

THE TEACHER EDUCATION AND MENTORING (TEAM) PROGRAM
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS 2013-14
Supplement to the TEAM Program Guidelines

FOR DISTRICT FACILITATORS, ADMINISTRATORS AND MENTORS

WHAT IS THE TEAM PROGRAM?

Legislation passed in October 2009 (Section 10-145o of the Connecticut General Statutes) has established a teacher education and mentoring program for the purpose of providing support and professional growth to beginning teachers who work under the initial educator or interim initial educator certificates or 90-day certificate. Implementation of this program commenced with the school year beginning July 1, 2010. This program replaced the BEST Program.

WHAT IS THE DESIGN OF THE TEAM PROGRAM?

TEAM is designed around five professional growth modules in order to provide a framework for support of new teachers. These five modules focus on the following domains of the Common Core of Teaching (CCT): Classroom Environment, Student Engagement and Commitment to Learning; Planning for Active Learning; Instruction for Active Learning; Assessment for Learning; and Professional Responsibilities and Teacher Leadership. The modules have been designed collaboratively by a group consisting of RESC staff, CSDE staff, union representatives and higher education representatives.

HOW DO THE MODULES PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK FOR SUPPORT?

Mentors and beginning teachers work together to establish the goal for each module. Beginning teachers start the module process by identifying an area of professional growth using the CCT Performance Profile designed specifically for each module. As part of the process, mentors and beginning teachers focus on classroom practice – within the context of the teacher’s own students, content area being taught, grade level, curriculum requirements and school and district goals. At the culmination of each module, a written reflection paper is submitted by the beginning teacher to a district or regional review committee to determine if the beginning teacher has successfully completed the module. Criteria defining successful completion and training to apply these criteria have been developed to assist the reviewers with the consistent implementation of decisions.

WHO ARE REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN TEAM?

Category I: All teachers holding an initial educator or interim initial educator certificate or 90-day certificate (full or part-time) in the following endorsement areas: **bilingual education, elementary education, English language arts, health, mathematics, science, social studies, special education, music, physical education, visual arts, world languages and teachers of English as a second language**, receive two years of mentorship and are required to successfully complete all five modules in order to be eligible for the provisional educator certificate. *Please refer to the Participation Category Chart for a list of all endorsements for Category 1 attached.*

Category II: All teachers holding an initial educator or interim initial educator certificate or 90-day certificate (full or part-time) in the following endorsement areas: **business education, vocational agriculture, agriculture, home economics, technology education, partially sighted, hearing impaired, blind, marketing educator, occupational subjects in technical high schools, trade and industrial occupations in a comprehensive high school, health occupations – comprehensive high school, health occupations – technical high schools and unique endorsements in dance, theater, and Montessori**, receive one year of mentorship and are required to successfully complete two modules *selected from modules #1-4*, to be eligible for the provisional educator certificate. *Please refer to the Participation Category Chart for a list of all endorsements for Category 2 attached.*

DO TEACHERS WORKING UNDER DURATIONAL SHORTAGE AREA PERMITS (DSAPS), RESIDENT TEACHING CERTIFICATES OR ADJUNCT ARTS INSTRUCTOR PERMITS PARTICIPATE IN TEAM?

Teachers working under these certificates have not fully completed requirements for the initial certificate. For this reason, these teachers will not participate in TEAM until the initial educator, interim initial educator certificate or 90-day certificate is issued. Although not required by TEAM, mentorship of these teachers is encouraged. However, these mentors will not be considered part of the TEAM Program for the purpose of receiving stipends.

DO LONG-TERM SUBSTITUTES PARTICIPATE IN TEAM?

Participation in TEAM requires that the teacher hold an initial, interim initial or 90-day certificate. If a teacher holds one of these certificates and is in a long-term position (taking over someone else's classroom) for a **full 10 months**, then this teacher will be required to participate in TEAM. If the duration of the long-term substitute position is less than ten months, then the teacher will not participate in TEAM. Staff file records must be accurate and *reflect the duration* of the long-term assignment.

WHAT IS THE TIMELINE FOR BEGINNING TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN TEAM?

Category 1, Full Five Module Program: It is expected that beginning teachers complete the five module process in two years. However, beginning teachers will be given a full three years to complete the requirements of TEAM *from their "entry date"* in the program. TEAM registration will begin with entry into the Department of Education certified staff file (ED163) and the assignment of an "entry date" as follows:

HIRE DATE	BEGINNING TEACHER PROGRAM ENTRY DATE
Between February 15, 2013, and October 31, 2013	September 1, 2013
Between November 1, 2013, and February 14, 2014	February 15, 2014
Between February 15, 2014, and October 31, 2014	September 1, 2014

If the required number of modules are not successfully completed within the allotted timeframe, a process will be put in place to request an extension of time – only in extenuating hardship cases – such as illness or leave of absence due to maternity leave or medical reasons. These are circumstances which may have limited the teacher's time in TEAM and his/her ability to complete all 5 modules within the three year timeframe.

Category 2, Two Module Program: It is expected that the beginning teachers in this group complete the two modules of their choice (*selected from modules 1-4*) in their *first year*. However, this group will be given a full two years to complete the requirements of TEAM *from their "entry date"* in the program as described above.

Note about Module 5: Teachers participating in Category II are strongly encouraged to participate in the Module 5 District-facilitated conversations focused on professional responsibility. **However, although participation in Module 5 may be recommended by districts, Category II teachers are not required**

to do so as part of TEAM completion requirements and participation in these conversations will not count towards meeting one of their module requirements.

WHY ARE TIMELINES FOR PARTICIPATION IMPORTANT?

Teachers who do not successfully complete all five modules by the end of three full years in TEAM for Category I teachers, and two modules within two full years for Category II teachers, and who do not receive an approved extension of time, will not be eligible for an extension of their initial educator certificate and will not be eligible to advance to the provisional certificate. In such case, in order to earn eligibility for the reissuance of the initial educator certificate, the teacher would need to fulfill the requirements of intervening study and experience (Sec. 10-145f) as approved by the State Board of Education.

Clarification of these consequences:

- The consequence of not meeting timelines for TEAM completion, results in the loss of the teacher's initial educator certificate and ineligibility for the provisional or professional educator certificate.
- To regain eligibility for the reissuance of the initial educator certificate, the teacher must fulfill the requirements of intervening study and experience which may include:
 1. A designated number of clinical experiences hours or a long term substitute position.
 2. A structured response reflection paper relative to Professional Responsibilities.
 3. A structured interview with CSDE or TEAM RESC staff.
- In addition, teachers must take and meet standards on any tests (Praxis II, Foundations of Reading, etc.) currently required for a teacher's endorsement area, that were not required at the time of the issuance of the teacher's original certificate.

WHAT ARE THE DISTRICT'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO TEAM?

- Appointment of a TEAM District Facilitator by the Superintendent.
- The establishment of a district TEAM Coordinating Committee (TCC) for the purpose of developing a plan for the support of beginning teachers based on program guidelines.
- The development of a Three-Year District Support Plan: Plans first developed in 2010-11 are due to be revised by districts in 2013-14.
- Assignment of the review of beginning teacher reflection papers to an in-district review committee or a regional review committee.
- Recruitment and training of individuals to review beginning teacher reflection papers regardless of choice of review option.
- Distribution of funding to mentors as made available by the state.
- Assignment of a trained mentor to each beginning teacher upon hire.
- Notification to the state by the Superintendent of a beginning teacher's successful completion of program requirements and eligibility for the provisional educator certificate.

WHAT ARE THE DISTRICT'S OPTIONS FOR THE REVIEW OF REFLECTION PAPERS?

Each module culminates with a reflection paper submitted by the beginning teacher. Reflection papers may be reviewed in-district by the TCC or by a subset of the TCC or a district may choose to participate in the regional review process to determine successful completion of module reflection papers. Choice of review option is noted on the district's three-year support plan.

DO DISTRICTS HAVE ACCESS TO THE TEAM DATA SYSTEM?

Yes. The CSDE, in conjunction with EASTCONN, has created a data system for local and regional school districts to access resources and record-keeping tools to manage the TEAM Program at the local level. The data system includes, but is not limited to, templates for:

- writing and updating each district's support plan;
- completion of the module process including a needs assessment and a professional growth action plan;
- documenting the teachers' completion of professional growth module activities and the submission of written reflection papers.; and
- recording each teacher's completion of each of the five instructional modules.

DO MENTORS HAVE ACCESS TO THE TEAM DATA SYSTEM?

Yes, mentors interact with their assigned beginning teacher(s) online. Mentors work with their beginning teachers as they use their CCT based performance profiles to establish a focus for growth for each module, develop a professional growth action plan and schedule anticipated meeting dates. As the module process continues, through the electronic system, the mentor and mentee record the purpose and outcome of each meeting and the mentor can read, comment and sign-off on the beginning teacher's paper. Each mentor must sign-up as a USER of the system by going to www.ctteam.org, clicking on Log-in and following directions for sign-up as a new user.

WHAT IS THE REQUIRED COMMITMENT FOR MENTORS AND DOES THE LEGISLATION PROVIDE FOR PAYMENT OF A STIPEND TO MENTORS?

Mentors to beginning teachers in Category 1 (five module requirement) are required to provide their mentee with fifty contact hours over a two-year period. Mentors supporting beginning teachers in Category II (2 module requirement) are required to provide their mentee with twenty contact hours over a one year period. The expectation is that a mentor will provide their mentee with approximately ten hours of mentorship for each module. Mentors will receive a five hundred dollar annual stipend for each beginning teacher for whom they provide the required support. Funding is provided by TEAM to the districts for distribution to mentors.

WHAT KINDS OF TRAINING ARE AVAILABLE FOR MENTORS AND OTHER DISTRICT PERSONNEL?

- **Initial Support Teacher Training:** This is a three-day training for individuals selected by their districts to serve in the role of mentor or cooperating teacher. The training engages participants in an exploration of teaching standards and coaching strategies to help novices develop new learning, reflect on and improve their teaching practices and promote positive outcomes for students. Mentors support beginning teachers through TEAM modules in their first two years of teaching and cooperating teachers host student teachers.

In-district training Option: Districts or consortiums of districts are eligible to host in-district mentor update or initial support teacher trainings if they have a minimum of 30 people to train. In such case, TEAM funds will pay for the trainer and the district pays for materials and food.

- **Mentor Update Training:** This is a three and a half-hour training for mentors who have previously participated in a TEAM Initial Support Teacher training or TEAM Mentor Update training. Legislation requires that mentors be updated every three years. As a result, mentors who participated in a TEAM Initial Support Teacher training or a TEAM Mentor Update training during the 2010-11 school year must attend a TEAM Mentor Update session prior to serving in the role of mentor or cooperating teacher during the 2014-15 school year.

- **Administrator Training:** A half-day workshop to give administrators an overview of the TEAM Program and their role in supporting new teachers. Administrators will learn how to utilize their dashboard to review Professional Growth Action Plans and provide assistance to their beginning teachers.
- **Initial Reflection Paper Reviewer Training:** This one day training is required for anyone serving on a district or regional review committee. Districts must select potential reviewers to attend the training to learn the criteria for a successful reflection paper. Participants are given multiple opportunities to read and review a range of papers to assist them in making informed decisions.
- **Reviewer Update training:** A half day training to update previously trained reviewers. Reviewer update training is required every year and is available through in-person sessions or online beginning in the 2013-14 school year.

September 2013

