



District Mentoring Plan: Components of Novice Teacher Training

Provisional teaching year: a year of full-time teaching required of all novice teachers under provisional certification before they can be approved for standard teacher certification.

Key Resources

- Orientation to School Procedures (R1)
- Sample Novice Teacher Self-Assessment Inventory (R2)

The Responsibilities of Novice Teachers

It is important for novice teachers to understand their responsibilities during the induction process.

State regulations require that the novice teacher:

- Participate in the Provisional Teacher Program, which requires mentoring;
- Make a commitment of time to the mentor-novice relationship over the required one-year mentoring period;
- Establish regular weekly conferencing times to discuss novice teacher needs, obtain ongoing support, and plan and reflect on classroom practices aligned with the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers and the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards;
- Maintain confidentiality for all mentor-novice activities;
- Contribute to ongoing program evaluation.

It is suggested that the novice teacher also:

- Document mentoring activities and time;
- Provide opportunities for the mentor to observe through a collegial coaching model;
- Share openly effective strategies and techniques;
- Develop professional goals;
- Participate actively in a learning community;
- Observe the mentor and other content experts during the school year;
- Be open to constructive feedback from mentor, school leaders, and other content experts.

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The New Jersey Provisional Teacher Program

Novice teachers are hired with either a Certificate of Eligibility (CE) or a Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing (CEAS) that permits them to seek work and results in their obtaining provisional instructional certification. The district must immediately enroll the newly hired novice teacher in the Provisional Teacher Program at the New Jersey Department of Education. The Department of Education will provide the district, the school leaders, and the novice teacher with the appropriate forms for the provisional year. During the provisional year, the novice teacher is mentored and supervised according to state and district policies.

During the first year of teaching under a provisional certificate, teachers will be evaluated by the school leader three times using state forms which, once completed, are copied and sent to the Department of Education.

- The first formative evaluation shall be completed at the end of 10 weeks.
- The second formative evaluation shall be completed at the end of 20 weeks.
- The final summative evaluation shall be completed at the end of 30 weeks.

After completion of the summative evaluation, the school leader will make one of the following three recommendations:

- Approved: State Department of Education issues a Standard Certificate.
- Insufficient: The CEAS remains in effect for a maximum of one more year.
- Disapproved: The CEAS is invalidated. The novice teacher may appeal this decision to the New Jersey State Board of Examiners.

The novice teacher must receive a copy of each evaluation within 15 days of completion. State regulations make it clear that the mentor teacher shall not assess, evaluate, or give input on the performance of the provisional teacher.

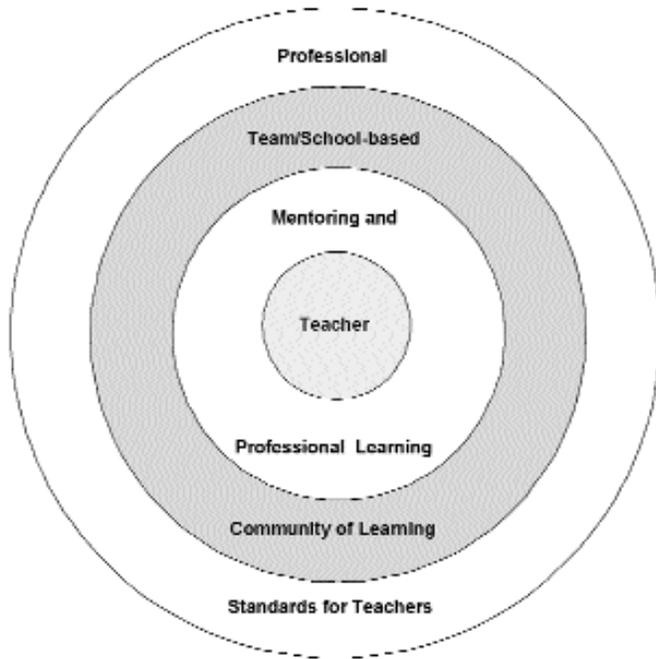
The Stages of Teacher Development

Teacher development depends on the interaction between the learner (novice teacher) and the learning environment (Reiman & Thies-Sprinthall, 1998). When viewing a teacher's professional growth, it is important to consider the characteristics and influences of the individual as well as the school environment and teaching profession. Figure 1 shows how the individual teacher becomes embedded in the school culture and the teaching profession.



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Figure 1. The Context of Teacher Development



As the novice teacher encounters the complexities of beginning to teach in his/her own classroom, he/she experiences three phases of concern:

- (1) survival of self;
- (2) task; and
- (3) impact.

(Fuller, 1969; Reiman & Thies-Sprinthal, 1998). The following describes the concerns of the novice teacher during each phase.

- **First phase:** The novice teacher focuses on orienting him/herself to the school culture and learning the school policies and procedures, which include getting supplies, organizing the classroom, finding resources, and becoming an integral part of the school faculty.
- **Second phase:** The novice teacher begins to focus on classroom management skills, setting short-term goals, and other issues related to teaching and learning.
- **Third phase:** The novice teacher engages in a deeper understanding of teaching practices through ongoing professional learning opportunities based on student needs.

Hall and Loucks (1978) refined Fuller's original work and expanded the three phases (*i.e.*, self, task, impact) into additional concerns. As a result, the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) was developed. CBAM provides a way to view the process of individual change by identifying seven types of concern that a novice teacher may have as he/she begins a new teaching practice:



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- Awareness (no concern)
- Informational (I want to know more)
- Personal (How will using it affect me?)
- Management (How do I correctly use and integrate the practice?)
- Consequence (How does it affect students?)
- Collaboration (How can I relate it to what others are doing?)
- Refocusing (How could this be done even better?)

(NSDC, 1994, p. 17; Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, & Hall, 1987).

A mentor can provide assistance to the novice teacher based on his/her type of concern, which might include:

- **Personal:** The novice teacher may benefit by having discussions with other teachers who have also struggled with specific teaching practices and challenging situations in their own classrooms.
- **Management:** The mentor may demonstrate a lesson for the novice teacher or the novice teacher may observe or be coached by the mentor after he/she has taught a lesson for the purpose of learning a new teaching practice.
- **Collaboration:** The novice teacher and mentor work together collaboratively to plan and/or reflect on teaching practices that impact student learning (NSDC, 1994).

Figure 2 identifies the different phases of concern and the feelings experienced by the novice teacher at the different levels, starting with self, then task, and finally, impact.

Figure 2: Phases of Concern

Phase	Exemplar	Feelings	General Level
6. Refocusing	I'd like to adapt the curriculum to better meet the needs of the students.	Confident	Impact
5. Collaboration	I am eager to share these ideas with my teammates at school.	Excited	
4. Consequence	Are all the students connecting with the lesson?	Puzzled Successful	
3. Management	I never have enough time to do everything that is needed. How can I keep up with all this paperwork?	Frustrated	Task
2. Personal	How will this new program affect me? Will the parents like and respect me?	Anxious	Self
1. Informational	I need more information about the district curriculum guidelines.	Curious	
0. Awareness (lack of)	I'm not the least bit concerned about the new program.	Apathetic	

Source: Alan J. Reiman & Lois Thies-Sprinthall. *Mentoring and Supervision for Teacher Development*. Published by Allyn and Bacon, Boston, MA. Copyright ©1998 by Pearson Education. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.



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Novice Teacher Training Components

A key element in designing and implementing a successful mentoring program is the provision for ongoing training and support for novice teachers. There are many published resources that provide information and tools to support the design of novice teacher training. It is not the purpose of this toolkit to promote any specific training program. Training needs to be designed based on the needs of the novice teachers within the district and aligned with the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers. Novice teacher training may be provided by district personnel, national experts, colleges, or other training providers on one or all of the training components, in accordance with the district mentoring plan.

The Department of Education recommends the following novice teacher training components, recognizing that it will not be possible to offer all training components in a one-year period of time. The list identifies possible novice teacher training components and their alignment to the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers.

District Professional Development Requirements

The LPDC is responsible for developing and implementing both the district professional development and mentoring plans. The plans need to be aligned with the district needs and state standards including the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers, the New Jersey Professional Development Standards, the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards, and district curricula. It is important that the district, school, and individual professional development goals are in alignment with the needs of the students and teachers in the district.

Novice Teacher Orientation

Although not required by state regulations, districts may require orientation and training workshops prior to the start of each school year. The district orientation workshops can be designed to help novice teachers become familiar with the district, its policies and procedures, the CCCS and district curriculum, program initiatives, and effective research-based strategies.

Ongoing Professional Learning Opportunities

Some professional learning opportunities (*e.g.*, workshops, study groups, grade level/department meetings) may be required within the district and aligned with district initiatives. These may include such topics as literacy and mathematics, differentiated instruction, instructional use of technology, and behavioral management. Other professional learning activities may be based on the individual's needs and professional goals.

The novice teacher and the mentor can individually or collaboratively engage in a variety of professional learning opportunities. These may include action research, case discussions, curriculum development, data analysis of student work, journaling, lesson study, portfolios, or study groups (Easton, 2004).



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Understand and Apply the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers

State regulations for mentoring require that all novice teachers acquire the knowledge, dispositions, and performances defined in the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers, which describe what all teachers should know and be able to do.

The ten professional standards for teachers focus on:

1. Subject matter knowledge
2. Human growth and development
3. Diverse learners
4. Instructional planning and strategies
5. Assessment
6. Learning environment
7. Special needs
8. Communication
9. Collaboration and partnership
10. Professional development

The New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers have been established to guide teachers in:

- Promoting reflection of the impact of teacher effectiveness on student learning;
- Facilitating formation of professional goals to improve teaching practice; and
- Monitoring and assessing progress toward professional goals and continuous improvement in teaching practice.

Training aligned with the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers that might be offered for novice teachers during their first year of teaching includes:

Classroom Management

Standard 6 (Learning Environment)

What does a novice teacher need to know and be able to do to establish a learning environment?

Research on classroom management skills reveals:

- Consistent, proactive discipline is the crux of effective classroom management.
- Effective teachers establish routines for all daily tasks and needs.
- Effective classroom managers orchestrate smooth transitions and continuity of momentum throughout the day.
- Effective teachers and classroom managers strike a balance between variety and challenge in student activities.
- Effective classroom managers can multitask.
- Effective educators have a heightened awareness of all actions and activities in the classroom.
- Classroom management skills include the use of space and proximity or movement around the classroom for nearness to trouble spots and to encourage attention.



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- Effective teachers anticipate potential problems as a means to limit disruption.
- Effective classroom teachers resolve minor inattention and disruption before they become major disruption.
- Effective classroom managers are able to increase student engagement in learning and make good use of every instructional moment.
- Effective teachers seem to have eyes in the backs of their heads (Stronge, 2002, pp. 27-28).

Addressing Diversity

Standard 3 (Diverse Learners)

What does a novice teacher need to know and be able to do to understand and address the diverse needs of all students?

Novice teachers need to become culturally responsive by exploring their own personal histories and experiences, as well as the histories of their students and their families; developing an appreciation for diversity; engaging in reflective thinking and writing; and reading about and/or visiting teachers in diverse settings. As novice teachers plan lessons and reflect on lessons taught and/or observed, they need to be aware of and design teaching practices that recognize and utilize the students' cultures and languages in their classrooms and respect their diversity (Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2004).

Lesson Planning

Standard 4 (Instructional Planning and Strategies)

What does a novice teacher need to know and be able to do to plan effective lessons and use appropriate instructional strategies?

Effective teaching depends on effective lesson planning, which can be overwhelming for the novice teacher. Developing strategies for effective teaching is an ongoing process that requires the teacher to link curriculum, instruction, and assessment. To be effective, the teacher needs to be able to:

1. Develop instructional strategies and methods that:
 - a. Cover essential core curriculum content over the course of the year;
 - b. Schedule each day and week to address all subject areas within the given time frames;
 - c. Plan daily lessons and thematic units;
 - d. Constantly align lesson objectives with standards to be addressed; and
 - e. Maximize time spent on learning.
2. Select curriculum materials, always keeping standards in mind; and
3. Perform standards-based assessments (formative, diagnostic, summative, formal, and informal) (Jonson, 2002, p. 51).

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Resources to assist the LPDC, mentors, novice teachers, and training providers in designing professional learning opportunities that engage novice teachers in learning and applying the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers are included in the Appendix.

Use of Standards-based Formative Assessments

Standard 1 (Subject Content Knowledge), Standard 4 (Instructional Planning and Strategies), Standard 5 (Assessment), Standard 6 (Learning Environment), Standard 8 (Communication), and Standard 10 (Professional Development)

Many first-year teachers feel inadequate and unprepared; have limited knowledge of content and pedagogy; lack information regarding school/district policies and procedures; have limited knowledge and experience dealing with the diverse needs of their students; and have minimal competence in classroom management and organization.

Standards-based formative assessments can provide a confidential structure for interaction between a mentor and a novice teacher and allow for reflection on strengths and areas for growth. The mentor can guide and support the novice teacher in identifying professional learning activities most appropriate to improve classroom teaching. The mentor can help the novice teacher identify and make progress toward his/her identified professional goals by focusing on what types of data to collect during classroom observations, collaboratively planning lessons, making suggestions, and modeling lessons for the novice teacher.

Because of the special relationship between mentor and novice teacher, the interaction is confidential. Therefore, it is important for the school leader to provide time for interactions between mentor and novice teacher and to honor the confidentiality between the two. In order to maintain the confidentiality and trusting relationship between the mentor and the novice teacher, the school leader should not ask or expect the mentor to provide information that would be considered “evaluative” or to influence the evaluation conducted by the school leader.

Formative assessments used in the mentoring relationship include the following characteristics:

- An ongoing measurement of growth over time;
- Evidence of student learning and teacher practice to help identify areas of strength and for growth;
- Objective and data-based;
- Responsive to the teacher’s developmental needs;
- Interactive and collaborative;
- Assessment tools that support inquiry and reflection (ETS, 2001, p. 28).

Confidential collaborative assessment logs can be used as the basis for accountability and interaction between the mentor and the novice teacher. Collaborative assessment logs may include the following criteria:

- A clearly articulated goal related to a professional teaching standard;
- A developmental guide and support system based on continuous discussion and ongoing assessment;



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- Frequent use of self-assessment and reflection;
- A shared accountability and responsibility for contribution to the mentor-novice teacher relationship (Moir, July 2003).

Design Professional Goals

The mentor works collaboratively with the novice teacher to identify the novice teacher's strengths and areas for improvement in teaching practice. Formal and informal assessments used to determine area of focus may include: self-assessments; collaborative assessment logs; data gathered by observations during classroom visitations; and analysis of student work in relation to CCCS.

Once an area of focus for professional growth has been determined, the novice teacher can write a SMART goal, which is specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and tactically sound. The criteria for completing a SMART goal include:

- **Specific:** The goal must be based on the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers and clearly state what is to be accomplished;
- **Measurable:** The goal needs to be results-oriented with evidence of achievement;
- **Achievable:** The goal must be within reach given the time frame and resources available;
- **Relevant:** The goal must address a need based on data that will enhance student learning;
- **Tactically sound:** The goal must identify barriers and challenges in process of achieving desired results (Udelhofen & Larson, 2003).

Resources to assist the mentors and novice teachers in developing professional goals for individual growth plans are included in the Appendix.

The Importance of Reflecting on Teaching Practice

Reflection may be done formally or informally. It may include reviewing one's teaching mentally, keeping a journal or portfolio, or meeting with a mentor or other colleagues. Reflecting on teaching practices used during a lesson, via examination of a videotaped lesson taught by the novice teacher or the mentor, may be helpful. Reflection is an important part of improving teaching, as well as enhancing teacher efficacy.

One element of professionalism for an effective teacher is to reflect on one's own teaching practice (Stronge, 2002). There are three major elements of reflection:

- **Reflection-on-action:** Looking back on what has been done or thought;
- **Reflection-in-action:** Thinking and taking action during performance (Schon, 1987);
- **Reflection-for-action:** Analyzing what has been done or thought and drawing conclusions to provide insight into future action (Killion and Todnem, 1991).



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Teaching and Learning Portfolio

Lipton & Wellman (2002) suggest that during the first year of teaching, the novice teacher might keep a portfolio of significant artifacts with reflections of individual professional growth, both successes/accomplishments and areas identified for improvement with progress shown. Based on an individual growth plan, the novice teacher might collect the following artifacts: journal entries articulating a growing professional knowledge and skills; video evidence of the use of effective classroom practices; samples and analysis of student work; and documentation of applied professional learning.

Resources to assist the LPDC, mentors, novice teachers, and training providers to design professional learning opportunities that engage novice teachers in reflective practice are included in the Appendix.

Interactions between Novice Teacher and Mentor

Dialogue and discussion are key communication activities that facilitate ongoing professional growth for both novice teacher and mentor. Different types of contact provide numerous ways for mentor and novice teacher to have ongoing interactions. Types of contact include one-on-one interaction, grade level/discipline team meetings, interactive journal, phone calls, e-mails, conferences, drop-in visit, etc. See Appendix for sample interaction contact logs that might be used by a mentor-novice teacher pair.

E-Mentoring

The novice teacher and mentor might engage in frequent electronic communication as one way to discuss classroom experiences, ask questions, share resources, or reflect without having to schedule a face-to-face meeting.

Online mentoring is a professional learning opportunity which allows both mentors and novice teachers to engage in online discussions with other veteran and novice teachers within and outside the district. Online discussions allow ongoing networking opportunities for both veteran and novice teachers to share, request ideas or resources related to teaching practices such as classroom management techniques, examples of formal and informal assessments, curriculum development or instructional strategies.

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