Summary Guidelines for Mentor Teacher Programs
for Beginning and Experienced Teachers

All information acquired from the Virginia Department of Education

"Mentor" means a classroom teacher hired by the local school division who has achieved continuing contract status or other instructional personnel including retired teachers who meet local mentor selection criteria.

Questions to Consider:

1. ***Who* is involved in mentoring teacher programs?**
   a. Beginning and experienced teachers (mentors), principals, supervisors
   b. Qualified, carefully selected, and well-trained mentor teachers

2. ***What* are mentoring teacher programs?**
   a. Help beginning and experienced teachers make a successful transition into teaching by relying on the expertise of veteran educators to provide a clinical, real world training process.
   b. Mentors guide teachers in the program through demonstrations, observations, and consultations.
   c. Should be part of a larger system of teacher development, support, accountability, and evaluation
   d. Characterized by strong leadership and management, a commitment to teacher induction and improving student achievement in all schools, and adequate resources to deliver the planned program.

3. ***Where* are mentoring teacher programs conducted?**
   a. Instructional/educational building (i.e. School)
   b. Mentors must work in the *same building* as the teachers they are assisting

4. ***How* are mentoring teacher programs created/implemented?**
   a. *The Guidelines for Mentor Teacher Programs for Beginning and Experienced Teachers* provide the framework for effective mentor programs that assist teachers as they become experienced and dedicated professionals.
   b. The Virginia General Assembly has funded various strategies that support beginning teachers and mentors.
   c. The Virginia Board of Education prescribed new Standards of Quality (SOQ) for the Commonwealth's public schools.
      i. Include a commitment to support educator recruitment and retention with an increased emphasis on mentoring new teachers and principals

5. ***Why* are mentoring teacher programs needed? (Benefits)**
    a. School divisions that provide effective support are likely to:
        i. Develop teachers who remain on the job longer and improve student academic performance
        ii. Promote a climate of collaboration and professional learning
        iii. Allows new teachers to deepen their knowledge of:
            1. Content standards, understanding of social & emotional learning, learner variability, culturally responsive and inclusive educator practices

6. ***When* are mentoring teacher programs implemented?**
    a. When teachers initially assume their roles (can be new to the profession or new to the position)

1. **VISION, MISSION, AND GOALS OF MENTOR TEACHER PROGRAMS**
    ○ Focus on advancing student learning and accelerating beginning teacher effectiveness within a comprehensive system of development for all educators

2. **MENTOR TEACHER PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND LEADERSHIP**
    ○ Administered by the local school board and demonstrates a commitment to teacher induction and academic achievement for all students in all schools.

3. **RESOURCES FOR MENTOR TEACHER PROGRAMS**
    ○ The school board allocates sufficient resources in order for the Mentor Teacher Program to meet all requirements/deliver planned components to all beginning teachers consistent with the stated program vision, mission, goals, and design.

4. **SCHOOL LEADER ENGAGEMENT IN MENTOR TEACHER PROGRAMS**
    ○ The Mentor Teacher Program leaders work with division and school leaders to ensure that induction practices are integrated into existing division and school professional development initiatives.

5. **MENTOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, SELECTION, AND ASSIGNMENT**
    ○ Mentor teachers are selected using explicit criteria consistent with assigned mentor roles and responsibilities. Mentors are selected and assigned using a fair, well-articulated process that is monitored consistently

6. **MENTOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**
    ○ Program leaders design and implement mentor professional development to ensure mentors have understanding of:
        i. Program vision, mission, goals and foundational knowledge/skills to establish initial trust and credibility with beginning teachers and school leaders.

7. **MENTOR TEACHER PROGRAM DESIGN**
    ○ Incorporates a purposeful, logically sequenced structure of extended professional development that prepares beginning teachers to meet the academic learning needs of all K-12 students

8. **BEGINNING TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**
    ○ Integrates individualized support and assistance from mentors with formal professional development offerings.

9. **INSTRUCTIONALLY FOCUSED FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT OF BEGINNING TEACHER PRACTICE**
    ○ The formative assessment system comprises multiple measures of teaching, analysis of student data, collaboration with colleagues, a focus on classroom practice, and structured reflection with a prepared mentor.

10. MENTOR TEACHER PROGRAM EVALUATION

- ○ Provides meaningful opportunities for professional practitioners and a broad representation of school community members to become involved in program revision, development, and evaluation activities.