guide improvements in new educator support. These program assessments should include an annual survey of all new teachers and perhaps mentors and principals about their support and how it might be improved.

Good Policy to Support Good Practice

Policy is only as good as what it accomplishes. The real test of states' prioritization of support for new educators comes from the programs and resources they devote to this area of education—and their attention to the provision of comprehensive, quality induction support. While other areas of state policy related to teachers—their preparation, evaluations and professional development—are important, they at times have overshadowed the need for states and schools to help the rising number of new educators succeed. Without greater attention to beginning teachers and school leaders, many schools cannot meet the higher standards most states have enacted, nor prepare more of their students for college and good careers.

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States can help to put good policy on new teachers into practice through communication and outreach, helping school districts or consortia of districts to build their own capacity, developing technological tools and effective program design, and providing for the professional learning needed for mentors and new educators. States also need to monitor the success of their own efforts and make improvements continually, and require schools to provide support for new educators as part of state accountability and oversight. Research and surveys of educators have shown consistently that states with more detailed policies around support for new teachers provide the greatest level of assistance for these beginning educators.¹¹ They deserve our best, so that they can bring their best knowledge and skills to our nation's students.



State Induction Policy Criteria

- 1. *Educators Served.*** State policy should:
 - a. Require that all beginning teachers receive induction support during their first two years in the profession; and
 - b. Require that all beginning school principals and administrators receive induction support during their first two years in the profession.

- 2. *Mentor Quality.*** State policy should:
 - a. Require a rigorous mentor selection process;
 - b. Require foundational training and ongoing professional development for mentors;
 - c. Establish criteria for how and when mentors are assigned to beginning educators; and
 - d. Allow for a manageable caseload of beginning educators and the use of full-time teacher mentors.

- 3. *Time.*** State policy should encourage programs to:
 - a. Provide release time for teacher mentors; and
 - b. Provide dedicated mentor-new teacher contact time.

- 4. *Program Quality.*** State policy should address the overall quality of induction programs by:
 - a. Requiring regular observation of new teachers by mentors, the provision of instructional feedback based on those observations, and opportunities for new teachers to observe experienced teachers' classrooms;
 - b. Encouraging a reduced teaching load for beginning teachers; and
 - c. Encouraging beginning educators' participation in a learning community or peer network.

- 5. *Program Standards.*** The state should adopt formal program standards that govern the design and operation of local educator induction programs.

- 6. *Funding.*** The state should:
 - a. Authorize and appropriate dedicated funding for local educator induction programs; and/or
 - b. Establish competitive innovation funding to support high-quality, standards-based programs.

- 7. *Educator Certification/Licensure.*** The state should require beginning educators to complete an induction program to move from an initial license.

- 8. *Program Accountability.*** The state should assess and monitor induction programs through strategies such as program evaluation, program surveys, and peer review.

- 9. *Teaching Conditions.*** The state should:
 - a. Adopt formal standards for teaching and learning conditions;
 - b. Conduct a regular assessment of such conditions; and
 - c. Incorporate the improvement of such conditions into school improvement plans.



Purpose

This report—accompanied by extensive policy summaries for all 50 states (available on the New Teacher Center (NTC) website)¹²—aims to assist policymakers and education leaders in making improvements to beginning educator induction and mentoring policies and programs. We have analyzed state policies on new educator induction and mentoring against nine criteria. NTC has opted not to grade or rank states against these policy criteria; instead, we have chosen to share our analysis in a collaborative spirit. We look forward to opportunities to work with states in reviewing their existing policies, strengthening the ones they have in place, and helping them to better support beginning educators upon their entry into the teaching profession and into the ranks of school and district leadership.

The Need for High-Quality Induction

Historically, many beginning teachers were left to ‘sink-or-swim’ during their initial days in the classroom. If they needed help, they had to ask for it. And often it wasn’t especially helpful. In recent years, the assignment of mentors for new teachers has become increasingly prevalent.¹³ However, most support programs still do not provide a bundle of multiple supports and assistance—and most state policies do not articulate a comprehensive teacher induction system—in a manner that research suggests is necessary to strengthen teaching and learning.

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Mentoring support makes a huge difference to teachers. We know because we ask them. A 2014 survey released by the National Network of State Teachers of the Year and the American Institutes for Research indicates that 55 percent of new teachers listed “access to a mentor” as having the largest impact on developing their effectiveness as a teacher.¹⁴ A 2015 federal analysis found that beginning teachers who were assigned a first-year mentor were significantly more likely to remain in the profession than those who were not assigned a first-year mentor.¹⁵

But mentoring is only one component of comprehensive educator induction—and all mentors and approaches to mentoring are not created equal. Existing induction and mentoring programs vary in quality from old-fashioned “buddy systems” that provide very limited emotional and logistical support to comprehensive systems that use carefully selected and trained mentors and provide structured time for interaction focused on improving new teachers’ classroom management and instructional skills.

Half-hearted approaches to induction and mentoring exact a high price on new teachers, their students, and their school communities. Such programs fail to make the best use of human and financial resources and don’t achieve lasting impact or address the individual needs of new educators. These types of programs create a mirage of support rather than giving new educators the kinds of support they need. Their presence allows school leaders and policymakers to check the box and say, “Oh, yes. We provide mentoring.” But they fly in the face of the evidence on comprehensive induction and the lasting impact it can have on educator growth and school culture.¹⁶

Regardless of the quality or source of their initial preparation, beginning teachers encounter a steady stream of distinct challenges in their initial years in the classroom.¹⁷ Too many new teachers struggle in isolation—or with inadequate assistance—to navigate the steep learning curve of these early years. And teachers in their initial years are, on average, less effective than more experienced ones.¹⁸

High-quality induction programs can overcome these challenges by accelerating new educators' professional growth. Research suggests that comprehensive, multi-year induction programs reduce the rate of new teacher attrition, accelerate the professional growth of new teachers, provide a positive return on investment, and improve student learning. A federally funded study found that the classrooms led by new teachers who received two years of comprehensive induction support achieved greater student learning gains in mathematics and reading compared to those of new teachers who were provided more typical, less intensive support.¹⁹

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Informed by more than two decades of work with hundreds of school districts and states, NTC has found that a comprehensive and systemic approach to teacher induction is essential. Focused, comprehensive induction helps teachers get better faster, sometimes surpassing veteran colleagues in their effectiveness. Essential components for program success include: (1) capable instructional mentors, (2) effective school principals, (3) multiple support structures for beginning teachers, and (4) ongoing program evaluation.

Efforts to improve new educator induction, and teacher effectiveness generally, also must address teaching and learning conditions—including the critical role of school leadership, opportunities for teacher leadership and collaboration, and personalized professional development.²⁰ Inducting new teachers into a weak professional community limits the impact of high quality induction. Weak professional environments rob new teachers of the opportunity to achieve their full potential, or push effective teachers to schools with a stronger professional community or out of the profession entirely. Poor working conditions stifle teachers' ability to learn and improve on the job.²¹ And they can depress the student achievement in classes led by new teachers.²²

The impact of high-quality induction has special significance for hard-to-staff schools that serve a disproportionate number of low-income and minority students. In such schools, teacher turnover is generally higher—sometimes rampant—and inexperienced and out-of-field teachers comprise a disproportionate percentage of the faculty. Forty-five percent of all teacher turnover occurs in the nation's hardest-to-staff schools.²³ Induction programs help to provide the specialized support that new teachers need in these schools. Strong support also can contribute to the transformation of these hard-to-staff schools into strong professional communities where educators want to stay and work—and where they can be successful practitioners.



The Role of State Policy

State policies make a difference. It may seem obvious, but in states that do not require any form of induction or mentoring, new educators are less likely to receive it.²⁴ While the absence of strong state policies does not hinder the isolated development of induction and mentoring programs, an analysis of federal Schools and Staffing Survey data suggests that new teachers in states with more comprehensive induction policies—including an induction mandate—are more likely to be assigned a mentor.²⁵

But state policies need to make a bigger difference than that. Simply requiring schools and districts to assign a mentor to every new teacher without regard to mentor or program quality offers little benefit for the educator or the education system as a whole. Too many states with a mentoring mandate do so in the absence of key policy elements such as funding, strong program standards, program oversight, or mentor selection and training requirements. Ultimately, to be effective, these policies must be strategically designed, continuously assessed and constantly communicated to local educational leaders in order to best serve new educators, mentors, induction program leaders, and school districts.²⁶ In concert, these are the induction elements that can work to improve educator practice and strengthen classroom instruction.

Few states have such comprehensive educator induction policies—and those that do exist are sometimes not followed or are implemented poorly. Among the more than 352,000 U.S. educators NTC surveyed during the 2013-2014 school year through our Teaching & Learning Conditions Initiative²⁷, between 4.4 and 22.4 percent of beginning teachers in seven states with an induction or mentoring requirement reported that they were not formally assigned a mentor. In the two states we surveyed that do not require induction or mentoring programs, a larger percentage of beginning teachers (26.4 and 35.2 percent) reported not being assigned a mentor. Further, in all nine states where we surveyed educators, many new teachers did not receive strong mentoring support in such areas as planning instruction, observing teaching, or analyzing student work.²⁸

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For NTC, the key question is not *whether* states should ensure that all new teachers and principals receive induction assistance, but *how* this support is best provided. Although contemporary education politics and some state cultures prioritize honoring local control of schools, new educator induction is a policy area that benefits from state leadership. State-led induction program standards, program tools and infrastructure can provide flexibility to local school systems to design and develop support systems for beginning educators that fit their context without sacrificing excellence in program design. States are critical in providing school districts with the guidance and support to implement high-quality induction for early-career teachers and principals.²⁹

State Induction Policy Criteria

Nine criteria provide a foundation for our analysis of state educator induction policies. Together, these criteria can effectively support and guide local school districts toward induction program excellence. From our review of available research and NTC's organizational expertise, we contend that states that come closest to meeting all nine criteria will raise the likelihood that every new educator will receive a sufficient level of induction and mentoring support, will ensure that local programs incorporate an effective design, and will enjoy the resulting benefits—including heightened job satisfaction, enhanced effectiveness, and increased levels of retention.

State Induction Policy Criteria

- 1. *Educators Served.*** State policy should:
 - a. Require that all beginning teachers receive induction support during their first two years in the profession; and
 - b. Require that all beginning school principals and administrators receive induction support during their first two years in the profession.
- 2. *Mentor Quality.*** State policy should:
 - a. Require a rigorous mentor selection process;
 - b. Require foundational training and ongoing professional development for mentors;
 - c. Establish criteria for how and when mentors are assigned to beginning educators; and
 - d. Allow for a manageable caseload of beginning educators and the use of full-time teacher mentors.
- 3. *Time.*** State policy should encourage programs to:
 - a. Provide release time for teacher mentors; and
 - b. Provide dedicated mentor-new teacher contact time.
- 4. *Program Quality.*** State policy should address the overall quality of induction programs by:
 - a. Requiring regular observation of new teachers by mentors, the provision of instructional feedback based on those observations, and opportunities for new teachers to observe experienced teachers' classrooms;
 - b. Encouraging a reduced teaching load for beginning teachers; and
 - c. Encouraging beginning educators' participation in a learning community or peer network.
- 5. *Program Standards.*** The state should adopt formal program standards that govern the design and operation of local educator induction programs.
- 6. *Funding.*** The state should:
 - a. Authorize and appropriate dedicated funding for local educator induction programs; and/or
 - b. Establish competitive innovation funding to support high-quality, standards-based programs.

State Induction Policy Criteria (continued)

- 7. Educator Certification/Licensure.** The state should require beginning educators to complete an induction program to move from an initial license.
- 8. Program Accountability.** The state should assess and monitor induction programs through strategies such as program evaluation, program surveys, and peer review.
- 9. Teaching Conditions.** The state should:
 - a. Adopt formal standards for teaching and learning conditions;
 - b. Conduct a regular assessment of such conditions; and
 - c. Incorporate the improvement of such conditions into school improvement plans.

Public policies don't jump off the page and become reality by themselves. Putting them into practice takes more than passing legislation, enacting regulations, and crafting guidance. The mere existence of state educator induction policies is no guarantor of universal access to quality programs. That is why our criteria go beyond traditional policy elements, such as mandates and funding, to include quality program standards as well as program evaluation and oversight. States also must attend to local policy implementation, developing leadership support and building programmatic capacity, through strategies such as: communicating program vision; building state program infrastructure; developing program tools; modeling effective program design; offering training for mentors, program leaders, and school administrators; providing technical assistance; and evaluating the efficacy of local program models and state induction policy overall.

State Induction Policies³⁰

Twenty-nine states require beginning teachers to participate in some form of induction or mentoring and, as a result, more new teachers receive mentoring or induction support than ever before.³¹ In 1990-91, 51 percent of beginning teachers participated in such a program. By 2011-12, 85 percent of beginning teachers did.³² However, only 20 states have similar requirements for beginning school principals and administrators.

Even states with existing induction and mentoring requirements have more work to do to strengthen their policies and practices. While a majority of states address many of our nine policy criteria, many of their policies are weak, often serve purely as guidance, and sometimes only apply to programs in districts that choose to offer them. Certain states demonstrate strength with respect to one or more of our criteria, but not with others.



Support From The Start

6

A small number of states—Connecticut, Delaware, and Iowa—rise to the top by meeting some of the most important criteria, providing that every new educator receives multi-year induction support, requiring new educators to participate in an induction program as a condition of professional licensure, establishing high expectations for program quality, and actively evaluating or monitoring local induction and mentoring programs. Hawaii also requires and funds a multi-year induction program for teachers and school principals, but not specifically for purposes of educator licensure.

Criterion 1: Educators Served—

- A. STATE POLICY SHOULD REQUIRE THAT ALL BEGINNING TEACHERS RECEIVE INDUCTION SUPPORT DURING THEIR FIRST TWO YEARS IN THE PROFESSION.**
- B. STATE POLICY SHOULD REQUIRE THAT ALL BEGINNING PRINCIPALS AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS RECEIVE INDUCTION SUPPORT DURING THEIR FIRST TWO YEARS IN THE PROFESSION.**

Teachers

We use an expansive lens to determine whether a state requires new teacher support, allowing for various definitions of new teacher induction, mentoring, professional development or other types of support within state policy. It is important, then, to note that the type of programs and supports that individual states require vary considerably. We describe those differences in detail in our subsequent policy criteria and within the individual state policy summaries that accompany this report. We focus on the presence of a state induction requirement for all first- and second-year teachers because of the research that suggests the benefits—such as improved instruction and reduced teacher attrition—may only accrue to teachers and their students from a multi-year course of professional support.

Fifteen states require induction or mentoring for all first- and second-year teachers.

Principals and School Administrators

In determining whether a state requires induction for new school principals and administrators, we generally allow for any articulated definition of induction, coaching, mentoring, professional development or other type of support within state policy. It is important, then, to note that the specifics of what individual states require vary considerably. We focus on the presence of a state induction requirement for all first- and second-year school principals and administrators because of the research about the importance of school leadership for student achievement. In the life of a new teacher, the school principal can be a key facilitator or inhibitor of their professional growth and success. Similar to comprehensive new teacher induction, beginning school principals and superintendents also need customized, on-the-job support during their first two years. Through professional development and direct coaching, school and district administrators need an opportunity to build leadership capacity while creating school conditions that support teacher development and student learning.

Findings/Analysis

Teachers

In total, 29 states require some form of induction or mentoring for all beginning teachers, but 11 of them require it only during a new teacher's first year in the classroom. Fifteen states meet Criterion 1 by requiring induction or mentoring for all first- and second-year teachers. [See Table 1] Six states—[California](#), [Connecticut](#), [Iowa](#), [Maine](#), [Missouri](#), and [Vermont](#)—require induction for all first- and second-year teachers.³³ Nine states require an induction program that spans greater than two years. [Ohio](#) requires a four-year-long

program of support. [Delaware](#), [Hawaii](#), [Louisiana](#), [Maryland](#), [Massachusetts](#), [Michigan](#), [North Carolina](#), and [Utah](#) require an induction program of three years in length.³⁴ In Louisiana's case, however, it is debatable whether the statutory mandate is truly operationalized in schools across that state.³⁵

Table 1. State Policy: New Teacher Induction Requirements

Required, with no minimum program length	Required for one year	Required for two years	Required for more than two years
Colorado	Arkansas	California	Delaware
Rhode Island	Kansas	Connecticut	Hawaii
Wisconsin	Kentucky	Iowa	Louisiana*
	New Jersey	Maine	Maryland
	New Mexico	Missouri	Massachusetts
	New York	Vermont	Michigan
	Oklahoma		North Carolina
	Pennsylvania		Ohio
	South Carolina		Utah
	Virginia		
	West Virginia		
3 states	11 states	6 states	9 states

Three additional states require new teacher induction but do not provide a minimum program length, so cannot be said to meet our stated criterion. [Colorado](#) allows school districts to determine the length of induction, "up to three years." [Rhode Island](#) law simply requires school district strategic plans to "include a process for mentoring of new teachers." [Wisconsin](#) law requires school districts to provide a qualified mentor to each beginning teacher during a "mentoring period" that "may be for less than five years."

Seven states do not require induction for all beginning teachers, but do require it for certain new teachers. Four states ([Alabama](#), [Florida](#), [Mississippi](#), [Tennessee](#)) require induction or mentoring only for alternatively certified teachers. [Alaska](#) requires it for teachers with a subject-matter expert limited certificate, [Nevada](#) for teachers with a special qualifications license, and [North Dakota](#) for teachers who seek a Teaching Alternative Flexibility Endorsement.

While [Alaska](#) has embedded little about new teacher support into its state policies, the state operates and funds one of the more robust induction programs in the nation. The Alaska Department of Education & Early Development partnered with the University of Alaska to create the Alaska Statewide Mentor Project (ASMP), based in part on the NTC Induction Model. Forty ASMP mentors served more than 500 new teachers during the 2014-2015 school year. Since its inception in 2004, the ASMP has served more than 2,600 new teachers in 48 out of 54 Alaska school districts.³⁶

Support From The Start

More than 10 additional states address new teacher induction in state policy, but do not make it mandatory for individual teachers or school districts. (None of these states are counted among the 29 with universal induction requirements.) Illinois does not “require” induction because its statutory requirement is contingent upon a level of state funding (\$1,200 for every beginning teacher) that has never materialized since the law was passed in 2002. Minnesota encourages school districts to develop mentoring programs for teachers. The Minnesota Department of Education’s most recent staff development data show that 87 percent of school districts operate some type of teacher mentoring program, although only one-third of them extend that support beyond first-year teachers.³⁷ South Dakota also doesn’t require teacher induction, but the state education agency operates two teacher mentor programs, including one that primarily serves remote school districts and schools with a high percentage of Native American students. As we will see under Criterion 6: Funding, states such as Oregon, Texas, and Washington award competitive grants for new teacher induction and mentoring, but do not require the practice statewide.

States are less likely to require induction or mentoring for new school administrators than for beginning teachers.

Certain states require a minimum induction period but allow for optional additional years. For example, Iowa requires two years of support, but also allows an optional third year (at the expense of the district or area education agency). Some states have differing minimum induction program length for teachers with different preparation experiences. Other states differentiate the program length for different types of teachers. Arkansas requires one year of induction for most new teachers, but two years for some alternatively certified teachers. Maryland requires three years of induction for beginning teachers, but also ensures that experienced teachers new to the school district receive one year of induction support. Alongside its three-year induction requirement for all new teachers, Delaware also provides one year of support for experienced teachers who are new to the state or to a licensure category.

Principals and School Administrators

States are less likely to require induction or mentoring for new school administrators than for beginning teachers. Whereas 29 states require some form of induction or mentoring for all beginning teachers, only 20 states require some form of professional support for all new school principals. Six states (California, Delaware, Hawaii, Missouri, New Jersey, Vermont) meet this criterion by requiring induction or mentoring for every first- and second-year school administrator.³⁸ Delaware is the only state that requires three years of support for new principals and school administrators. In total, 19 states require an induction or mentoring program for *both* new teachers and school administrators. Only two states—Alabama (only for school superintendents) and Texas—require support for beginning school administrators but not for beginning teachers.

Eleven states have a one-year induction mandate for beginning principals and administrators. Alabama requires one year of support only for its district superintendents. New Jersey requires a one-year program for superintendents and school business officials, but a two-year program for new principals. As with their

beginning teachers, [Colorado](#) and [Wisconsin](#) require an induction period for new principals and school administrators of an undefined length. [Pennsylvania](#) requires induction for new school principals, but allows it to occur anytime within the principal's first five years on the job. [See Table 2]

Table 2. State Policy: New School Principal/Administrator Induction Requirements

Required, with no minimum program length	Required for one year	Required for two years	Required for more than two years
Colorado	Arkansas	California	Delaware
Pennsylvania	Iowa	Hawaii	
Wisconsin	Kansas	Missouri	
	Maryland	New Jersey (principals only)	
	Massachusetts	Vermont	
	New York		
	South Carolina		
	Texas		
	Utah		
	Virginia		
	West Virginia		
3 states	11 states	5 states	1 state

[Illinois](#) state law requires two years of support for new district superintendents and one year for school principals, but these mandates are contingent upon a level of state funding that never has materialized. [Kentucky's](#) Principal Internship Program is currently suspended due to budget constraints.

At least three additional states operate beginning school administrator induction programs, but do not require participation by educators or districts. For example, the [Alabama](#) New Principal Mentoring Program is an optional two-year coaching and support program supported by the state education department. LEAD [Connecticut](#) operates the Turnaround Principals Program aimed at low-achieving schools. [New Mexico's](#) School Leadership Institute provides "a comprehensive and cohesive framework for preparing, mentoring and providing professional development for principals."

And, as we will see under Criterion 6: Funding, [Oregon](#) awards competitive grants for new school administrator induction and mentoring, but does not require it statewide.



Selected State Policy Examples

Teachers

- **California** requires local induction programs to provide a two-year, individualized, job-embedded system of mentoring, support and professional learning that begins in the teacher's first year of teaching.
- **Delaware** provides induction support for all beginning teachers during their first three years in the profession, in addition to providing support to experienced teachers new to the state or new to a licensure category during their first year of employment.
- **Hawaii** requires all first- and second-year teachers to receive intensive support from full-time mentors, with assistance available to third-year teachers.
- **North Carolina** requires all beginning teachers to participate in a three-year induction program.
- **Ohio** requires beginning teachers to complete a four-year Resident Educator Program of induction support and mentoring.
- **Utah's** Entry Years Enhancement (EYE) in Quality Teaching program provides all new teachers with induction support during their first three years in the profession.

Principals and School Administrators

- **California** requires all new school administrators to receive two years of induction support. A qualified, trained coach is assigned to each educator for the first two years of his/her administrative career.
- **Missouri** requires all new school administrators to participate in a district-provided induction program during their first two years.
- **New Jersey** requires all new principals to participate in a two-year residency program for principal certification.

State Policy Recommendations

1. Establish a multi-year induction requirement for all beginning teachers.
2. Establish a multi-year induction requirement for all beginning school principals and administrators.

Criterion 2: Mentor Quality—

- A. STATE POLICY SHOULD REQUIRE A RIGOROUS MENTOR SELECTION PROCESS AND FOUNDATIONAL TRAINING AND ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR MENTORS.**
- B. STATE POLICY SHOULD ESTABLISH CRITERIA FOR HOW AND WHEN MENTORS AND ASSIGNED TO BEGINNING EDUCATORS.**
- C. STATE POLICY SHOULD ALLOW FOR A MANAGEABLE CASELOAD OF BEGINNING EDUCATORS AND THE USE OF FULL-TIME TEACHER MENTORS.**

Effective mentors are at the heart of every high-quality induction program. The selection, training, on-going support and strategic use of mentor teachers is critical to instructionally focused guidance for beginning educators. Mentor selection and training is critical given that the skills and abilities of an effective mentor are different from those of an effective classroom teacher. These include facilitation of adult learning, classroom observation, and leading reflective coaching conversations. Foundational mentor training and on-going professional development are important tools to ensure that the provision of quality support is aligned with program goals. In addition, pairing mentors with beginning teachers of similar teaching and/or school assignments and solidifying the mentor-new educator partnership at the start of the school year are important considerations.

At least 29 states clearly define who is eligible to serve as a mentor teacher and articulate mentor selection processes.

Findings/Analysis

Slightly more than half of the states have specific policies that address mentor selection and training. At least 29 states clearly define who is eligible to serve as a mentor teacher and articulate mentor selection processes. Forty states address mentor training within their policies—and more than 30 states require some type of mentor training. Some states provide statewide or regional training for teacher mentors. But only 22 states' policies address the need for on-going mentor development—and only 18 states require it. Twenty-seven states address issues related to mentor assignment within their policies.

Mentor Selection

The most typical factors used by states to determine mentor qualifications include teaching experience, communication and interpersonal skills, and teaching excellence. A majority of states use teaching experience and/or holding a professional teaching license as a foundational requirement for serving as a mentor. Many states typically require a minimum of three-to-five years of classroom teaching experience, as well.

Several states articulate a specific definition of teaching effectiveness or excellence as a mentor selection criteria. In Delaware, a mentor must “have satisfactory teaching evaluations” and lead mentors must successfully complete a series of questions and observations to qualify for the position. Kansas allows recent evaluations and professional recognition through the National Board for Professional Teaching

Standards as criteria to determine “exemplary teaching.” New Jersey makes “a rating of ‘effective or highly effective on the most recent summative evaluation’” a requirement for mentor selection.

Two states require a special certification for mentors. Georgia requires a Teacher Support Specialist licensure endorsement. Montana defines mentoring as a “special competency area.”

South Carolina is unique in that it articulates a set of 12 specific skills and abilities upon which a mentor teacher must be evaluated, including knowledge of beginning-teacher professional development and effective adult learning strategies, familiarity with the state’s performance assessment system, and the willingness and the ability to engage in non-evaluative assessment processes, including planning and reflective conversations with beginning teachers about their classroom practice.

Mentor Training

More than 30 states require training for mentors, but most state policies say little about its content or delivery. The few states that do articulate specific training elements include such components as: knowledge of state teaching standards, formative assessment of new teacher performance, classroom observation, reflective conversations, and adult learning theory. Some states offer mentor training or license mentor training providers, while others devolve responsibility for training mentors to local programs.

Table 3. State Policy: Mentor Training/Professional Development

State requires or recommends foundational mentor training and on-going professional development	
California	New York
Colorado	North Carolina
Connecticut	North Dakota
Hawaii	Ohio
Illinois	Oregon
Kansas	Rhode Island
Maryland	South Carolina
Massachusetts	Utah
New Jersey	Washington

Only 18 states require both foundational mentor training and on-going professional development for mentor teachers. [See Table 3] The Alaska Statewide Mentoring Project provides initial training and on-going mentor support, but the state does not address these requirements in policy. The NTC national induction model provides for 12 full days of mentor professional development in years one and two, and half-day mentor learning forums every week or every other week. While such intensive, on-going mentor training

may not be warranted as a state requirement, mandating some on-going support to deepen and refresh mentor knowledge is important.

Mentor Assignment and Caseload

A slight majority of states' policies address how mentors are assigned to beginning educators. The timing of the assignment is a primary issue. California requires each teacher induction program to ensure that mentors are assigned to each beginning teacher "within the first 30 days of the participant's enrollment in the program." New Jersey requires that each novice teacher must be "assigned a mentor at the beginning of the contracted teaching assignment." North Carolina requires mentors to initiate contact with beginning teachers and learn about their needs "before or near the start of school or at the time of hire if later in the year." South Carolina says that districts must assign mentors to beginning teachers "in a timely manner, before the teachers start teaching—or, in the case of late hires, not more than two weeks after their start date."

NTC believes that the strategy of utilizing full-time mentors, released from all classroom-teaching duties, maximizes program quality and allows the support provider to focus entirely on his or her role as a mentor.

Some states have very specific policies regarding mentor assignments. For example, Kentucky law prescribes priorities for selecting and matching resource teachers to beginning teacher interns, in the following order: (1) Teachers with the same certification in the same school; (2) Teachers with the same certification in the same district; (3) Teachers in the same school; (4) Teachers in the same district; and (5) Teachers in an adjacent school district. It is unclear whether such assignment requirements are beneficial or overly restrictive. Given the limited research-based guidance on assigning mentors, it may be more appropriate for state policies to *guide* local program leaders to be attentive to such assignment criteria, but not *prescribe* a specific approach to pairing mentors with beginning educators.

Full-Time Mentors

NTC believes that the strategy of utilizing full-time mentors, released from all classroom-teaching duties, maximizes program quality and allows the support provider to focus entirely on his or her role as a mentor. It allows programs to be especially selective with regard to which educators serve in the important role of mentor. It provides unlimited flexibility for mentors to meet with, observe and provide feedback to beginning teachers during the school day.

Some states affirmatively allow for fully released mentors within their policies and program standards. These include Hawaii, Idaho, Maryland, Ohio and Washington. In addition, the Alaska Statewide Mentor Project utilizes full-time mentors who visit new teachers in person every month and communicate with them weekly through virtual means, by e-mail or phone. Minnesota's teacher induction program guidance discusses the benefits of full-time teacher mentors, and New Hampshire's induction toolkit recommends part-time and full-time mentors.

Several states restrict the caseloads of teacher mentors. For example, Alabama and Arkansas do not allow current classroom teachers to mentor more than one new teacher. Alabama, however, allows a retired teacher to take on a caseload of as many as 15 beginners. Connecticut limits a mentor teacher's caseload to 1:2 or 1:3; Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi and South Carolina (for full-time teachers) to 1:2; Delaware to 1:3; and Virginia 1:4.

Selected State Policy Examples

Mentor Selection

- **Connecticut** requires mentor teachers to demonstrate: (1) effective teaching practice; (2) ability to work cooperatively as a team member to aid the professional growth of a beginning teacher; (3) professional commitment to improving the induction of beginning teachers; (4) ability to relate effectively to adult learners; and (5) ability to be reflective and articulate about the craft of teaching.
- **New Jersey** state regulations establish minimum criteria for mentor selection. Criteria include: (1) Certification in the subject area in which the beginning teacher is working; (2) Three years of teaching experience and has taught full-time for at least two years within the last five years; (3) A record of success in the classroom, including a rating of "effective or highly effective on the most recent summative evaluation"; (4) Understanding of the social and workplace norms of the school district and the community it serves; and (5) Understanding of the resources and opportunities available in the school district and the ability to act as a referral source to the novice provisional teacher.
- **South Carolina** requires each district to evaluate the performance of each mentor teacher on: (1) knowledge of beginning-teacher professional development and effective adult learning strategies; (2) familiarity with the state's performance assessment system; (3) knowledge of research-based instructional strategies and effective student assessment; (4) understanding of the importance of an educator having a thorough command of the subject matter and teaching skills; (5) understanding of the importance of literacy in the classroom; (6) record of exemplary teaching and professional conduct; (7) effective interpersonal and communication skills; (8) demonstrated commitment to his or her own professional growth and learning; (9) willingness and the ability to participate in professional preparation to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to be an effective mentor; (10) willingness and ability to engage in non-evaluative assessment processes, including the ability to hold planning and reflective conversations with beginning teachers about their classroom practice; (11) willingness and ability to work collaboratively and share instructional ideas and materials with beginning teachers; and (12) willingness and ability to deepen his or her understanding of cultural, racial, ethnic, linguistic, and cognitive diversity.

Mentor Training

- In **California**, mentors must receive ongoing training and support that includes: coaching and mentoring; goal setting; use of appropriate mentoring instruments; best practices in adult learning; support for individual mentoring challenges; reflection on mentoring practice; opportunities to engage with mentoring peers in professional learning networks; and program processes designed to support candidate growth and effectiveness.
- **Hawaii** Teacher Induction Program Standards require mentors to be provided an orientation to the induction program and continuous instructional mentor training. Additionally, mentors should participate in professional learning communities (PLCs) of mentor practice. Key features of mentor training and PLCs include opportunities to reflect on their use of mentoring tools, protocols and formative assessments, and setting professional goals aligned with mentor standards.
- **Maryland** requires school districts to provide initial and ongoing mentor training that includes: (1) The essential characteristics of mentoring adults and the duties and responsibilities of a mentor; (2) Addressing the specific and varied performance needs of mentees; (3) Models of effective instructional practices that address the identified needs of mentees; and (4) Identification and coordination of appropriate resources to address the performance needs of mentees.
- **North Carolina** requires programs to provide initial training to mentors regarding their role and responsibilities, ongoing training “to advance their knowledge and skills,” and “opportunities to participate in professional learning communities of mentoring practice.”
- **South Carolina** offers initial mentor training in collaboration with the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention and Advancement (CERRA). The state’s required mentor professional development program consists of: (1) initial mentor training; (2) advanced mentor training for selected mentors; and (3) continuous professional development for all mentors.

Mentor Assignment and Caseload

- **Idaho** Mentor Program Standards suggest that mentors should be assigned to beginning teachers in a timely manner, taking content, grade level, pedagogical needs and local context into account.
- **Illinois** Induction Program Standards guide programs to match beginning teachers and mentors according to relevant factors, including certification, experience, current assignments and/or proximity of location.
- **Massachusetts** requires districts to assign a mentor “within the first two weeks of the school year.” The mentor and new teacher, where possible, should be paired according to content area, grade level, and location.



Full-Time Mentors

- **Hawaii** Teacher Induction Program Standards require all first- and second-year teachers to receive intensive support from full-time mentors. Beginning teacher-to-full-release mentor ratios must not exceed 15-to-1.
- **Maryland** state policy requires school districts, as part of their comprehensive teacher induction program, to establish “a cadre of full-time or part-time mentors to support teachers during their comprehensive induction period.” To the extent practicable given staffing and fiscal concerns, district induction programs must not exceed the maximum ratio of mentors to mentees (one mentor to 15 mentees).
- **Washington** requires recipients of the state Beginning Educator Support Team grant to employ full-time mentors with a caseload of beginning teachers not to exceed 1:20.

State Policy Recommendations

1. Establish explicit mentor selection criteria, including evidence of teaching excellence and an ability to serve effectively as a mentor.
2. Provide or require foundational mentor training prior to assignment and on-going mentor professional development.
3. Ensure that mentors receive sufficient foundational training and on-going professional development in classroom observation, formative assessment of teaching practice, providing actionable feedback, and engaging in collaborative coaching conversations.
4. Require programs to ensure that mentor assignments occur in a timely manner, near the start of the school year or a teacher’s initial assignment.
5. Allow the use of full-time mentors, who are able to support larger caseloads of beginning teachers and which afford greater selectivity for mentor roles.

Criterion 3: Time—

- A. STATE POLICY SHOULD ENCOURAGE PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE RELEASE TIME FOR TEACHER MENTORS.**
- B. STATE POLICY SHOULD ENCOURAGE PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE DEDICATED MENTOR-NEW TEACHER CONTACT TIME.**

Mentors need time to do their jobs well. Short of restructuring the school day to increase professional learning time for all teachers, employing full-time mentors or providing regular release from classroom teaching duties are effective strategies to provide them with dedicated time to excel in their professional role, including interactions with and observations of beginning teachers during the school day.

State policy must raise the expectations of what induction programs can accomplish for individual beginning educators by incorporating research-based elements into program design. Chief among these are a regular and sufficient amount of mentor-new teacher contact time.

Mentor Release Time

NTC believes that using full-time mentors, released from all classroom-teaching duties, provides them with the greatest amount of flexibility to meet with, observe and provide feedback for beginning teachers. In addition to freeing mentor teachers from balancing mentoring duties with a full (or reduced) teaching load, employing full-time mentors who have more time to spend with new teachers allows induction programs to be more selective and choose the highest quality mentor candidates. As we noted under Criterion 2, some states encourage fully released mentors within their policies.

Nearly half of the states require or encourage districts to provide release time to mentor teachers to conduct classroom observations and engage in other induction-related activities during the school day.

In cases where full-time mentor teachers are not achievable or practicable, state policy should provide dedicated time during the school day for mentors to perform their jobs, including observing beginning teachers' classrooms. Nearly half of the states require or encourage districts to provide release time to mentor teachers to conduct classroom observations and engage in other induction-related activities during the school day. States that require school districts to provide release time for mentor teachers include [Arkansas](#),

[Connecticut](#), [Hawaii](#), [Iowa](#), [Massachusetts](#), [New York](#), [North Carolina](#), [North Dakota](#), [Ohio](#), [Virginia](#) and [Washington](#). Another approach taken by a few states—including [Connecticut](#), [Michigan](#), [Ohio](#) and [Virginia](#)—is to allow the use of retired teachers as mentors.

Mentor-New Teacher Contact Time

One of the program design elements most associated with impacts on teaching effectiveness and student learning is the frequency and duration of mentor contact time with beginning teachers.³⁹ NTC typically recommends one to two hours per week of “protected time” for interactions between each mentor and mentee.⁴⁰ Without

sufficient time to develop a trusted, mentoring relationship characterized by frequent and substantive interactions, policy and programmatic intent is undermined and the likelihood of improved new teacher effectiveness and student achievement is diminished. Unless specific requirements around time for these interactions are in place, competing priorities in schools tend to overshadow mentoring time.

Yet a large number of states have established no expectations for mentoring time. In total, 31 states *mention* the issue of time within their policies, and 17 states establish specific contact time requirements for mentor teachers.

A smaller number of more comprehensive state policies take one of two approaches. First, 12 states ([Alabama](#), [California](#), [Connecticut](#), [Delaware](#), [Georgia](#), [Hawaii](#), [Illinois](#), [Kansas](#), [Kentucky](#), [Mississippi](#), [Oklahoma](#), [Oregon](#)) establish a minimum amount of contact time between a mentor and beginning teacher, either on a weekly, semester or annual basis. (In only seven of these states, however, do these requirements apply statewide; in the others, they apply only to limited-reach state induction grant programs or optional programs.) Second, a number of states include strong program requirements governing mentor/mentee interactions within their policies and program standards, without quantifying a minimum amount of time. This includes states with specific mentor standards as well as state policies that aim to protect mentors from being assigned additional responsibilities that may infringe upon their time. States that represent strong examples of this approach include [Maryland](#), [North Carolina](#), [Ohio](#), [South Carolina](#), [Utah](#) and [Virginia](#). Among the criteria that [Kansas](#) uses for induction program approval is “a description of activities including contact time.”

Selected State Policy Examples

Mentor Release Time

- **Connecticut** law requires local school boards to “ensure substitute teacher coverage for mentors and beginning teachers to participate in the activities and modules” required in the district’s three-year teacher education and mentoring plan and to ensure that schools “coordinate the activities and schedules of mentors and beginning teachers to ensure faithful implementation of the district plan.”
- **Hawaii** Teacher Induction Program Standards require all first- and second-year teachers to receive intensive support from full-time mentors. Mentor-to-beginning teacher caseloads must not exceed 1:15.
- **North Carolina’s** Beginning Teacher Support Program Standards require programs to provide time for mentors “to work with beginning teachers during and outside of the school day” and to provide mentors and beginning teachers with “protected time to engage in required mentoring and induction-related activities.”

Mentor-New Teacher Contact Time

- **Hawaii** requires standards-based induction programs to ensure that mentors meet with beginning teachers for a minimum of one to two hours a week to improve instruction and student learning and to provide protected time for mentors and beginning teachers to engage in rigorous mentoring and induction-related activities.
- **Kentucky** state law requires each mentor teacher to spend a minimum of 70 hours working with a beginning teacher. Twenty of these hours must be in the classroom and 50 hours in consultation outside of class or attending assessment meetings.
- **Maryland** requires induction programs to include “a cadre of full-time or part-time mentors to support teachers.” It requires ongoing support from a mentor, including regularly scheduled meetings during non-instructional time, and regularly scheduled opportunities for new teachers to observe or co-teach with skilled teachers.
- **Virginia’s** Guidelines for Mentor Teacher Programs require opportunities for communication and feedback among program leaders, mentors and beginning teachers. They also require the provision of adequate release time for mentor teachers during the contract day.

State Policy Recommendations

1. Encourage and enable the use of full-time and part-time teacher mentors, fully or partially released from classroom teaching duties.
2. Require programs to provide regular release time for classroom teachers serving as mentors to meet with and observe beginning teachers during the school day.
3. Allow for flexible mentor caseloads depending on the instructional duties of the mentor. Do not restrict a mentor to supporting only one beginning teacher.
4. Create sanctioned time for interactions between mentors and beginning teachers. This could include quantifying a minimum amount of time or could include creating robust requirements for mentor performance and programs standards that explicitly require sufficient time and for mentor-mentee interactions.

Criterion 4: Program Quality—

- A. STATE POLICY SHOULD ADDRESS THE OVERALL QUALITY OF INDUCTION PROGRAMS BY REQUIRING REGULAR OBSERVATION OF NEW TEACHERS BY MENTORS, THE PROVISION OF INSTRUCTIONAL FEEDBACK BASED ON THOSE OBSERVATIONS, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW TEACHERS TO OBSERVE EXPERIENCED TEACHERS' CLASSROOMS.**
- B. STATE POLICY SHOULD ENCOURAGE A REDUCED TEACHING LOAD FOR BEGINNING TEACHERS.**
- C. STATE POLICY SHOULD ENCOURAGE THE PARTICIPATION OF BEGINNING EDUCATORS IN A LEARNING COMMUNITY OR PEER NETWORK.**

The central aim of state policy should be to develop and sustain local induction programs that develop new teachers' practice and accelerate their effectiveness in the classroom. Needed program elements to accomplish this include: (1) Opportunities for beginning teachers both to be observed in their classrooms and to observe effective, veteran teachers (or their mentor) in their school and district; and (2) Formative assessment of new teacher practice and regular instructional feedback between the mentor and beginning teacher. Other research-based program elements are far less frequently articulated—let alone required—in state policies. These include a reduced teaching load for beginning teachers and required or encouraged participation in a professional learning community or peer network.

Findings/Analysis

Classroom Observations

Classroom observation is a critical part of a strong system of support for new teachers. Mentor teachers need to observe the practice of beginning educators and new teachers need to observe their mentor's classroom or those of other effective veteran peers. A sustained cycle of repeated observations, feedback and discussion is important to beginning teacher development. To be able to observe intentionally and effectively, mentors should receive foundational training in data collection, analysis, and interpretation skills and obtain experience with classroom observation and formative assessment protocols that become the foundation of coaching.

Critical to teacher development is the practice of capturing and using assessment data to guide the support of beginning teachers.

At least 32 states address classroom observation within their policies, either by and/or of the beginning teacher. At least 11 states ([Delaware](#), [Illinois](#), [Kansas](#), [Kentucky](#), [Maine](#), [North Carolina](#), [North Dakota](#), [Oklahoma](#), [Utah](#), [Vermont](#), [Washington](#)) have set in policy a minimum number of observations that the mentor must conduct of the beginning teacher.

Formative Assessment and Instructional Feedback

Critical to teacher development is the practice of capturing and using assessment data to guide the support of beginning teachers. Formative assessment should be ongoing, responsive to teacher developmental needs, collaborative, aligned with professional teaching standards, and based on multiple data sources.⁴¹ Formative assessment of teaching practices not only helps beginning teachers to strive for instructional excellence,

but also helps to establish professional norms of inquiry and continuous learning. It helps beginning teachers assess their emerging practice to identify areas of strength and areas for professional growth.

Formative assessment has three essential elements: (1) Standards that describe best practice and against which a teacher assesses his or her instructional practices; (2) Criteria that enable the teacher to measure growth and development; and (3) Evidence that demonstrates the achievement.⁴² The NTC Formative Assessment System is an example of such a comprehensive approach that helps to support the work of mentors and guide a beginning teacher's growth and development.⁴³

Actionable, frequent, ongoing feedback is a key resource for beginning teachers in becoming more proficient and effective professionals.

Actionable, frequent, ongoing feedback is a key resource for beginning teachers in becoming more proficient and effective professionals. While beginning teachers may get some such feedback through formal job performance evaluations, most of those systems do not provide as many "touch points" as a strong induction program can. As part of their job, mentor teachers should be trained to effectively observe classroom lessons in order to provide helpful feedback, understand the "theory of action" on how feedback helps teachers grow, and provide the types of feedback and cognitive coaching that strengthens instruction.

At least 36 states address formative assessment of teaching practice and feedback for beginning teachers within their induction policies. States that exhibit the strongest policy focus and commitment to building mentor competency include California, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, and South Carolina. State policy on formative assessment and providing actionable teaching feedback is only meaningful if it is placed at the core of mentors' work and it helps to inform individual teachers' development.

Reduced Teaching Loads

Several states' policies articulate a reduced teaching load for beginning educators. Maryland and Massachusetts encourage programs to reduce the teaching load of beginning teachers. North Carolina requires the provision of "optimum" working conditions for beginning teachers, including limited preparations, limited non-instructional duties, and no extracurricular assignments unless requested in writing by the beginning teacher. Colorado requires "sufficient planning time" for beginning teachers in its program regulations. New York allows new teachers to be released from some instruction within state mentoring program guidelines. Virginia's Guidelines for Mentor Teacher Programs require the provision of additional time to beginning teachers when they are placed "in more challenging settings."

Professional Learning Community/Peer Network

Numerous studies have demonstrated the benefits of building a professional learning community for beginning educators.⁴⁴ Participation in such a peer network within a comprehensive induction program can positively impact teaching practice and increase teacher retention. It also serves to expand the sources of support for beginning teachers beyond the individual mentor and the individual school. In addition, it helps to structure a culture of collaboration within the district and among the cadre of beginning educators.

Eleven states' policies ([California](#), [Delaware](#), [Hawaii](#), [Idaho](#), [Maryland](#), [Massachusetts](#), [New Jersey](#), [North Carolina](#), [Ohio](#), [Oregon](#), [South Carolina](#)) address all three key program elements identified in Criterion 4: (1) *classroom observations*, (2) *formative assessment and feedback on teaching* and (3) *participation in a professional learning community or beginning educator peer network*. The [Alaska](#) Statewide Mentoring Project formatively assesses teachers, conducts monthly classroom observation and uses online forums for new teachers—but these elements are not included in state policy. The comprehensiveness of these states' induction policies varies, but they all have codified expected components of the beginning teacher induction programs to clearly ground their purpose in strengthening the instructional skills of beginning teachers.

Selected State Policy Examples

Classroom Observation

- **Delaware** uses an induction program model focused on formative assessment that includes mentor observations of teacher practice. The overall program is built upon a three-year mentoring framework divided into cycles, which include observations, post-observation meetings, video review, workshops, and self-analysis and reflection.
- **Kentucky** law requires that the mentor teacher must conduct three official observations, with each observation lasting one hour or one class period; or two observations followed by an observation of the teacher intern's videotaped classroom lesson. In addition, the classroom observations must be preceded by a pre-observation conference and lesson plan review and followed by a post-observation conference.
- **North Dakota's** Teacher Support System requires mentors to observe mentees' teaching six times per year. In addition, first-year teachers must record themselves teaching twice and discuss this with their mentor. First-year teachers also must spend a minimum of 12 hours per year observing others teachers (possibly including their mentor).
- **Oklahoma** state program regulations require each member of a beginning teacher's residency committee to observe him or her a minimum of three times.

Formative Assessment and Instructional Feedback

- **California** induction program standards require programs to provide beginning teachers both “just in time” and longer-term opportunities to analyze teaching practice through “focused cycles of inquiry.” Focused around Individualized Learning Plans, the mentoring process must support beginning teachers’ “consistent practice of reflection on the effectiveness of instruction, analysis of student and other outcomes data, and the use of these data to further inform the repeated cycle of planning and instruction.”
- **North Carolina** state regulations and standards for the Beginning Teacher Support Program require mentors to hold regular formative assessment conferences to reflect on the progress of the beginning teacher in meeting professional growth goals.
- **South Carolina’s** induction program requirements include a mentor-guided formative assessment process that includes opportunities for each new teacher and mentor to collaborate on a regular basis to reflect upon teaching, areas of identified need, and school procedures and concerns, and to plan for professional development. In addition, they require the mentor and new teacher to create a written professional growth and development plan based upon the new teacher’s identified professional strengths and areas of need related to the state’s teacher performance standards.

Reduced Teaching Loads

- **Maryland** state program regulations recommend that, to the extent practicable, local school systems should consider providing first-year teachers with “a reduction in the teaching schedule” and/or “a reduction, or elimination of, responsibilities for involvement in non-instructional activities other than induction support.”
- **Massachusetts** state guidelines for induction and mentor programs hold principals responsible for ensuring “reasonable working conditions” for beginning teachers, including schedule modifications such as “a moderate teaching load, a course load with relatively few preparations, few extra-curricular duties, and a schedule that is compatible with the mentor’s.”

Learning Community/Peer Network

- **Hawaii** Teacher Induction Program Standards expect beginning teachers to participate in ongoing professional development and professional learning communities designed to meet the unique needs of early-career teachers.
- **Maryland** state regulations require comprehensive induction programs to encompass a wide variety of learning activities for beginning teachers, including teacher study groups and teacher networks.



- **New Jersey** state regulations require school districts to provide every beginning teacher with the opportunity to participate in a professional learning community. Mentoring programs for beginning principals and school administrators must include opportunities to network with other candidates and experienced school leaders.
- **Oregon** state standards require induction programs to establish learning communities for beginning teachers and administrators and their mentors to engage in professional learning, problem solving, and evidenced-based collaborative inquiry.

State Policy Recommendations

1. Require the use of a formative assessment system or structured feedback processes within induction programs to ensure a focus on accelerating beginning teacher development and individualizing support.
2. Require regular opportunities for beginning teachers to observe other classrooms and to be observed by their mentor in their classroom.
3. Encourage the provision of reduced teaching loads for beginning educators.
4. Encourage the participation of beginning educators in a learning community or peer network as part of their induction program.

Criterion 5: Program Standards—

THE STATE SHOULD ADOPT FORMAL PROGRAM STANDARDS THAT GOVERN THE DESIGN AND OPERATION OF LOCAL EDUCATOR INDUCTION PROGRAMS.

Program standards establish a statewide vision for the purpose of induction and articulate the design elements that comprise a strong induction program. They provide the criteria and common language by which programs can develop, improve and be held accountable across a state system. A comprehensive set of *foundational, structural* and *instructional* program standards makes for a strong set of program standards. Foundational elements include program vision, administration and evaluation. Structural elements include mentor roles, mentor selection and training, beginning teacher assessment, and beginning teacher professional development. Instructional elements include a focus on teaching practice and on equity for students.⁴⁵ Ideally, program standards provide sufficient flexibility to allow for induction programs to be customized to meet local needs.

A governing or regulatory body—such as a state board of education or educator licensing board—that has the authority over induction program design and operation, should formally adopt such standards. Alternatively, states should consider providing statutory authority to the state department of education to design and enforce such standards.

Program standards establish a statewide vision for the purpose of induction and articulate the design elements that comprise a strong induction program.

Many states provide regulatory or informal guidance (resources, toolkits, models, etc.) to inform the development of induction programs. While these forms of guidance may be necessary, program standards are preferable because they are written as criteria and lend themselves to the development of other state infrastructure components in support of program development and improvement—as opposed to serving solely as a compliance checklist. They also allow for greater local program customization and variation to meet the needs of local schools and districts, and individual teachers.

Finally, it is worth noting that just because a state labels its program guidance as “standards” does not necessarily mean it actively functions as a set of program requirements, and vice versa. In at least two instances, state program “guidelines” function as requirements. The ideal answer to the question, “When are standards standards?” is when they both inform and govern the design of local induction programs across a state as a matter of practice in a way that strengthens the quality provision of new educator support.

Findings/Analysis

At least 20 states had adopted formalized induction program standards as of the 2015-2016 school year. [See Table 4] State boards of education or educator licensure boards typically approve program standards. Some state laws—such as those in [Connecticut](#), [Missouri](#) and [South Carolina](#)—require the state department of education to develop such standards. [Arizona](#) has a set of induction program standards used programmatically, but not formally adopted by any state policymaking body.⁴⁶

Table 4. State Policy: Induction Program Standards	
State has formally adopted induction program standards	
California	New Mexico
Connecticut	North Carolina
Hawaii	Ohio
Idaho	Oregon
Illinois	Pennsylvania
Kansas	Rhode Island
Maine	South Carolina
Massachusetts	Utah
Michigan	Virginia
Missouri	Washington

Another 12 states provide informal induction program guidelines or toolkits that do not rise to the level of standards. Twenty states provide some detailed induction program regulatory requirements; in six of these states, those rules accompany formal induction program standards. These induction regulations run the gamut from general guidance to more explicit, programmatic requirements. The most detailed statutory or regulatory requirements are found in [Arkansas](#), [Colorado](#), [Delaware](#), [Iowa](#), [Kentucky](#), [Maryland](#), [New Jersey](#), [Oregon](#) (which also has induction program standards), and [West Virginia](#).

Selected State Policy Examples

- **California's** Induction Program Standards encompass six elements: (1) program purpose, (2) components of mentoring design, (3) designing and implementing beginning teacher learning plans, (4) mentor qualifications, selection and training, (5) determining candidate competence for Clear Credential recommendation, and (6) program responsibilities for assuring quality of program services.
- **Connecticut** program guidance articulates the responsibilities of all induction program stakeholders and describes the five professional growth modules that provide a framework of support for new teachers.

- The **North Carolina** State Board of Education approved Beginning Teacher Support Program Standards in January 2010. In addition, the state also has specific standards for mentor teachers.
- **South Carolina's** induction and mentoring standards articulate four key program elements: (1) local program leadership, (2) district program for beginning teachers, (3) district program for mentors, and (4) district plan for program evaluation.
- **Virginia's** Requirements of Quality and Effectiveness for Beginning Teacher Mentor Programs in Hard-to-Staff Schools features 10 requirements for mentoring programs in hard-to-staff schools.

State Policy Recommendations

1. Formally adopt induction program standards to guide the design and operation of local programs, to allow for local program flexibility and customization, and to serve as a tool for program improvement and accountability.
2. States with existing induction program standards or guidelines should review them to ensure that they address a comprehensive set of foundational, structural and instructional program elements.

Criterion 6: Funding—

THE STATE SHOULD AUTHORIZE AND APPROPRIATE DEDICATED FUNDING FOR LOCAL EDUCATOR INDUCTION PROGRAMS AND/OR ESTABLISH COMPETITIVE INNOVATION FUNDING TO SUPPORT HIGH-QUALITY, STANDARDS-BASED PROGRAMS.

Funding is a key strategy for states to establish high-quality new educator induction and mentoring as an educational priority. It legitimizes the state’s interest in quality teaching, which is not just a local concern. It recognizes the real costs (and benefits) associated with comprehensive, high-quality induction programs. State funding for induction also can recognize its status as a licensure requirement for individual educators in many jurisdictions.

Comprehensive induction programs can cost thousands of dollars per beginning teacher. There are costs for training, meetings, materials, stipends, release time, and substitute teachers. State funding, where it exists, provides a critical base of support for local programs—especially for high-need school districts that employ larger percentages of new teachers. A combination of state, federal and local resources can help move a program from good to great. Research shows that it is an investment worth making: a 2007 cost-benefit analysis determined that the return on investment of a teacher induction program after five years was \$1.66 for every dollar spent.⁴⁷ The Washington State Institute for Public Policy has calculated a \$39.77 return on every dollar invested in teacher induction and mentoring.⁴⁸ High-quality induction pays dividends through reduced teacher turnover costs and accelerated new teacher effectiveness.

Findings/Analysis

During the 2015-2016 school year, 16 states provided dedicated funding for induction and mentoring. [See Table 5] States meet Criterion 6 when funding is *dedicated* explicitly for the purpose of new educator induction. Also, states must actually appropriate and not just authorize funding in order to meet this criterion.

Table 5. State Policy: Dedicated Induction Funding	
State provides dedicated funding for teacher induction (2015-16 school year)	
Alaska (<i>state-funded program</i>)	North Dakota
Arkansas*	Oregon#
Connecticut* (<i>also funds state mentor training</i>)	South Carolina
Delaware*	Texas#
Hawaii	Virginia
Illinois#	Washington#
Iowa	West Virginia
Kentucky (<i>state-funded program</i>)	Wisconsin#
* State reserves all local funding for mentor stipends. # Limited, competitive funding, not universally provided statewide.	

If state resources are available only through a competitive induction grant program, funding is considered dedicated under our analysis. At least five states ([Illinois](#), [Oregon](#), [Texas](#), [Washington](#), [Wisconsin](#)) make funding available to school districts in this manner during the 2015-16 school year. [Delaware](#) also provides the competitive Comprehensive Induction Program Grant in addition to the state-funded Mentor and Lead Mentor stipends. [Iowa](#) operates its Teacher Leadership and Compensation System in addition to the guaranteed statewide funding of \$1,300 per beginning teacher.

Only nine states provide induction funding to all of their school districts, and among them only six states provide funding for local induction program costs.

Only nine states provide induction funding to all of their school districts, and among them only six states ([Hawaii](#), [Iowa](#), [North Dakota](#), [South Carolina](#), [Virginia](#), [West Virginia](#)) provide funding for local induction program costs. As discussed below, the other three states with universal mentoring funding reserve it exclusively for mentor stipends.)

Two states fund and operate a statewide induction program. The [Kentucky](#) Teacher Internship Program is available to all first-year teachers. (The state also authorizes mentor stipends in statute, currently unfunded). The [Alaska](#) Statewide Mentoring Project serves beginning teachers in nearly every school district, but is not required in state policy.

Four states make educator induction an allowable use of existing state appropriations, but funds are not dedicated solely for this purpose. [California](#) is providing \$490 million in Educator Effectiveness funding during the 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years. These funds may be used for beginning teacher and administrator induction and mentoring. [Maryland](#) provides resources for educator induction through its school funding formula. [Minnesota](#) requires school districts to “set aside” 2 percent of their basic state education revenues for staff development, of which induction and mentoring is an allowable activity. [Ohio](#) school districts may use state professional development funds to support resident educator programs.

Mentor Stipends

Two of the 16 states that provide funding for teacher induction ([Arkansas](#), [Delaware](#)) reserve all of it for mentor stipends, leaving nothing remaining for induction program funding. [Iowa](#) requires \$1,000 of the \$1,300 per beginning teacher allotment to go toward mentor compensation. [Illinois](#) also requires mentors who provide 60 hours of face-to-face mentoring assistance annually to be paid a \$1,200 stipend from state grant funds. [Connecticut](#) pays a \$1,000 stipend per mentor from the \$3 million state appropriation for the Teacher Education And Mentoring (TEAM) Program that also supports statewide mentor and administrator training. The [North Dakota](#) Teacher Support System reimburses districts up to \$500 per year for each mentor/beginning teacher pair for the cost of substitute teachers and provides mentors an \$800 stipend per semester for their work. But the state may retain the remainder of the legislative appropriation for staff compensation, evaluation, training and administrative expenses.

Designating funds for mentor stipends honors the work. But they often are a needed incentive because mentors are not provided dedicated time to support beginning teachers during the school day. In these instances, the discretion to use state funding to bolster overall induction program quality is removed.

Authorized Funding, Not Appropriated

Ten states ([Florida](#), [Georgia](#), [Kansas](#), [Nebraska](#), [New Jersey](#), [New Mexico](#), [New York](#), [North Carolina](#), [Ohio](#), [Oklahoma](#)) authorize induction funding in statute, but do not currently provide it. In our analysis, we did not count these states as among those funding induction. In four states—Florida, Georgia, Kansas, and Oklahoma—state funding is authorized for mentor stipends only.

Selected State Policy Examples

- **Alaska**—The Alaska Statewide Mentor Project is funded through multiple revenue sources, including state and federal funds. It is funded by the state through a partnership between the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development and the University of Alaska.
- **Connecticut**—State funding of \$3 million for the Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) program supports mentor stipends, mentor and administrator training, and training for reviewers of TEAM reflection papers.
- **Iowa**—Iowa has appropriated more than \$4 million for the 2015-2016 school year to provide each school district or area education agency \$1,300 per beginning teacher (with \$1,000 reserved for a mentor stipend). In addition, funding for Iowa's Teacher Leadership and Compensation System will reach \$150 million in 2016-2017, giving beginning teachers in participating districts more professional support from mentor teachers.
- **North Dakota**—The state appropriated \$2.7 million for the Teacher Support System for the 2015-2017 biennium. State law allows the Education Standards and Practices Board to use state funding for training, evaluation and stipends for mentor teachers. The Teacher Support System reimburses districts up to \$500 per year for each mentor/mentee pair for the cost of substitutes. Mentors also receive an \$800 stipend per semester for meeting all program requirements.
- **Oregon**—In the 2015-2017 biennium, the state's Network of Quality Teaching and Learning will distribute \$10 million dedicated to educator mentoring, \$18 million for professional growth and development, and \$8.7 million for school leadership development. A qualifying district is eligible to receive an amount of funding that is "aligned with evidence-based best practices for beginning teachers and administrators."

State Policy Recommendations

1. Provide dedicated funding for local induction programs—or support a statewide program available to all new educators. Do not restrict state funding to mentor stipends exclusively.
2. States that are unable to provide universal, statewide induction program funding should consider creating a competitive grant program to seed high-quality new educator support programs.
3. States should consider requiring a local match as a condition of receiving state funding.

Criterion 7: Educator Certification/Licensure—

THE STATE SHOULD REQUIRE BEGINNING EDUCATORS TO COMPLETE AN INDUCTION PROGRAM TO MOVE FROM AN INITIAL LICENSE.

Requiring induction and mentoring to advance to a professional teaching licensure honors the importance of beginning teacher development and promotes a continuous professional growth orientation for teachers as they enter the profession. Tying induction to licensure also encourages new teachers, schools, districts and states to prioritize induction. For educators it affirms the responsibility to engage in induction activities. For schools and districts, it creates an obligation to provide an induction program so teachers in their district can meet the licensure requirement. And for states, it creates an obligation to build the program infrastructure (including funding) necessary for the licensure system and to support district implementation of induction programs.

When induction is comprehensive and required as a condition of licensure, and the successful completion of a performance assessment is required at the end of the induction period, states have the opportunity to develop a true performance-based system of licensure. The edTPA is one such tool used to measure performance for initial licensure.⁴⁹ A performance assessment for moving from initial to professional licensure is desirable if we are to acknowledge and expect that new teachers should develop and grow over the course of their induction period.

Findings/Analysis

At least 24 states require participation in or completion of an induction or mentoring program to advance from an initial to professional teaching license. Only 11 states ([California](#), [Connecticut](#), [Delaware](#), [Iowa](#), [Maine](#), [Maryland](#), [Massachusetts](#), [Missouri](#), [North Carolina](#), [Ohio](#), [Utah](#)) require induction for teacher certification/licensure *and* also require a program of at least two years in length. Fourteen states require participation in or completion of an induction or mentoring program for principal and school administrator licensure.

The distinction between completion of and participation in an induction program is sometimes a subtle one within state policy. In the clearest examples, successful “completion” includes passing a performance assessment or a comprehensive evaluation, whereas “participation” may mean that the teacher took part in an induction program. Some states require documentation to verify induction program participation.

Requiring induction and mentoring to advance to a professional teaching licensure honors the importance of beginning teacher development and promotes a continuous professional growth orientation for teachers as they enter the profession.

Several states (including [California](#), [Colorado](#) and [Maine](#)) incorporate or make explicit the development of professional growth plans as part of their induction and licensure requirements. Individual growth plans focus attention on the individual educator's development. Similar to allowing for an additional year of induction (in Criterion 1), some states ([Iowa](#) and [West Virginia](#)) allow teachers additional time to meet certification requirements. Allowing an additional year permits a focus on reaching a standard of practice and adequate support to reach that standard. Considering the relatively high levels of inter- and intra- district mobility among new teachers, allowing them an extra year to meet the standard of practice is an appropriate level of discretion for local districts.

Selected State Policy Examples

- **California** has created a new two-tier credentialing system for teachers, under which they earn a Professional Clear Credential only after participation in an approved induction program. The state's induction program standards require induction programs to assess candidate progress towards mastery of the state's teaching standards to support the recommendation for the Clear Credential. In addition, documentation of candidate progress must reflect the learning and professional growth goals indicated within the candidate's Individualized Learning Plan.
- **Connecticut** law requires beginning teachers to receive mentorship for two years and to complete the five professional growth modules within the Teacher Education And Mentoring (TEAM) program. Teachers who do not successfully complete program requirements are not eligible for the provisional educator certificate or for reissuance of their initial educator certificate.
- **Delaware** requires new teachers to complete mentoring requirements, including a prescribed number of contact hours with a mentor, to advance to a Continuing License. Mentors must submit contact log documentation accounting for all mentoring activities provided during the specified time period to the state at the end of the school year.
- **Iowa** requires the successful completion of a two-year induction program in order to advance to the career-level teaching certificate. This includes a comprehensive evaluation at the end of the induction period to determine whether a teacher meets the expectations to move to the career level. There also is a provision for districts to provide a third year of support for the teacher to meet the expectations for a standard license.
- **Ohio** requires beginning teachers to successfully complete the state's Resident Educator Program that requires participation in induction and mentoring and successful completion of a performance-based assessment to advance to a five-year Professional Educator License.



- **Utah** requires all beginning teachers to fulfill the requirements of the Entry Years Enhancement (EYE) program to advance to a Level 2 professional teaching license. All new teachers must satisfactorily collaborate with a trained mentor, pass a required pedagogical exam, complete three years of employment and evaluation, and compile a working portfolio.

State Policy Recommendation

1. Require successful completion of a multi-year educator induction program as a condition for earning a professional educator certificate, credential, or license.

Criterion 8: Program Accountability—

THE STATE SHOULD ASSESS OR MONITOR INDUCTION PROGRAMS THROUGH STRATEGIES SUCH AS PROGRAM EVALUATION, PROGRAM SURVEYS, AND PEER REVIEW.

State induction policies are most successful when they create an environment where local programs can thrive. To assess the extent to which state policies are successful in achieving this goal, it is critical for states to develop thoughtful, robust program accountability systems. In doing so, states can meet four key features of program quality.

First, states can assure program compliance with state laws, regulations and policies. State oversight of program design and operation can provide assurance that local induction and mentoring programs are meeting state requirements including, for example, the operation of a program, the provision of mentoring support to new teachers, and the use of trained mentors.

State induction policies are most successful when they create an environment where local programs can thrive.

Second, states can tighten the connection between policy and implementation. The gap between policy intent and program implementation can diminish or negate state efforts. By integrating thoughtful accountability systems, states can determine whether districts are implementing programs in alignment with the state's priorities. Further, as information from implementation pitfalls surface, states can problem-solve and address systemic or common obstacles that can deter effective programming.

Third, states can focus on program improvement. When oversight allows for an honest analysis of program strengths and challenges, and enables opportunities for rich feedback and discussion (as opposed to compliance-only systems), it provides a platform for enabling all programs throughout the state to improve. This ensures that the impact of the targeted policies will continue to grow over time.

Fourth, states can assess the impact of induction programs on student and teacher outcomes. In order to expand and sustain support for induction program funding, states should be able to demonstrate that programs are positively influencing teacher effectiveness and student learning and reducing teacher turnover costs. By supporting efforts to measure the outcomes of local programs, states will have a better assessment of the effects of their policies and more leverage to sustain programs over the long-term.

Findings/Analysis

Fifteen states most clearly meet this criterion on program accountability in that their policies and state-level practices establish a clear focus on program quality, assessment, and improvement. As a group, these states are actively engaged in some of the following activities: reviewing induction activities and the use of time; administering new teacher or

induction program surveys; conducting program audits or site visits; ensuring programs adhere to state program standards; supporting induction program improvement; and requiring programs to submit evaluation data.

Six states among the 15 ([Connecticut](#), [Illinois](#), [North Carolina](#), [Ohio](#), [Oregon](#), [South Carolina](#)) create the tightest link between state-directed program evaluation and state induction program standards. Illinois and North Carolina, with support from NTC, have both developed an induction program continuum that allows programs to self-assess their success in meeting program standards.

In all, 25 states' policies address the state's role and responsibility in overseeing induction and mentoring programs, and 30 states' policies address the role and responsibility for local induction programs. Some of these states require local programs to submit program plans, verify the provision of induction and mentor support, or conduct local evaluations, but many appear to take a more compliance-focused approach. More states provide guidance on program evaluation to local programs but don't require it or play an active role.

Selected State Policy Examples

- The **Alaska** Statewide Mentor Project (ASMP), through its partnership with the University of Alaska, ensures that research is funded, supported and distributed to stakeholders. It includes evaluations of mentor professional development; surveys of new teachers, mentors, and principals; summaries of new teacher growth and practice; and investigations into teacher retention. In 2010, a statistical analysis of mentoring and student achievement gains was conducted and distributed. Further, a federal Investing in Innovation (i3) grant supported additional assessment of the ASMP on teacher retention, teacher effectiveness, and student achievement.
- **Connecticut** state law requires the state department of education to oversee an outside evaluation of the Teacher Education And Mentoring (TEAM) program every three-to-five years and to monitor district implementation of the TEAM program to ensure fidelity to program plans and goals, including district audits and observations by state personnel.
- **North Carolina** requires the state, every five years, to formally review Beginning Teacher Support Programs to review evidence and verify that program proficiency is demonstrated on all program standards.
- The **Ohio** Resident Educator Program has a two-pronged system of evaluation: (1) A survey of principals, program coordinators, mentors and resident educators administered by NTC; and (2) an external evaluation that has four primary areas of focus—(a) fidelity and compliance, (b) quality and effectiveness, (c) influence and impact, and (d) scale-up and sustainability.

- **Oregon** law holds the state department of education responsible for the regular and ongoing evaluation of educator mentoring programs. The law reserves 2.5 percent of program funding for evaluation. It may include assessments of the effectiveness of the programs in retaining beginning teachers and administrators and their impact on student performance.
- **West Virginia** monitors the implementation of the beginning teacher and principal internship programs through the state education agency's Office of Education Performance Audits. All school systems must prepare internship program plans for annual approval by the State Board of Education. These plans must address the manner in which the effectiveness of the local program will be monitored and evaluated.

State Policy Recommendations

1. Develop robust, thoughtful accountability structures that go deeper than compliance-oriented systems and move toward a focus on program improvement and the measurement of program outcomes. Such structures should both provide for local program accountability and an evaluation of the state policy or program as a whole.
2. Provide dedicated funding for induction program evaluation at the local and/or state level. Ensure that evaluations are oriented around the induction program standards established by the state. If appropriate, tie evaluations to program approval and/or funding streams so that districts are incentivized to focus on implementation and results.
3. Survey all new teachers (and possibly mentors and principals) annually about the provision and quality of induction support and mentoring assistance.
4. Conduct site visits to programs, interviewing program leaders and participants, to build a stronger knowledge of program operation and impact.

Criterion 9: Teaching Conditions—

- A. THE STATE SHOULD ADOPT FORMAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING CONDITIONS.**
- B. THE STATE SHOULD CONDUCT REGULAR ASSESSMENT OF SUCH CONDITIONS.**
- C. THE STATE SHOULD INCORPORATE THE IMPROVEMENT OF SUCH CONDITIONS IN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS.**

Comprehensive efforts by state leaders should include the establishment of standards for teaching and learning conditions and the regular assessment of these conditions in schools and districts. Data and findings from such surveys can inform school improvement planning and help states to identify specific supports needed by their newest teachers and principals. By hearing directly from school-based educators who intimately understand working condition issues, state policymakers have the opportunity to make data-driven decisions for developing policies that make schools better places to work and learn.

To do their jobs well, educators need supportive school environments where they feel valued, trusted and empowered to collaborate, in order to improve instruction. Teaching conditions impact student learning. Specifically, management of student conduct, manageable demands on time, ample professional autonomy, and effective professional development are significant predictors of student perception, of support and rigor, and ultimately of value-added student learning gains. Additionally, teachers that work in supportive environments can help to raise student achievement over time. Teaching conditions also impact teacher retention. Studies find statistically significant relationships between teachers' perception of school facilities and their plans to stay or leave.⁵⁰ Where you sit shapes how you see your conditions. Not knowing the perceptions of teaching conditions can make school improvement planning challenging.

Comprehensive efforts by state leaders should include the establishment of standards for teaching and learning conditions and the regular assessment of these conditions in schools and districts.

Since 2008, NTC has worked collaboratively with more than 18 state coalitions—including governors, state education agencies, educator associations, and practitioners as well as a host of school districts—to implement the Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning (TELL) Survey. The TELL survey is a full population survey of school-based licensed educators designed to report perceptions of the presence of teaching and learning conditions that research has shown increase student learning and teacher retention. The conditions assessed in the TELL survey include: Time, Facilities and Resources, Professional Development, School Leadership, Teacher Leadership, Instructional Practices and Support, Managing Student Conduct, Community Support and Involvement, and New Teacher Support.

Findings/Analysis

Policymakers are increasingly recognizing teaching and learning conditions as an essential element for retaining teachers and improving student achievement.

Two states—Kentucky and North Carolina—have formally adopted statewide standards for teaching and learning conditions. North Carolina’s Teacher Working Conditions Standards address eight elements and provide a developmental continuum.⁵¹ Kentucky also articulates eight standards that can be measured on a four-point scale: *distinguished*, *accomplished*, *proficient* and *developing*.⁵² In total, 13 states (Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont) have administered an educator survey of teaching and learning conditions once or more in the last three years. One state, West Virginia, makes a school culture survey available to local schools and districts. Overall, at least 11 states have used the results of such educator surveys as one of multiple measures in school improvement planning or as a metric to measure progress.

Selected State Policy Examples

- **Kentucky**, in 2010, established the use of a teaching conditions survey as part of the evaluation of persistently low-performing schools. In 2012, Kentucky became the second state to formally adopt state standards for teaching conditions. The state, in partnership with NTC, has administered three iterations of the TELL Kentucky Survey since 2011. The 2015 survey garnered a statewide response rate of 89 percent. To encourage participation and on-going improvement, the state created the Winner’s Circle Awards to recognize schools that exemplify excellent teaching conditions and student success.
- **North Carolina** was the first state to adopt statewide teaching conditions standards, in 2001, and was the first state to administer a statewide teaching conditions survey, beginning in 2002. The North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey has been administered biennially since, with responses from as many as 100,000 educators each time, and response rates above 85 percent. The state has embedded the use of survey results into its school improvement efforts, including requiring the use of survey data in the annual school and district improvement plans and requiring school administrators to demonstrate use of the survey data in the state’s annual evaluation instrument.
- **Oregon** administered the first TELL Oregon Survey in 2014, in partnership with NTC. Schools and districts that reached participation thresholds received school- and district-level data and used them to inform school improvement plans. Oregon also uses survey data to evaluate new teacher support. The 2015-2017 biennial state budget provides on-going support to the TELL Oregon Survey.



State Policy Recommendations

1. State boards of education should adopt discrete standards for teaching and learning conditions that address key elements including time, leadership, professional learning, instructional practices, and resources.
2. States should build coalitions of key education constituency groups to administer regular, statewide surveys to gauge educators' perceptions of their working conditions.
3. States should require the use of teaching conditions data in district and school improvement plans. These data also should be used to identify exemplary leadership practices that create supportive school environments.

Conclusion

Despite the intensive work by policymakers and education leaders to build educator effectiveness systems, support for new educators remains too frequently overlooked in policy and practice. State policies must do more to recognize that a greater percentage of the teaching population now is comprised of early-career teachers. They also must pay special attention to new teachers' unique professional needs.

As states grapple with improving educational quality, they must consider the needs of beginning educators and the students they serve.

No single U.S. state has perfected its policies to ensure the provision of high-impact, multi-year induction support for all beginning educators. Some states have prioritized the needs of new teachers and principals in recent years—and helped to move the policy needle forward to some extent. But more than 20 states still don't require all early-career teachers to receive support and assistance, and 30 states have no such requirement for beginning school principals.

As states grapple with improving educational quality, they must consider the needs of beginning educators and the students they serve. Given the mounting evidence about the impact of teachers, the importance of school leaders, and the benefits of high-quality induction, a strong state policy focus in this area will pay long-term dividends for educators, students, and our entire educational system.



Notes

- The state policy data we used for our analyses were accurate during the 2015-16 school year.
- Individual state induction policy reviews are available on the New Teacher Center website at: <http://newteachercenter.org/policy/>
- Education agency and department representatives from all 50 states were invited to review our state policy summaries. Forty-three states reviewed and verified this policy information prior to publication.

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10. While Louisiana state law requires school districts to provide beginning teachers with "professional development opportunities and assistance," it is unclear whether this requirement is enforced and supported by the state. We note that the National Council on Teacher Quality's 2015 State Policy Yearbook has indicated that Louisiana "does not" require teacher induction, despite this state law.

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 27. NTC, Teaching & Learning Conditions Initiative.
 28. NTC, Results from Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning (TELL) Surveys, 2013-2014 school year.
 29. We use the term “program” to encompass induction programs run by states, school districts, area education agencies, universities, consortia, and other educational entities.
 30. *NTC Review of State Policies on New Educator Support* is based on data and information that was accurate as of January or February 2016 and verified by 43 of the 50 states.
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 33. Connecticut requires only one year of induction for a small number of teacher endorsement areas (such as agricultural education and technical education).
 34. In Delaware, mentoring assistance after year one is provided at the discretion of the school district, but “continuing support” is required through year three. Hawaii requires intensive mentoring support through year two, with assistance provide through year three. In Massachusetts, school districts are required to provide 50 hours of additional mentoring support during years two and three after the initial induction year.
 35. The National Council on Teacher Quality’s 2015 *State Policy Yearbook* finds that Louisiana does not require beginning teacher induction, despite this state law. <http://www.nctq.org/statePolicy/2015/statePolicyFindings.do?stateId=19>
 36. Email communication from University of Alaska, Office of K-12 Outreach, January 27, 2016.
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