**State Education Department Mentor Certification Requirements**

**What is the relationship between the New York State-mandated mentoring for certification and teacher mentoring required in schools in need of improvement under No Child Left Behind legislation?**   
  
Teachers with NYS Initial teaching certificates must complete a mentored experience in their first year in the teaching profession. School districts must plan and implement teacher-mentoring programs to serve teachers in their employ who are obligated to have such mentored experiences, in any school within the district. A framework for these experiences is provided in section 100.2 (dd) (2) (iv) of Commissioner’s Regulations (district professional development plans).  See the amended language of the regulation [http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/part100/pages/1002.html#dd.](http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/part100/pages/1002.html#dd) [top](http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/faqmentoring.html#top)   
  
NCLB-mandated teacher mentoring is school-centered and not necessarily limited to first year teachers. However, the mentoring program for new teachers described in a district’s professional development plan and NCLB-mandated mentoring provided in the context of school improvement plans should be coordinated. For example, the mentor selection process designed and reflected in the professional development plan for Initial certificate holders might be employed to select mentors for NCLB mandated mentoring.  [top](http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/faqmentoring.html#top)

**Professional development.** For purposes of this subdivision, professional development includes any continuing education required under Subpart 80-6 of this Title.

1. Requirement.
   1. By September 1, 2000, and annually by September 1st of each school year thereafter, each school district and board of cooperative educational services (BOCES) shall adopt a professional development plan that meets the content requirements prescribed in paragraph (2) of this subdivision. The purpose of the plan shall be to improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that teachers participate in substantial professional development in order that they remain current with their profession and meet the learning needs of their students. The plan shall also ensure that holders of level III teaching assistants certificates and that substitute teachers who work on a long-term basis, as defined in section 80-5.4 of this Title, are provided the opportunity to participate in the professional development program of the district or BOCES.
   2. Such professional development plan may be a part of a comprehensive education plan of the district or BOCES, provided that the professional development plan meets all of the requirements of this subdivision, including the requirements related to collaboration with the professional development team in the development of the plan as prescribed in paragraph (3) of this subdivision, or may be a free-standing plan of the district or BOCES.
   3. A school district or BOCES shall include as part of its professional development plan a description of the professional development activities provided to all professional staff and supplementary school personnel who work with students with disabilities and English language learners to assure that they have the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the needs of students with disabilities and English language learners, respectively.
2. Content of the plan. The professional development plan shall be structured in a format consistent with commissioner's guidelines and shall include:
   1. a needs analysis, and goals, objectives, strategies, activities and evaluation standards for professional development in the school district or BOCES;
   2. a description of:
      1. how the school districts or BOCES provide all teachers they employ substantial professional development opportunities directly related to student learning needs as identified in the school district or BOCES report card and other sources as determined by the school district or BOCES. For plans covering the time period, February 2, 2004 and thereafter, each school district or BOCES shall describe in its plan how it will provide teachers it employs holding a professional certificate and/or Level III teaching assistant certificate with opportunities to complete 175 hours of professional development or 100 hours of continuing teacher and leader education, as required every five years under Part 80 of this Title;
      2. teachers' expected participation in professional development, including but not limited to an estimate of the average number of hours each teacher is expected to participate in professional development in the school year covered by the plan;
      3. the alignment of professional development with New York standards and assessments, student needs, including but not limited to linguistic, cultural diversity and special needs, and teacher capacities;
      4. the articulation of professional development across grade levels;
      5. the efforts made to ensure that professional development is continuous and sustained and that the methods and approaches for delivering professional development have been shown to be effective; and
      6. the manner in which the school district or BOCES will measure the impact of professional development on student achievement and teachers' practices; and
   3. provision for the training of employees holding a teaching certificate or license in the classroom teaching service, school service, or administrative and supervisory service in school violence prevention and intervention. Each such employee shall be required to complete at least one training course in school violence prevention and intervention, which shall consist of at least two clock hours of training that includes but is not limited to, study in the warning signs within a developmental and social context that relate to violence and other troubling behaviors in children; the statutes, regulations, and policies relating to a safe nonviolent school climate; effective classroom management techniques and other academic supports that promote a nonviolent school climate and enhance learning; the integration of social and problem solving skill development for students within the regular curriculum; intervention techniques designed to address a school violence situation; and how to participate in an effective school/community referral process for students exhibiting violent behavior. Upon request of the employee who successfully completes such training course, the school district or board of cooperative educational services shall provide the employee with a certificate of completion attesting to the completion of the two clock hours of training in school violence prevention and intervention; and
   4. for plans covering the time period February 2, 2004 and thereafter, provision for a mentoring program.
      1. The purpose of the mentoring program shall be to provide support for new teachers in the classroom teaching service in order to ease the transition from teacher preparation to practice, thereby increasing retention of teachers in the public schools, and to increase the skills of new teachers in order to improve student achievement in accordance with the State learning standards.
      2. The professional development plan shall describe how the school district or BOCES will provide a mentoring program for teachers in the classroom teaching service who must participate in a mentoring program to meet the teaching experience requirement for the professional certificate, as prescribed in section 80-3.4 of this Title.
      3. The mentoring program shall be developed and implemented consistent with any collective bargaining obligation required by article 14 of the Civil Service Law, provided that nothing herein shall be construed to impose a collective bargaining obligation that is not required by article 14 of the Civil Service Law.
      4. The information obtained by a mentor through interaction with the new teacher while engaged in the mentoring activities of the program shall not be used for evaluating or disciplining the new teacher, unless withholding such information poses a danger to the life, health, or safety if an individual, including but not limited to students and staff of the school; or unless such information indicates that the new teacher has been convicted of a crime, or has committed an act which raises a reasonable question as to the new teacher's moral character; or unless the school district or BOCES has entered into an agreement, negotiated pursuant to article 14 of the Civil Service Law whose terms are in effect, that provides that the information obtained by the mentor through intervention with the new teacher while engaged in the mentoring activities of the program may be used for evaluating or disciplining the new teacher.
      5. The professional development plan shall describe the following elements of the mentoring program:
         1. the procedure for selecting mentors, which shall be published and made available to staff of the school district or BOCES and upon request to members of the public;
         2. the role of mentors, which shall include but not be limited to providing guidance and support to the new teacher;
         3. the preparation of mentors, which may include but shall not be limited to the study of the theory of adult learning, the theory of teacher development, the elements of a mentoring relationship, peer coaching techniques, and time management methodology;
         4. types of mentoring activities, which may include but shall not be limited to modeling instruction for the new teacher, observing instruction, instructional planning with the new teacher, peer coaching, team coaching, and orienting the new teacher to the school culture; and
         5. time allotted for mentoring, which may include but shall not be limited to scheduling common planning sessions, releasing the mentor and the new teacher from a portion of their instructional and/or noninstructional duties, and providing time for mentoring during superintendent conference days, before and after the school day, and during summer orientation sessions.

**Mentoring Requirement for Certification**

Holders of the Initial and Conditional Initial certificate must receive mentoring in their first year of teaching or school building leadership service in a public school district. An exception to this requirement applies to certificate holders who have at least two years of teaching or educational leadership service, respectively, prior to receiving the Initial or Conditional Initial certificate; they may be exempted from this requirement.

The purpose of the mentoring requirement is to provide beginning educators in teaching or school building leadership service with support in order to gain skillfulness and more easily make the transition to one’s first professional experience under an Initial certificate. Satisfaction of a mentored experience is one of the requirements individuals must meet in order to qualify for the Professional certificate. Public school employers are responsible for reporting mentored experience for the certificate holders they employ.   School employers may use the TEACH system to report the verification of mentor experience.   For additional information on the mentoring requirement go to [Frequently Asked Questions - Mentoring Requirement](http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/faqmentoring.html) .

**Instructions for reporting mentored experience into the TEACH system.**

1. [Login to the TEACH system](http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/teach/home.html) and click the “TEACH Online Services” button.
2. View the instructions on entering a superintendent statement go to [TEACH School Employer Training Guide](http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/pdf/teachpublicschoolguide.pdf)ortable Acrobat Document (1.25MB).

**What documentation must a New York State school district maintain regarding the completed mentoring experiences of Initial certificate holders?**

Required documentation for completed mentored experiences includes:  the names and teacher certificate numbers of beginning teachers served and those who provided the mentoring; types of mentoring activities, and total hours of mentoring successfully completed. [top](http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/faqmentoring.html#top)