

# RI Beginning Teacher Induction Program

2011-2014



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*We believe that what a teacher does in the classroom makes a difference in the learning of each individual child. Because of this, we strive to ensure all beginning teachers across the state have the individualized support that they need to be successful.*

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## Program Overview

### Vision:

Accelerating beginning teacher effectiveness to increase student achievement.

### Mission:

To develop beginning teachers by providing immediate, sustained, differentiated support that is instructionally focused and data driven. This support will be focused on student success with the aim of all RI students receiving a high quality and equitable education.

### We aim to:

Develop highly effective beginning teachers by:

- Focusing on student achievement
- Accelerating new teacher growth
- Developing reflective practitioners
- Creating a community of life-long learners
- Arming educators with the skills and attitudes necessary to be change agents and teacher leaders.

### Definition of Beginning Teacher:

We consider a "beginning teacher" one who is brand new to the profession, has never had his or her own classroom from the open to close of school, and holds a valid RI teacher certificate.

### Induction is Different than Mentoring in Rhode Island:

The biggest difference between the old mentoring model in RI and the new Induction Model is that the Induction Coaches spend a great deal of time in each beginning teacher's classroom observing and collecting data. Having fully released Induction Coaches ensures that each beginning teacher is afforded time with a veteran teacher to work toward improving their instructional practice as well as student achievement through the use of formative assessment and analysis of data. Each week, beginning teachers are supported an average of approximately 90 minutes by their Induction Coach. Induction Coaches are trained and skilled in the use of multiple strategies to formatively assess teaching practices, gather data during lessons for analysis, and analyze student work in a way that impacts their instruction. As part of training, Induction Coaches receive tools that assist with these strategies in supporting the accelerated growth of beginning teachers as well as student achievement. The RI Beginning Teacher Induction Program is instructionally focused and data driven.

## Beginning Teacher Support

Support for beginning teachers is instructionally focused, data driven, and individualized.

Induction Coaches provide ongoing, weekly support to beginning teachers who are in their first year of teaching. Generally, each coach has a caseload of approximately 15 beginning teachers who receive an average of 90 minutes of support each week. Supports include, but are not limited to:

- analysis of student work,
- observations with formative assessment tools,
- co-planning,
- co-teaching,
- guidance through the evaluation system,
- assessing student performance,
- reflecting on practice,
- working with parents and communities,
- promoting a culture of professionalism

Induction Coaches and beginning teachers work together in variety of ways. Induction Coaches observe beginning teachers or meet.

*The role of the Induction Coach is to provide support to beginning teachers that is individualized, instructionally focused and data driven.*

**Urban Core and a Second Year of Support:**

Research shows that supporting beginning teachers for a second and third year results in greater teacher growth and student achievement. Under Race to the Top, all school districts are offered support to their first year teachers. Urban core districts are offered a second year of support for their beginning teachers. As research data from Rhode Island begins to demonstrate the value of this model, it is our hope that other districts find ways to support beginning teachers beyond their first year.

**District Leadership Engagement:**

Principals play a key role in the development of a beginning teacher. They know the vision of the school and understand the performance of all teachers at their site. It is important for the Induction Coaches to know and understand the context of each school they work in to be able to support the beginning teachers on their caseloads. Part of the Induction Coach's job is to engage in collegial conversations with the building principals in the schools in which they work. It is critical that the Induction Coaches understand the vision and expectations of the principal and the school. It is expected that Induction Coaches and principals meet at least once every 4-6 weeks.

Confidential and trusting relationships are a key to the success of the Induction Program. Induction Coaches are not at liberty to share their interactions or assessments of the beginning teacher with the principal. At the same time, information a principal may give to the Induction Coach is also confidential.

**Induction Coaches**

The role of the Induction Coach is to provide support to beginning teachers that is Individualized, Instructionally-Focused and Data-Driven.

Induction Coaches are master educators who have at least 5 years of exemplary teaching experience and possess the reflective and interpersonal skills necessary to serve effectively in this role. They are fully released from their teaching duties in order to dedicate their time to supporting beginning teachers. They travel between schools and districts to meet the needs of their beginning teachers.

**Induction Coach Assignments:**

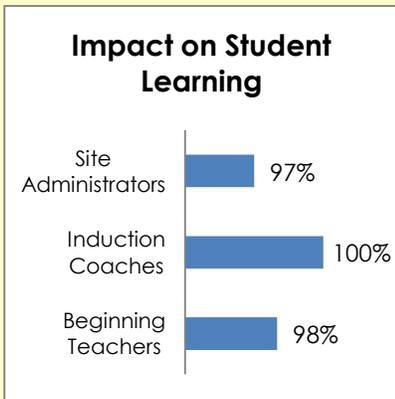
When school districts hire a beginning teacher, RIDE requests notification from each district as soon as possible in order to build Induction Coach caseloads and to initiate timely support. Multiple factors are taken into consideration when matching beginning teachers with Induction Coaches. These factors include: regional locations, grade level, and whenever possible, certification areas. Our experience and research has shown us that because Induction has a strong emphasis on effective teaching practices, Induction Coaches are able to provide powerful support to beginning teachers of other grade levels and content areas that do not necessarily match their own. We believe that most teaching and learning strategies work across grade levels as well as content areas.

**Induction Coach Professional Development**

Induction Coaches receive two years of formal training: Induction Coach Academies and Induction Coach Forums.

Induction Coach Academies and Modules which are each held 4 times per year for 2-3 days. During the Academies and Modules, Induction Coaches learn how to use the wide variety of Formative Assessment System tools designed by New Teacher Center as well as how to navigate the complicated work of being an Induction Coach. New Teacher Center currently provides this professional development, which will be gradually shifted over to the RIDE Induction Team by September of 2014.

Bi-weekly Induction Coach Forums are usually a full day. These forums are dedicated to skill building, solving problems and issues of practice, as well as creating and sustaining a community of resources and support. Forum time is dedicated to providing training and professional development in Rhode Island specific initiatives to meet the needs of the coaches and their beginning teachers as well as their school districts.



*After the first year of implementation, RI Beginning Teachers, Induction Coaches, and Site Administrators agree that Induction Support is impacting student learning.*  
 ~(NTC Induction Survey, 2012)



### Induction Coach Supports

Because Induction Coaches are deployed throughout the state, we have created avenues to network them with each other. Induction Coaches are assigned coaching partners from within the cohort. They are expected to meet with their coaching partner at least once each month. During these meetings, they observe each other, collect data, share issues of practice, receive coaching support and work on professional goals.

In addition to coaching partners, the coaches belong to a listserv that is reserved for formal communications and use a Google Group to communicate and support one another on a regular basis.

### Assessing Induction Coaches:

Induction Coaches take part in multiple forms of assessment to support their own growth and development. The RIDE Induction Team is responsible for the selection process in order to ensure that we have a cohort of Induction Coaches of the highest caliber. Our goal is for the Induction Coaches to be effective in moving beginning teacher practice forward. Induction Coaches are shadowed a minimum of 2 times per year in the field to observe how they interact with beginning teachers, principals, and other colleagues. During these site visits with the Induction Coaches, the RIDE Induction Team uses assessment tools to capture data, just as the Induction Coaches do when they work with beginning teachers. These observations include a pre-meeting to identify the focus areas, an observation, and post-meeting to debrief and deliver feedback. Induction Coaches are required to log their support time for each of their beginning teachers on a weekly basis. This data is used to ensure Induction Coaches are accountable for their work. Induction Coaches also set professional goals and work with coaching partners and the RIDE Induction Team to provide evidence that these goals are met. Additional performance data is collected through surveys at the mid-year point and again at the end of the year to provide additional feedback from administrators and beginning teachers the induction coaches work with on a regular basis.

### Coach Recruitment and Selection

Induction Coaches are generally nominated to apply by administrators and colleagues. RIDE reaches out to multiple stakeholder groups to ask for nominations and applicants. The application and interview process is rigorous. Applications are available at <http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/mentoring.aspx>. We look for current educators who demonstrate the following: successful research-based classroom practices, leadership capacity, openness to feedback, respect for multiple perspectives, and knowledge of adult learning, and experience with coaching of collaborative models.

A paper screening tool is used to identify applicants who demonstrate qualities of highly effective coaches. Applicants who are successful in the paper screening process are asked to come in for an interview in front of a panel representing multiple stakeholders, including superintendents, assistant superintendents, principals, and RIDE staff. The interview consists of a series of questions, a role play, and writing prompt. A tool is used to rate each candidate and identify the top applicants. Two to three reference checks are conducted for each applicant using a reference tool.

Applicants who are successful in all three parts of the process are ranked according to performance and program need. The number of coaches hired varies year to year and is dependent upon the number of beginning teachers statewide as well as the number of Induction Coaches from the previous year who continue to serve in the role of Induction Coach. Based on need top applicants will be offered Induction Coach or Alternate positions. Being an alternate means that the applicant should attend all training with the understanding that he or she may be called upon to join the cohort of Induction Coaches within the first 2-3 months of the school year, as the hiring and identification process within districts identifies additional beginning teachers.

We strive to build capacity in RI school districts. Applicants who are successful in the interview process and have the skills and attitudes necessary for effective coaching may also be offered an opportunity to assist their districts in building internal coaching capacity. These candidates will attend all trainings and will have a separate forum to meet their needs. District coaches may support second year teachers who do not receive year two support through the formal Induction Program or teachers on improvement plans through the educator evaluation process.

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*The 2012 NTC Induction Survey revealed that the work between beginning teachers and their Induction Coaches most often focuses on:*

1. Observation
  2. Classroom management
  3. Post-observation discussion
  4. Goal Setting
  5. Differentiated instruction
  6. Analyzing student work
  7. Job related stress
  8. Developing a repertoire of teaching strategies
  9. Lesson Planning
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## Program Monitoring

### Program leadership:

The RI Beginning Teacher Induction Program is implemented and monitored by a team at the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE).

The induction team at RIDE:

- Ensures programmatic data is collected to measure impact in a variety of ways
- Recruits and selects Induction Coaches
- Supervises and observes Induction Coaches in the field
- Communicates programmatic information to the field
- Ensures Induction Coaches receive ongoing training and support they need to be successful
- Coordinates induction support in each school district
- Engages multiple stakeholders in a variety of ways
- Presents to school committees and other professional educational organizations
- Purposefully seeks opportunities to increase the awareness of induction and its role in beginning teacher development
- Collects feedback from multiple stakeholders and uses it to refine and improve the program
- Assesses Induction Coaches through observations, analysis of data entry and documentation, goal setting, and feedback from the field

### Monitoring of Program Implementation and Impact

- Surveys of beginning teachers, site administrators and Induction Coaches
- Ongoing feedback from Induction Coaches regarding training needs, quality of training, trends in the field, and issues that arise
- Informal feedback from the field to address questions and concerns

Any feedback and data that is collected informs programmatic changes to improve the program, its accountability and impact. Results that are meaningful to stakeholders are shared systematically to drive further conversations focused on program improvement.

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this pamphlet were developed under a Race to the Top grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U. S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

