Louisiana Believes

Building a Strong Educator Workforce: Becoming an Effective Mentor Teacher
Objectives

Participants will:

- Discuss the benefits of hosting and mentoring yearlong residents

- Identify how the Mentor Teacher role, and the current statewide training opportunity, can build content knowledge, strengthen teachers' ability to work with other teachers, and better prepare classroom teachers for positions in school leadership

- Determine next steps for becoming a Mentor Teacher, or maximizing the impact of Mentor Teachers in your school
Agenda

- Believe and Prepare Overview (15 min)
- Panel Discussion with current mentors and mentor training participants (50 min)
- Question and Answer (15 min)
Believe and Prepare
Louisiana’s Commitment to Building a Strong Educator Workforce

Full Preparation for Louisiana’s Teachers: Prepare Louisiana’s teachers for their first years in the classroom through competency-based preparation programs with yearlong residencies, as piloted through Believe and Prepare. Facilitate strong partnerships between educator preparation providers and school systems.

Continuum of Leadership Roles: Establish content-specific roles and training for expert teachers who are equipped to support and prepare new teachers, and provide curriculum-specific professional learning.

Informed Workforce Decisions: Publish educator workforce data that informs decisions related to educator compensation, placement, recruiting and hiring practices, as well as supports for struggling schools to ensure that all students have access to excellent educators.
We know that…

• Teacher and principal quality is an important factor affecting student success.
• Teacher preparation experiences have a great impact on teachers’ readiness for day one in the classroom.
Believe and Prepare

In order to better prepare new teachers for their first years in the classroom, the Louisiana Department of Education launched the nationally recognized Believe and Prepare pilot program in 2014, to strengthen teacher preparation. This pilot program:

- offered aspiring teachers a full year of practice under an expert mentor and a competency-based program design, and
- catalyzed strategic partnerships between school systems and educator preparation provider partners.

Since the pilot’s inception, over 850 undergraduate teacher candidates were supported by expert mentors while pursuing certification through a yearlong residency program.

“As a first year teacher...I support one-year residencies for future teachers....I feel that if student teaching could be an entire year, there would be fewer surprises for teachers when entering their own classrooms.” Delaney Longa, First-Year Teacher
Yearlong Teaching Residency Model and Competency-Based Design

In October 2016, the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), with support from the Louisiana Board of Regents (BoR), adopted landmark regulations to expand yearlong residencies and competency-based curricula statewide.

By July 1, 2018, teacher preparation programs in Louisiana will include a yearlong residency alongside an expert mentor, and all preparation programs will include a competency-based curriculum that will provide teacher candidates with the knowledge and skills needed in order to be prepared for their first years of teaching.

Louisiana’s teacher preparation competencies were developed in collaboration with content experts, elementary and secondary educators, and postsecondary education leaders. Competencies are based on Louisiana student standards and the pedagogical skills needed to ensure that all students achieve those standards.

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“I applaud Louisiana for adopting new teacher preparation standards that will support all teachers and help ensure they are prepared to lead their classrooms."

John B. King Jr., former U.S. Secretary of Education
Leadership Development

As yearlong teaching residencies grow statewide, undergraduate and post-baccalaureate candidates need skilled mentors to support their growth.

To further support the next generations of educators for years to come, Louisiana seeks to:

1. Establish a cadre of excellent educators who have the knowledge and skills to coach and support other teachers, and who understand how to use and implement high-quality curriculum aligned to Louisiana’s standards and assessments
2. Grow the local leadership pipeline for schools and school systems by developing talented teachers

In order to reach this goal, Louisiana is building a cadre of trained mentors -- expert classroom teachers -- to support residents, new, and developing educators.

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“I am fortunate enough to have the opportunity of being a mentor teacher to a yearlong teacher resident….I know that our schools need quality teachers that are prepared to take our students, our schools, and our state to the next level. Putting qualified, highly trained, and experienced new teachers in the classrooms is key to this success.”

Shannon P. Embanato, Mentor Teacher
Mentor Teachers
In November 2017, the Department launched a **statewide training opportunity** to prepare expert teachers to effectively mentor residents, new, and developing teachers.

The training builds mentors’ ability to: develop relationships with their mentees, identify and address the needs of their mentees, deliver resources to help their mentees improve, and track their progress.

Through a nomination process, **89 school systems and preparation providers identified 470 teachers to participate in this training**, which is offered statewide. In **2018-2019, nearly 700 more educators are expected to participate** in the second cohort.

By 2020, Louisiana will have established a cadre of approximately 2,500 trained **Mentor Teachers** through Louisiana’s Mentor Teacher Training.

As a result, Louisiana is creating a leadership pipeline for top talent who understand Tier 1 curricula and its implementation, and practice effective coaching and mentoring skills.
Develop Local Talent

Goals

1. Create a cadre of talented educators who have the knowledge and skills to coach and support other teachers within their schools and school systems

2. Grow the local leadership pipeline for schools and school systems by developing talented teachers within the system
What is a Mentor Teacher?

Mentor Teachers are those who:

- Host a resident in an **undergraduate teacher program** and co-teach with them for the full school year.

- Coach residents in a **post-baccalaureate program** weekly by reviewing instructional plans, materials, assessments, and student work samples, and by leading frequent observation/feedback cycles.

- Support **veteran teachers** who are struggling by reviewing instructional plans, materials, assessments, and student work samples, and by leading frequent observation/feedback cycles.

Mentor Teachers can support a variety of teachers to best meet the needs of a school or school system.
Who should be a Mentor Teacher?

Veteran teachers who serve as mentors are best suited to support and develop new teachers given their insights as classroom teachers.

Characteristics of high-potential Mentor Teachers:

- Experience making consistent, positive impacts on student learning
- Ability to teach and lead adults
- Leadership and coaching skills with a willingness to invest in colleagues to help them grow
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Strong content and content pedagogy knowledge
- Ability to manage time and plan effectively
- A commitment to constant learning and improvement
Panel Discussion
Panel Members

Tonya Aaron, Instructional Specialist, West Feliciana Parish
Mandy Boudin, Secondary Math Teacher, St. James Parish
Jamie East, Assistant Principal, Bossier Parish
Gloria Malbrough, Talent Pipeline Lead, St. Landry Parish
Brandon Rowe, Secondary Science Teacher, Concordia Parish
Emmie Tipton, Elementary Teacher, Sabine Parish
Shuranda Williams, Teacher, Avoyelles Parish
Panel Questions

What would our new teacher workforce look like if every first-year teacher co-taught with an expert mentor for six months or for a year? What do you think would happen to student learning?

How has your practice changed since you started mentoring?

How has mentoring impacted your students?

What challenges have you faced as a mentor and how have you overcome those challenges?

What did you learn from the statewide Mentor Teacher training that you find most valuable? What do you wish you had learned more about during training?

What advice do you wish someone had given to you before becoming a Mentor Teacher?
Questions and Answers
Contact Information

For more information on statewide Mentor Teacher efforts, visit Louisiana Mentor Teachers.

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