



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | Mark Johnson, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*

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TO Superintendents/Charter School Directors
Human Resource Directors
Public School Unit BT Coordinators

FROM Dr. Beverly R. Emory, Executive Director of Leandro Support
Dr. Thomas R. Tomberlin, Director, Educator Recruitment and Support
Dr. Cynthia M. Martin, Director, District and Regional Support

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BEGINNING TEACHER SUPPORT PROGRAMS

At its September 2020 meeting, the North Carolina State Board of Education approved revisions to the Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP) policy ([TCED-016](#)). According to the policy, all public-school units (i.e., LEAs, charter schools, laboratory schools, or schools within the Innovative School District) are required to have a three-year induction program for teachers who have fewer than three years of teaching experience, whether in the state of North Carolina or outside the State. It has come to the attention of the NCDPI, that there is some confusion whether schools have the flexibility to have a BTSP. In the past, schools that chose not to support initially licensed teachers in the pursuit of a continuing license may not have been required to offer this program to their beginning teachers, but the current policy no longer allows for this distinction.

The most recent policy update includes the requirement that Educator Preparation Program (EPP) surveys be completed by first year beginning teachers and their principals at the end of the first year of teaching. Other changes in the policy related to the use of the State's evaluation instrument, NCEES, for evaluating beginning teachers and their mentors, have necessitated modifications to many of our schools' BTSP plans. This process of updating BTSP plans is an excellent time for those schools who do not currently have a BTSP plan to create one and get approval for that plan from NCDPI staff. **All North Carolina public school units should have an updated, approved BTSP plan by February 15, 2021.**

G.S. § 116-239.10 requires at least fifty percent (50%) of the teachers employed by a UNC-constituent institution in a laboratory school to hold a teaching license. A beginning licensed teacher employed in a laboratory school could leave employment with the laboratory school and accept a position with an LEA. The broad authority to require all public school units to support newly licensed teachers reflects the State Board of Education's interest in assuring the quality of those teachers' future performance in public schools as well as the State Board's interest in keeping licensed teachers employed in the profession. This authority is further reflected in 16 NCAC 06C .0381 which requires all "public-school units," which G.S. § 115C-5(7a) defines to include charter schools, regional schools, and UNC laboratory schools, to have a Beginning Teacher Support

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Program and a Beginning Teacher Support Program Plan that has been approved by the public-school unit and by NCDPI.

It is important to stress that a robust BTSP plan is not just about moving teachers through the licensure process; it is an important component of a school's teacher retention efforts. Early career teachers are extremely vulnerable to leaving the profession and a systemic program aimed at supporting teachers in their initial years of service can help mitigate attrition. Furthermore, beginning teachers are, on average, the least effective they will be at any other point in their career. Instructional and emotional support from more experienced colleagues will help these teachers develop the skills they need to be successful and guard against the frustration they may experience if left unsupported during these formative years.

NCDPI appreciates your willingness to adhere to the State Board of Education's policies. If you have questions about this policy or if your school needs assistance in developing or modifying your BTSP plan, please contact Dr. Monica Shepherd (monica.shepherd@dpi.nc.gov). Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

BRE/TRT/CMM/trt

C Dr. Monica Shepherd