

Northwest Colorado BOCES



Teacher Induction Program Handbook

2020-2021

(revised August 2020)

Purpose of Induction

The induction program is intended to support teachers in their first three years of teaching to become successful educators. In the state of Colorado, teachers with an initial license must complete an approved induction program in order to apply for a professional license (Code of Colorado Regulations 1-CCR 301-37). NW BOCES is the approved induction provider for East Grand, Hayden, North Park, South Routt, and West Grand School Districts.

Goals

The goal of the NW Colorado BOCES teacher induction program is to increase access to effective teachers for all students in the NW BOCES region, supporting the NW BOCES mission: “Through the cooperative efforts and services of NW BOCES, school districts will improve student achievement and maximize resources.” The induction program will accomplish this goal by:

1. providing the types of supports for teachers that have been proven to increase retention including:
 - a. content on the best practices that are most critical to success in the first 3 years of teaching
 - b. a professional network that includes both veteran colleagues and other new teachers, locally and regionally
2. designing and continually refining a program that meets the indicators from the state of Colorado for a high-quality induction program
3. facilitating activities that help new teachers to reflect, apply learning, and make continuous progress on a journey toward masterful teaching

Sources of Support

One of the primary objectives of the induction program is helping new teachers develop a network of support and the skills they need to continue to identify and seek out a supportive community throughout their careers. Inductees are encouraged to access support through:

- district staff
- principals
- assigned mentors
- BOCES coaches
- informal mentors
- SEED facilitator
- a regional cohort of new teachers
- CDE resources
- induction module content

BOCES staff and assigned mentors can and should be the go-to source of support for any questions or if inductees are having trouble identifying where to go for help.

Mentoring

Mentors are experienced teachers whose job is to guide inductees as they navigate their first years as a teacher. A mentor’s job is to help and support a new teacher in providing the information they need to be successful or leading them to where they can find this information. Having the support of a strong mentor is critical to helping create and retain high-quality teachers

Mentor Selection

Districts are tasked with identifying mentors who will be most supportive to new teachers. The process and criteria may vary in each school or district, but in general, a mentor should be an accomplished and experienced teacher who understands the context in which the new teacher is working (grade level, school, content area, etc.) and what they may need to be successful in that context.

Support for Mentors

NW BOCES staff will provide support for mentors in two ways:

- 1) There will be one required mentor meeting at the beginning of the school year that provides details on mentor expectations.
- 2) Each quarter, BOCES staff will host a regional webinar on an important topic in coaching and mentoring. These webinars are not required by the BOCES induction program, but districts may choose to require them for their mentors.

Mentoring Requirements

Mentors and inductees are required to meet monthly (or more frequently) during a teacher's first year. A teacher should continue to have support from a mentor through at least their third year of teaching, even though this is not a requirement before an induction certificate is issued.

During monthly meetings, mentors should provide support for their mentees by identifying which items in the mentor conversation checklist will be most helpful to the inductee at that time and discussing any other topics that the mentor or mentee has identified as questions, concerns, or important issues. The use of a double-entry journal or similar mechanism as a means of more frequent communication is encouraged. These topics may be related to school policies, procedures, culture, or events, problem-solving, lesson planning, classroom management, parent relationships, or anything else that will ensure a new teacher feels supported and successful. The mentor conversation checklist contains the minimum requirements for these conversations, and mentors and mentees are expected to go beyond this list.

Induction Program Requirements

In order to be recommended for a professional teaching license, inductees must successfully complete the program requirements, which include:

- Participation in the initial in-person meeting, and one, two-hour meeting in January. During these meetings, participants will engage in understanding the work of the teacher as a professional, some foundational instructional planning practice, as well as in introduction to the program.
- Completion of Modules 1-3 (including review of resources and classroom implementation)
 - Modules 1 and 3 include observation expectations - candidates must be observed or observe a fellow educator. If an observation isn't practical (due to COVID-19) a guided interview may be conducted.
- At least three check-in meetings with the NW BOCES Professional Learning coordinator and coach. These meetings can be in person, virtual, or by phone.
- Active and prepared participation in virtual meetings - all meetings will be required.
- Meet with an assigned mentor (monthly or more frequently) - a discussion of all items in the mentoring checklist is required.
- Creation of a portfolio and written reflection.

Modules

The induction program content consists of three modules that are completed over the course of one year. The module content reflects requirements from CDE as well as content that reflects research on successful teaching in the first three years.

Each module contains:

1. Several resources (articles, book chapters, videos, etc.) related to the module topic and learning target(s)
2. A classroom implementation assignment which requires the inductee to apply new learning from the resources in the classroom, connect with a colleague to complete a classroom observation, and submit artifacts that demonstrate successful implementation
3. A reflection assignment to be submitted to BOCES staff for review

Module Topics and Important Dates

	Topic	Start Date	Due Date	Module meeting
Opening meeting	Becoming a Professional Teacher	10/9/20		10/9/20 (face-to-face)
Module 1	Establishing a Positive Learning Environment	10/23/2020	12/13/2020	10/22/20 (virtual)
Module 2	Effective Instructional Planning	1/28/2021	3/7/2021	1/21/21 OR 1/27/21 (face-to-face)
Module 3	Supporting Students in Their Learning	3/10/2021	5/2/2021	3/9/21 (virtual)
	Final reflection		5/17/2021	

Module Content

Each module has an associated learning target and several topics that will be covered. Both the topics and the learning targets represent practices detailed in the Colorado Model Evaluation System Teacher Quality Standards rubric. The modules are designed to help support inductees in learning new content, applying it in their classrooms, and then reflecting on their learning. NW BOCES objective is that teachers will develop these habits of learning, application, and reflection in their classroom practice. In each module, there is an element of choice as well so that induction candidates can personalize the content to their own needs.

Opening Meeting: Becoming a Professional Teacher

Learning Target: I will demonstrate professionalism through ethical conduct, reflection, and leadership.

Topics:

- Ethical conduct - confidentiality, responsible/ethical behavior and interactions, modeling, and expectations for students.
- Responsibility for professional growth and reflection
- Colorado Educator Effectiveness System
- Response to a dynamic environment - productive relationships, adapts to changing demands, collaborates with colleagues productively
- Contributes and participates in the school environment
- Foundations of instructional planning

Module 1: Establishing a Positive Learning Environment

Learning Target: I will establish a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment for a diverse population of students.

Topics:

- Respectful relationships
- Collaboration with families
- Physical space
- Classroom Expectations
- Maximizing Instructional Time

Module 2: Effective Instructional Planning

Learning Target: I will use content standards and district curriculum materials to create intentionally planned learning experiences in which learning goals are clearly articulated to students.

Topics:

- Standards-Based Instruction
- Assessment design

Module 3: Supporting Students In Their Learning

Learning Target: I will support students with instruction that prompts high levels of student engagement and thinking, clear communication and a variety of evidence-based instructional strategies.

Topics:

- Student-Centered learning targets and feedback
- Instructional strategies that facilitate high levels of engagement and thinking
- Scaffolding and Differentiation

Classroom Implementation Assignments and Reflection

The cycle of learning and reflection is critical to success, and building this habit at the beginning of your career will serve you well. Each classroom implementation assignment asks you to take some new learning or thinking from the module resources, put it into action in your classroom, invite a colleague to observe in your classroom, visit a colleague's classroom (or interview a colleague if restrictions due to COVID-19 limit observations), and then engage in reflection on how it went and what your next steps will be. The practices of applying new learning in your classroom, inviting others in, and reflecting are critical to teaching success, and we invite you to use these assignments to develop these habits in your teaching practice so that they can become a foundation for you throughout your career.

While the observation assignments in Modules 1 and 3 may feel a bit uncomfortable at first, the research is very clear that the most successful educators are those with high "social capital" - those who go to their colleagues for support with problem-solving, open their classroom doors to others, and have a strong network of support. These observation assignments are meant to help you in developing social capital within your school, district, and region. There are several ways you can meet the observation requirement of these assignments:

1. Invite a colleague to observe in your classroom (this might be your mentor, another teacher, a coach, or BOCES staff);
2. Request to observe in a colleague's classroom (you may get a recommendation from your mentor or principal or identify another teacher that you would like to learn with);
3. If observations are restricted due to COVID-19 health concerns, an interview may be conducted.

Meetings

Virtual or face-to-face meetings are scheduled once per module. These meetings provide an opportunity to discuss the content of the module and are required. Make-up assignments will be offered if extenuating circumstances arise, but participation in these meetings provides the best support for a new teacher. Prepared and active participation in each meeting serves as evidence of accountability for module learning and classroom application. Each meeting will be held 4:30-6:00 p.m. - dates are outlined in the calendar above.

Mentor Conversation Checklist

The following topics are to be covered in monthly meetings with mentors, and both the mentor and mentee should sign off when this has been completed. These are the minimum mandatory topics to be covered, and any other topics that are of importance, interest, or concern to the school or the mentee should be addressed as well. Mentors should review the complete list and determine when the most helpful time to provide the information might be.

Topic	Date	Mentee Initials	Mentor Initials
Building orientation			
Introductions to building personnel - administration, office staff, nurse, counselor, grade level teachers, and specialists, custodial staff, kitchen staff			
Building committees - orient new staff of what committees are within the building and what the purpose of each is			
Duty assignments (hall duty, bus supervision, etc.)			
RTI, MTSS, and/or other data team requirements and processes			
Special Education, READ Act, ELL, GT responsibilities (assessment, paperwork, and meetings required)			
Professional responsibilities (including confidentiality, ethics, and appropriate conduct)			
Policies for student injuries including any necessary forms			
Student code of conduct			
Teacher absences and substitutes, including sick leave and personal days			
Procedures and policies for field trips and out of school activities			
Any other local policies necessary for new staff (culture and climate of the school)			
Technology information (passwords, login information, data warehouses, internal assessments, tech support)			
How to fill out forms used in the district and building (material requests, supplies, other local forms new teachers may not be familiar with)			
Mandatory reporting processes within the building and district			
Staff dress code			
Record-keeping (attendance and grades) procedures and policies			
Where to get answers about salary and benefit questions			

Processes and best practices for parent-teacher conferences			
The use of RANDA for evaluation and how to develop goals and self-assessment at the beginning of the year			
Local processes and timelines for evaluation			
Classroom management/building level expectations			
Grade level standards (horizontal and vertical articulation)			
Assessment (local, district, state) processes and timelines			
End of year checkout procedures			
Additional district requirements:			

Induction Program Completion Verification

The induction candidate listed has met the following requirements (the party indicated should initial in the shaded area to indicate completion):

	Principal	Mentor	BOCES
Completion of mentor conversation checklist items			
Monthly (or more frequent) meetings with a mentor			
Completion of Module 1 (in-person meeting):			
Completion of Module 2 (including meeting):			
Completion of Module 3 (including virtual meeting):			
Portfolio and final reflection			

Notes on Verification Items:

Signatures

_____ (name) is recommended for an induction completion certificate and eligibility for professional licensure. ***This document is not valid for professional licensure. A certificate issued by NW BOCES is required for professional license application.**

Principal

Mentor

Mentee/Induction Candidate

NW BOCES Representative

Date: _____

For NW BOCES Office use only

Date induction certificate issued: _____