



Selecting a Mentoring Delivery Model

Over the last several years, districts in Oregon and across the nation have begun to significantly increase the hiring of educators in an effort to rebuild programs and reduce large class sizes that were the result of the Great Recession. Over the last three years, Oregon districts have hired on average 5,073 beginning teachers and over 350 beginning administrators annually. With this large infusion of beginning educators, districts are recognizing the need to provide them with a systematic structure of support to ensure all students receive a highly effective educational experience.

Oregon developed and adopted Mentoring Program Standards (2014), <http://www.oregon.gov/ode/schools-and-districts/grants/mentoring/Documents/oregon-mentoring-program-standards.pdf> that clearly describe the structures and functions, processes, and effective practices to support school districts/Education Service Districts (ESDs) to develop comprehensive mentoring induction programs that can lead to improved student achievement. Foundational to these programs is the determination of which mentoring delivery model to implement. This selection is dependent upon many factors. The district's Mentoring Program Leadership Committee should analyze the benefits and challenges associated with each model to determine the one that best fits the district and program needs. Mentoring consortiums can implement a variety of models based on the needs of each individual district.

Various mentoring delivery models used in Oregon include:

Full-Release Mentor:

- Experienced educators (5 yrs. or more of teaching/educational experience) are selected and trained
- Released from all classroom/school duties to support beginning educators throughout the district/consortium
- Develop sophisticated mentoring skill sets necessary to grow novice educators

Recommended caseload 1:16

Partial-Release/Content Mentor:

- Experienced educators (5 yrs. or more of teaching/educational experience) are selected and trained
- Released from classroom/school duties a portion of their day to support beginning educators throughout the district/consortium
- Allows Districts/ESDs to specialize in a specific content area or (CTE mentor, SPED mentor, etc.)
- Develop sophisticated mentoring skill sets necessary to grow novice educators

Recommended caseload 1:8 (for .50)

One-on-One/Building Colleague Mentor:

- Beginning educator is matched with an in-building/district colleague
- Selected and trained with research-based professional learning to develop mentoring skills
- Skill set of building colleague is more important than the grade level or content match

Recommended caseload 1:1

Blended: Full-Release Mentor PLUS Building Colleague Mentor:

- Beginning teachers work with a full-release mentor AND receive support from a building colleague mentor
- Defined roles with specific expectations, responsibilities, and receives research-based professional learning to develop mentoring skills
- Full-release mentor focuses on instructional components that include goal setting, observations, formative feedback, and reflective conversations
- Building mentor provides daily onsite support and frequent face-to-face check-ins

Hybrid: Any combination of the mentoring delivery models listed above.

Caution: The blending should not impact the quality of mentoring.

Oregon Mentoring Model Analysis Tool

The Mentoring Model Analysis Tool is designed to highlight the benefits and challenges of each of the models. The model(s) that best fits the needs, capacity, resources, goals and vision of the project will be identified. Regardless of which model a district/consortium chooses, they can be confident it is aligned to the Oregon Mentoring Program Standards as long as the systems are in place to ensure mentors and mentees have time to:

- Meet for a minimum of one-two hour(s) each week, uninterrupted, for planning and problem solving (75-90 hours per year required by statute)
- Use various mentoring tools to support gathering data, analyzing student work, facilitating a collaborative conversation, and purposeful planning
- Build a trusting relationship that uses an instructional, collaborative and/or facilitative approach
- Participate in ongoing professional learning based on assessed needs to develop and improve skills and practices
- Conduct observations of experienced, accomplished teachers/administrators with mentor
- Conduct at least five classroom/professional setting observations of the mentee

Regardless of the model chosen for mentoring, districts/consortiums need to ensure:

- Mentors are carefully selected and highly-trained
- Mentors are carefully matched with beginning educators based on the beginning educator's style of teaching, availability, grade level, and content area
- Mentors have adequate time to support the number of mentees on their caseload

THINGS TO CONSIDER

VS

Responsibilities only for mentoring:

- Full responsibility for mentoring/single focus
- No added challenges of balancing time/roles
- Clear understanding of the role of the mentor
- Easier to build trusting relationship between mentor/mentee

Responsibilities in addition to mentoring:

- Extra resources and expertise to provide
- Multiple responsibilities including mentoring
- Protecting confidentiality can be challenging
- Confusion as to the role mentor is functioning in

Fully Released Mentor Vs. Building Colleague Teacher As Mentor

VS

Fully-released mentors:

- Is able to be available to work with beginning teachers for extended time in a given day, multiple days in a row, or weekly time planning, conducting conferences and observations, and providing feedback.
- Is available to provide support during busy times in the school year since they are not in the classroom.
- Is able to focus on building mentoring skills and capacity of mentor over time.

Caution: When no longer facing the day-to-day challenges experienced by classroom teachers, the mentor may experience issues of credibility.

Building colleague teacher as mentor:

- Generally teaches a similar grade level or subject as the beginning teacher.
- Has a deep understanding of student learning needs and curricula for the beginning teacher's assignment.
- Is able to provide a context for collaborative planning and examining evidence of student learning.
- Lays a foundation for beginning teachers becoming contributing members of a professional learning community.

Caution: When not working as a fully released mentor, finding time to observe the beginning teacher and growing expertise as a mentor for teachers that work occasionally as mentors is more challenging.

District vs. School-based Mentor

VS

District-based mentor:

- Brings an outside perspective into a school and provides a safe place for beginning teachers to discuss challenging situations from within their building.
- Is able to deliver consistent district-wide messages and may have more access to district information, personnel, and resources.
- Has greater access to helpful ideas and learning from other sites.

School-based mentor:

- Has a deep understanding of school culture, contexts, and its unique features.
- Is present at building meetings and trainings, which can help with the integration of beginning teachers into a school's professional learning community.
- Is on-site and may be more available when urgent needs arise.

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The more comprehensive the induction program, the better the retention.

- Ingersoll, R. 2012

ESD or Consortium-Based Mentor For Multiple Districts

For small districts and those with few beginning teachers, ESDs and/or groups of school districts are ways to provide specialized support. Mentors in these models can build cadres of beginning teachers from across districts and may be able to offer deep knowledge of specific curriculum and regional issues, supports, and resources.

Mitigating challenges

There are several ways to mitigate the challenges presented by the various mentoring models.

- Provide on-going professional development for all mentors
- Clarify roles and responsibilities
- Combine district-based mentors with school-based mentors
- Involve building mentors in district trainings and invite district mentors to participate in building trainings
- Use of technology including a balance of face-to-face time and virtual meetings

In Oregon districts have the flexibility to select the mentoring delivery model(s) that works best for their program based on the Oregon Mentoring Program Standards.

Mentoring Project Directors utilize different models:



The Consortium will continue to use a variety of mentoring models; one-to-one for elementary level and retired teachers/partial release at the secondary level.



Full release mentors who are highly trained is completely different than the buddy system. It supports a skilled mentor with tight focus on the direct support of new educators.

Additional Resources for Developing a Beginning Educator Mentoring Program:

- Oregon Mentoring Program Standards
- Oregon Mentoring Model Analysis Tool
- Oregon Mentoring Program Website
- Oregon Foundational Standards Protocol

References

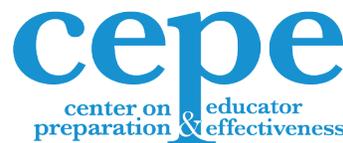
Special thank you to the State of Washington's Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST).

Ingersoll, R. (2012). Beginning Teacher Induction: What the Data Tell Us. Retrieved from http://repository.upenn.edu/gse_pubs/234

ODE Mentoring Informational Briefs

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