

# Beginning Teacher Support Program Plan

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# Beginning Teacher Support Program Plan

## Introduction: Overview and Goals

### Overview

Buncombe County Schools (BCS) implements a Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP), as outlined by the North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE) Policy Number TCED-016. The BTSP is a three-year induction program that provides a comprehensive support model for teachers in their first, second, and third year of teaching in North Carolina (NC). Along with observing policy, the BTSP Plan aligns with the NC BTSP Standards, NC Mentor Standards, and the NC Professional Teaching Standards. The NC Beginning Teacher Handbook is a reference for us to use during the implementation of our BTSP. Collectively, these resources are vital to inform and guide a successful support program for novice teachers.

### Goals

One primary and direct goal of our BTSP is to help beginning teachers (BTs) improve their skills and build confidence to become successful educators. We believe BTs will reach their fullest potential with systemic, multi-tiers of support from the state, district, and school levels, including quality mentorship. Additional goals of the BTSP include helping BTs:

- meet the NC Professional Teaching Standards;
- positively impact the learning of all students;
- choose to remain in the profession;
- take on teacher leadership roles; and
- become master educators.

Revisions to the BCS BTSP Plan are necessary to comply with state regulations governing the BTSP and, most importantly, to effectively respond to the current needs of BTs and mentors. In BCS, BTs receive an assigned mentor per SBE policies. Thus, BCS designed a mentor support program that maximizes available resources and provides on-going, job-embedded support for BTs.

## I. BT Identification, Verification, and Documentation Process

A coordinated effort to provide an effective and accurate process to identify, verify, and document BTs' licensure and BTSP participation exists in BCS. Primary coordination is executed among our Human Resources Director, Licensure Specialist, and the BTSP Specialist to ensure alignment with the State Board of Education licensure and BTSP policies. As necessary, additional collaboration among the HR data entry specialist, associate superintendent, principals may occur.

The Human Resources Director and Licensure Specialist utilize sound employment practices to identify, verify, and document teachers' licensure documentation. BTs are assigned in their area of licensure. Upon verification of and collaboration with the BTSP Specialist, BT information is documented in the state-approved Human Resource Management System (HRMS) and placement in the BTSP is documented accordingly. BTs are eligible to convert to a continuing license once all required coursework has been successfully completed, all NCSBE approved exams have been passed, and three years of teaching have been completed. BCS follows all NCSBE requirements for all required licensure tests. State regulations governing the completion and submission of the annual Teacher Turnover Report is completed by the HRMS data specialist.

## II. BTSP Induction Process

BCS implements a sound induction process for BTs with less than three years of teaching experience. We ensure every BT participates in a formal orientation within two weeks of their first day of work in any school year. Per NC SBE policy, at a minimum, orientation includes the following topics:

- State Board of Education's Mission and Goals;
- BCS goals, policies, and procedures;
- BCS program services and professional development;
- BTSP;
- Working conditions;
- Licensure/conversion process;
- NC Professional Teaching Standards and NC Educator Evaluation System (NCEES);
- NC curriculum standards and BCS curriculum resources; and
- Safe and appropriate use of seclusion and restraint of students.

Additional formalized orientations continue as part of our comprehensive onboarding process for BTs prior to the start of the school year. Upon initial employment, BTs attend our Newly Hired Licensed Staff Orientation sponsored by the Human Resource Department. This one-day orientation provides a districtwide overview of key programs, services, and staff associated with their professional careers with BCS. BTs also participate in school-based orientations to help them become acquainted with key staff, procedures, and facility. Finally, several program departments deliver orientations for their specialized BTs, such as lateral entry, Career Technical Education, Exceptional Children, English Learners, Dual Language Spanish Immersion, and Chinese language/cultural exchange to provide a smooth and successful transition process.

### Multi-Tiers of Support

Our three-year induction program includes opportunities for professional growth and development intended to further enhance BTs' knowledge, skills, and dispositions. BCS strategically delivers wrap-around multi-tiers of support for BTs. Numerous K-12 directors, specialists, and coaches from the Instructional Services Department, including: BTSP, Career

Technical, Curriculum, Digital Learning, Special Services, Student Services, and Testing and Accountability design and facilitate rich professional development aligned with our district's priorities throughout the year. Supplementary support from school administrators, university-school partnerships, and the Western Region Education Service Alliance (WRESA) augment our systemic support structures for BTs.

Funding is maximized to provide BTs allocated time to observe master teachers. BTs participate in school-level Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Collectively, this interconnected support network is a key component to strengthen our novice teachers' professional growth practices and reach our BTSP program goals.

### Required Working Conditions

Research indicates that BTs are often placed in difficult assignments that do not allow them the opportunity to learn and grow as professionals. Research also indicates that BTs are often assigned the most difficult students, multiple preparations, and multiple extra-curricular assignments. These working conditions prohibit on-the-job learning and negatively influence teacher job satisfaction.

BCS recognizes that novice teachers are applying new knowledge and skills during their first three years of teaching. BCS supports the following working conditions to ensure BTs have the opportunity to develop into highly effective educators:

- The job assignment of the BT will be in the area of licensure.
- The mentor will be assigned early, and, when possible, in the licensure area of the BT and near.
- A reasonable assignment that includes:
  - limited preparations (i.e., when feasible, based upon the school's faculty or structure),
  - limited number of exceptional or difficult students (no more than veteran teachers in the same setting);
  - limited non-instructional duties;
  - no extra-curricular assignments unless requested in writing by the BT.

The term *non-instructional duties* refer to those that are not directly involved with the instructional program or the implementation of the standard course of study, but that all teachers are expected to do. Examples would be bus duty, lunch duty, and hall duty.

The term *extracurricular activities* refer to those activities performed by a teacher involving students that are outside the regular school day and not directly related to the instructional program.

## Mentor Assignment

All beginning teachers are assigned a mentor according to State Board Policy TCED-016. BTs will be assigned excellent, experienced, and qualified teachers serving as mentors to provide ongoing support for novice teachers entering the profession. Eligible classroom teachers will serve in the official capacity as mentors throughout the BTs' participation in the BTSP.

The NC Mentor Standards provide a framework designed to focus on what knowledge, skills, and dispositions BTs need and clearly articulate how mentors can help teachers attain them. Mentors support BTs to:

- Demonstrate Leadership;
- Establish a Respectful Environment for a Diverse Population of Students;
- Know the Content they Teach;
- Facilitate Learning for their Students; and
- Reflect on their Practice.

## Mentor Training

BCS recognizes that mentors need the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be effective instructional coaches, emotional supports, and organizational guides for new teachers entering the profession. Mentors are trained in accordance with the NC Department of Public Instruction program based on the NC Mentor Standards.

## Professional Development Plan

A central part of the NC Educator Evaluation System (NCEES) is the Professional Development Plan (PDP), as indicated in Section III, "Formal Observation and Evaluation." BTs will develop their PDP in collaboration with his/her principal (or the principal's designee) and mentor.

- The PDP is based on the NC Professional Teaching Standards, and includes goals, strategies, and assessment of the BT's progress in improving professional skills.
- At the beginning, middle, and end of each year, formative assessment conferences including the BT, mentor and principal are held to reflect on the BT's progress in meeting the goals established for professional growth. Signatures of the BT, mentor, and principal are required for each formative assessment conference.

## Professional Development

Each year, BTs complete professional development required or prescribed by BCS, which may include districtwide, program-specific, or school-based professional development. In addition, the BTSP Support Specialist is the conduit of ongoing professional development support designed for administrators, mentors, and BTs.

### BTSP Program Feedback

Continuous improvement data are important to ensure our BTSP provides the necessary supports to meet current BT needs. Therefore, we utilize a needs assessment survey to gather perception data from BTs, mentors, and administrators to determine areas of strength and limitations that may warrant modifications.

## III. Formal Observation and Evaluation Process

BCS implements the NCEES as a formal process for conducting observations and a summative evaluation on all BTs and recognizes that a comprehensive evaluation cycle is critical to providing meaningful feedback on a BT's performance related to the NC Professional Teaching Standards. The NCEES components include:

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### *Component 1: Training & Orientation*

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- BTs participate in an evaluation training within two weeks of their first day in any school year.
- The principal provides:
  - the Rubric for Evaluating NC Teachers,
  - NC SBE Policy TCED-016, and
  - a schedule for completing the evaluation process.

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

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### *Component 2: Teacher Self-Assessment*

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- BTs rate and reflect on their performance using the Rubric for Evaluating North Carolina Teachers.

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### *Component 3: Pre-Observation Conference*

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- The purpose/goal of a pre-observation conference is to prepare the principal for the observation. Pre-observations are not required for subsequent observations.

- Before the first formal observation, the principal meets with the BT to discuss his/her Self-Assessment, Professional Growth Plan (PDP), and written description of the lesson(s) to be observed.

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*Component 4: Observations*

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- BTs receive four (4) observations during the school year: three (3) conducted by the administrator and one (1) by a peer. The first observation is a formal observation. Observations may be announced or unannounced and appropriately spaced during the school year. BCS produces an annual NCEES schedule for principals.

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*Component 5: Post Conference*

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- The principal shall conduct a post-conference no later than 10 days after each formal observation to discuss the teacher's performance. The conference will be based on the information from the pre-observation conference and the observation should be a vehicle for identifying areas of strength and areas in need of improvement.

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*Component 6: Summative Evaluation Conference*

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- The principal conducts a summary evaluation conference with the BT. This conference is to provide the teacher with specific performance feedback based on the NC Professional Teaching Standards, observations, and artifacts/evidence submitted as part of the evaluation process. Based on the collection of information gathered in the process, principals rate each element in the Rubric for Evaluating NC Teachers and review the completed Teacher Summary Rating Form with the teacher.

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*Component 7: Professional Development Plan (PDP)*

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- BTs are required to complete a PDP with collaboration with the principal and mentor as part of the NCEES process. The PDP is based on the NC Professional Teaching Standards and must include goals, strategies, and assessment of the BT's progress in improving professional skills. In developing the PDP, the BT,

principal and mentor use an assessment of the teachers' knowledge, performance, and dispositions. Throughout the year, formative assessment conferences are held to reflect on the progress of the BT in meeting the goals established for professional growth. The PDP is updated on an annual basis.

#### **IV. BTSP Monitoring**

Our BTSP Plan will be monitored for compliance with the NC SBE Policy, TCED-016. Monitoring will be completed in a five-year revolving cycle. Technical assistance from the NCDPI Regional Education Facilitator will be provided as necessary to address areas of concern.

#### **V. BTSP Peer Review Process**

Each year BCS participates in a regionally-based annual peer review. The Peer Review process includes an annual self-assessment and a peer review with a critical friend (filed annually with NCDPI). Data from the annual peer reviews will be summarized and analyzed by NCDPI on a five-year cycle. The BCS BTSP Specialist works in collaboration with the NCDPI Regional Education Facilitator.

#### **VI. BT Personnel Files Statement**

All BTs' PDP and performance evaluation report(s) are filed and secured electronically in the NC Educator Evaluation System (NCEES).

#### **VII. Transfer of BT Files**

BCS provides a timely transfer of BT files to subsequent employing LEAs, charter schools, or non-public institutions within the state, upon request.

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*AS OUTLINED IN TCED-016, THE BTSP PLAN IS TO BE APPROVED BY THE LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION, NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, AND ON FILE FOR REVIEW IN BUNCOMBE COUNTY SCHOOLS.*

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- \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_
- BTSP SPECIALIST, DR. CHERI BOONE
- \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_
- SUPERINTENDENT, DR. TONY BALDWIN
- \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_
- SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR, MS. ANN FRANKLIN
- SUBMITTED TO NCDPI DATE: \_\_\_\_\_
- APPROVED BY NCDPI DATE: \_\_\_\_\_