

For 10 years the Oregon Department of Education has been supporting instructional mentoring for beginning teachers, principals, and superintendents (beginning educators) across the state through grants to districts and consortia. Rigorous formative and summative evaluation has informed implementation revisions and supported the development of the Oregon Mentoring Program Standards. These efforts ensure highly effective systems of support for beginning educators. The lessons outlined here are tied to these data-driven, evidence-based standards.

Lessons to Support Mentees



Mentor beginning educators for two years. ([ORS 329.788](#))



Implement data-based cycle of inquiry to support student learning.



Provide 75-90 hours of job-embedded, focused support to improve instruction/leadership. ([ORS 329.800](#))



Implement ongoing professional learning based on data of beginning educators' needs.



Support beginning educators to develop resiliency and self-care.

Research and Oregon survey data both confirm the characteristics listed above are the essential components to supporting beginning educators to stay in the profession and accelerate their instructional/leadership practices. Beginning educators repeatedly stated in their survey responses they value having a trusted, non-evaluative person to debrief challenging situations with; someone who can provide them tips as they are ready to hear them; and a system that provides ready access to trained peers. These foundational building blocks for instructional mentoring are highly valued by beginning educators in Oregon.

Lessons to Support Mentors



Build a trusting and confidential relationship with mentees.



Use tools to analyze data and guide instructional/leadership practices.



Provide mentors ongoing professional learning and support based on identified needs. ([ORS 329.810](#) & [ORS 329.815](#))



Ensure mentor caseloads are grounded in evidence-based recommendations.



Implement a rigorous mentor selection and thoughtful pairing of mentors to mentees.

Mentors, as more experienced professionals, value giving back to the field. Professional learning provided opportunities for mentors to network with each other and share resources, experiences, and skills and strategies for supporting beginning educators. Mentors recognize the importance of thoughtful and purposeful pairing of mentors to mentees, as well as the significance of a trusting and confidential relationship with the mentee. In order to be effective and prevent burnout in themselves, mentors need professional learning and evidence-based tools to support them in improving beginning educators instructional/leadership practices.

Lessons for Program Implementation



Implement instructional mentoring as part of a comprehensive induction system.



Elevate educator practice on both ends of the educator experience continuum.



Analyze multiple data sources for project improvement.



Select the mentoring delivery model that aligns with program goals, mission, and vision.



Deploy highly effective, skilled instructional mentors.



Partner with Institutions of Higher Education to share data and bridge preservice into service.

Instructional mentoring cannot be effective if it is implemented as a stand-alone support. It must be a part of a comprehensive induction system. There are various models of mentoring. The one a district selects must be a good fit within the context in which it is being implemented. A comprehensive evaluation of the program using several types of data is vital to support continuous improvement. Feedback and data gained from evaluation can also be collaboratively shared with Educator Preparation Programs (EPP) to build partnerships and understanding of current educator needs.

More detailed information on each of the lessons learned in effective mentoring will be posted soon.



Fast Facts, Research and Informational Briefs

Research and Informational Briefs, Fast Facts, and other documents are developed jointly by the Oregon Department of Education and Mentoring Evaluation team to share lessons learned about mentoring beginning educators in Oregon, as well as best practices.



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