

September 23, 2004

TO: Chief School Administrators

FROM: Jay Doolan, Ed.D., Director
Office of Academic and Professional Standards

Joan E. Brady, Director
Office of Licensure and Credentials

RE: Implementation of the New Teacher Mentoring Regulations

The new school year has begun and the Provisional Teacher Program is registering those traditional and alternate route teachers who will participate in the one-year mentoring program. In December 2003, the State Board of Education adopted N.J.A.C.6A:9-8 which includes revisions and enhancements to the mentoring regulations. As a result, this will be the first year that districts must assure their mentoring plans are being developed to align with the Professional Standards for Teachers. The local professional development committee must develop a mentoring plan that will be implemented by the district and the district board of education.

Attached is information to assist your local professional development committee and the district board of education with their responsibilities as specified in the regulations. This includes:

- A brief overview of the development process for the mentoring with induction plan;
- A review of the key points within the mentoring regulations;
- Information on mentor training funds;
- Information on the mentoring of special education teachers;
- Information on the use of retired educators as mentors; and
- A District Information Sheet and Statement of Assurance and Intent.

Districts are required to complete the attached Statement of Assurance and Intent which must be submitted to the district board of education for their approval by **October 15, 2004**. The district board of education must then submit the forms to the county superintendent for their records by **October 29, 2004**. The county superintendent will submit a report to the New Jersey Department of Education of the status of the completed records by **November 15, 2004**.

Should you have further questions or need assistance, please call Victoria Duff, the coordinator of Mentor Training at (609) 292-0189 or victoria.duff@doe.state.nj.us.

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Attachments

c: Members, State Board of Education
William L. Librera, Ed.D., Commissioner
Dwight Pfennig
Regional Assistant Commissioners
Assistant Commissioners
Eileen Aviss-Spedding
Judy Cifone
Victoria Duff
Betty Sue Zellner
Gerard M. Theirs
County Superintendents
NJ LEE Group
Garden State Coalition of Schools
Mentoring Task Force

THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS FOR THE MENTORING WITH INDUCTION PLAN 2004 -2005

The mentoring regulations (N.J.A.C. 6A:9-8) place the responsibility for the development of the district mentoring plans with the local professional development committee. The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), working in partnership with the National Staff Development Council and the Mentoring Task Force, is in the process of developing a standards-based toolkit for statewide distribution to professional development committees, district boards of education and other stakeholders. The toolkit will provide guidance in the development, implementation and approval of mentoring and induction programs. The distribution and statewide training for this toolkit will begin in early 2005. The toolkit will provide useful information to guide districts in developing mentoring plans that are aligned with the Professional Standards for Teachers.

DISTRICT STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE AND INTENT

During the 2004-2005 school year, the NJDOE will focus on developing a standards-based mentoring and induction program in all districts. Regulations stipulate that all districts must have approved plans aligned with the professional standards. In order to provide districts with a realistic timeframe to develop a standards-based program the NJDOE is requiring the following:

- The chief school administrator and the local professional development committees will submit a **Statement of Assurance and Intent**, which is attached to this document, for the 2004-2005 school year to the district board of education by **October 15, 2004** and the county superintendent by **October 29, 2004**. The Statement of Assurance and Intent will be a preliminary mentoring plan that will assure that:
 - All provisional teachers receive a mentor upon hire;
 - All provisional teachers receive a rigorous mentoring program; and
 - All mentors are selected through an application process and receive a comprehensive training program.
- Local professional development committees, district boards of education and other mentoring stakeholders will receive training and guidance on implementing effective standards-based mentoring and induction programs in early 2005.
- The local professional development committee will begin the process of aligning the district mentoring plan with the Professional Standards for Teachers. This process should be completed by late Spring 2005 and sent to the district board of education for approval and to the county superintendent for notification to the New Jersey Department of Education.
- The county superintendent will provide notification to the New Jersey Department of Education regarding the status of each district within the county. The final report should reflect the district name and the notification status from the district board of education. The county superintendent report should be submitted by **November 15, 2004** to:

Victoria Duff, Mentor Training Coordinator
New Jersey Department of Education
Office of Academic and Professional Standards
P.O. Box 500
Trenton, NJ 08625-0500

**AT A GLANCE:
KEY POINTS OF THE MENTORING REGULATIONS**

The following is a summary of minimum program revisions, as outlined in the regulations, which may serve as an immediate guide in developing mentoring and induction programs for the district:

- All mentoring plans and programs in each district must be aligned with the **Professional Standards for Teachers** (<http://www.nj.gov/njded/profdev/standards.htm>).
- The local professional development committee is responsible to develop a mentoring plan based on the regulations (<http://www.nj.gov/njded/code/title6a/chap9/index.html#8>).
- District plans must provide a rigorous mentoring process for novice teachers.
- District plans must ensure that mentors receive comprehensive mentor training.
- In the absence of state funds, novice teachers pay the stipend, unless the district provides other alternatives.
- The regulations define the plan approval process, through the district board of education and then to the county superintendent for notification to the DOE.
- The effectiveness of the mentoring plan will be reported through the district Quality Assurance Annual Report (QAAR) on an annual basis.

MENTOR TRAINING FUNDS

Funds from the federal Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant were sent to each qualifying district to support comprehensive training for mentor teachers or mentor-novice teacher pairs. In a letter from the Office of Academic and Professional Standards, guidelines for the use of the funds were provided. This information can be accessed at <http://www.nj.gov/njded/profdev/mentor/>.

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

Those teachers who hold a provisional certificate, a Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing (CEAS) or a Certificate of Eligibility (CE), must participate in the one-year mentoring program. Special education teachers who hold a CE through the alternate route process must participate in the provisional teacher program and the mentoring process. Although there is no requirement at this time that special education teachers who hold a standard certificate participate in the mentoring program, it is strongly recommended that districts provide a mentor for all novice special education teachers to assure that the novice is able develop the skills necessary to be effective in their classroom. There is no requirement that the special education teacher with a standard certificate pay for mentoring.

RETIRED EDUCATORS AS MENTORS

Districts may use retired educators as mentors; however, they must undergo the fingerprinting required for any person working within the district. Districts that use retired educators who have previously worked in their district may allow the retired educator to mentor while going through the fingerprinting process. Districts that use retired educators from another district or educators from another state must have the fingerprinting results on file prior to the mentor beginning the work in the district.

If you have any questions on the mentoring regulations, please contact Victoria Duff at (609) 292-0189 or victoria.duff@doe.state.nj.us.