



Georgia Department of Education Teacher Induction Draft Guidelines

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"Making Education Work for All Georgians"

Introduction

Within Georgia's Race to the Top (RT3) grant, the Great Teachers and Leaders Project focuses on increasing the overall effectiveness of Georgia's teachers and leaders, a critical factor in increasing student growth and achievement. One aspect of this project is the development and implementation of teacher induction guidelines that focus on recruiting, retaining, and supporting induction phase teachers.

Rationale

Teachers are the most important school-related factor in determining student success. Research suggests that one effective teacher can accelerate students' learning over more than one grade level, while an ineffective teacher can cause students to fall irreparably behind. Strong induction processes should ensure effective teachers stay in the classroom and ineffective teachers are supported to either become effective teachers or are to be counseled out of the classroom. Research shows that intensive, mentor-based induction programs can significantly reduce teacher turnover and help teachers to focus on improving instruction.

Across our nation, this endeavor is being seriously undermined by one specific cause: our failure to recruit, retain, and support our newest teachers. In its 2003 report *No Dream Denied: A Pledge to America's Children* (<http://www.ecs.org/html/Document.asp?chouseid=4269>), the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future acknowledges the situation:

Too few of the teachers we have prepared are choosing to enter the schools, and too many of those who are hired don't stay long enough to join their colleagues in developing a quality teaching environment once they are there. Newly prepared teachers, and those with as many as five or more years of experience, are leaving their schools in growing numbers; they are leaking out of the bucket faster than we can replace them. The response has been to try to keep the bucket full by pouring in more inexperienced teachers, and under prepared individuals, at a faster rate, but this has destructive consequences for the quality of teaching in many schools. Why? Because these novice teachers flow through the schools so fast that they aren't in their jobs long enough to become good at them. . . . approximately a third of America's teachers leave teaching sometime during their first three years of teaching; almost half may leave during the first five years. (23–24)

According to NCES School and Staffing Survey, 78% of Georgia teachers have been in their current schools for fewer than nine years, compared to 68.6% nationally. Presumably, teacher induction should address those conditions that cause teachers to leave – these range from poor leadership, lack of collegial support, to feelings of isolation, to dissatisfaction with growth potential, to school safety. Most beginning teachers receive insufficient on-the-job support during their initial years in the profession. The basis of this guidelines document is to provide the necessary direction for district leaders, school-based administrators, mentors, and induction phase teachers to support the continuous professional growth of induction phase teachers to ensure effective teachers in every Georgia classroom.

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Structure of Guidelines

Georgia's Teacher Induction Draft Guidelines address six domains of high-quality teacher induction: 1) Roles and Responsibilities; 2) Leadership and Organizational Structures; 3) Orientation; 4) Mentoring; 5) Ongoing Assessment; 6) Professional Learning; and 7) Program Evaluation. Guidelines are clarified by components. Some components (elements in each domain) are required while others are suggested.

How these Guidelines Were Developed

These teacher induction guidelines were developed as a component of Georgia's Race to the Top initiative. A cross-disciplinary team – including teachers, instructional coaches, early career and experienced principals, district leaders, university faculty, education organization staff, and state agency leaders – was convened multiple times over a period of several months. The team worked collaboratively to review research on effective teacher induction programs and information gathered from new teachers in Georgia into drafting guidelines that are meant to be flexible and accommodating of the wide range of districts and district needs in Georgia.

Definition of Terms

Induction Phase Teacher

The induction phase teacher is defined as all teachers who have been hired into a new permanent position in any Georgia school. Teachers are considered to be “induction phase” until they successfully complete the district induction program.

Teacher Induction Support Team

The Teacher Induction Support Team is comprised of the immediate supervisor or designee, a mentor, and when possible, an external support agency representative, i.e. higher education, regional educational service agency, or district specialist.

Teacher Induction Plan

The Teacher Induction Plan is developed collaboratively with the induction phase teacher and the Teacher Induction Support Team to drive the professional learning of the induction phase teacher. The plan will be based on the district and/or school teaching and learning goals, identified developmental needs, prior preparation and experiences, and assessment results.

Mentor

A mentor is highly committed to supporting the personal growth of the induction phase teacher. The mentor provides guidance, shares knowledge and experiences, and supports the induction phase teacher in making a positive impact on student growth and achievement.

Coach

A coach supports the performance of the induction phase teacher in reaching a specific goal(s).