Mentor Program Allotment Overview

Program Goals

In 2015, the Texas Teacher Mentoring Advisory Committee created a set of recommendations anchored in research-based best practices for mentor teacher recruitment and selection, training, roles and responsibilities, and program design and delivery. These best practices were largely adopted into legislation in 2019 to support high-quality mentoring across the state through the Mentor Program Allotment (MPA).

MPA provides districts the opportunity to build or sustain beginning teacher mentoring programs aligned to research-based mentoring best practices with the primary goal of increasing student outcomes through increased beginning teacher retention and effectiveness.

Districts across the state may opt into MPA and, in doing so, commit to a rigorous set of requirements for mentors, district leaders, and campus leaders supporting beginning teachers. For example, MPA includes competency- and research-based training for these educators throughout the school year. Additionally, MPA outlines specific topics for mentoring sessions that extend beyond logistical support and focus high-leverage practices such as instructional coaching cycles, data-driven instruction, and lesson planning. To ensure the mentoring activities do not provide additional burdens for mentor or beginning teachers, MPA also requires districts to provide dedicated release time during the school day for mentoring activities to occur, totaling at least 12 hours per semester. If implemented successfully, these best practices serve as key components of high-quality mentoring programs.

Approved Provider Role

Commissioner-approved providers of mentor training Approved Providers (APs) undergo a rigorous vetting process. They provide high-quality mentor training and implementation support that are aligned to best mentoring practices. The goal of APs is to ensure that district mentoring programs meet the requirements of MPA as stated in Texas Education Code (TEC) and Texas Administrative Code (TAC) by providing research-based, job-embedded training for mentors and district and campus leaders that support beginning teachers. Organizations interested in providing mentor training to districts in accordance with the MPA must follow the application and approval process outlined in this document. While districts may seek commissioner approval for a district-created training program, the majority of past district participants partnered with an AP.

Statute & Rule

We encourage all applicants to carefully review the following information prior to beginning an application to ensure they understand MPA requirements.

- Texas Education Code, §48.114 and §21.458
- Texas Administrative Code, §153.1011
- All applicant materials and other pertinent information are linked in the Qualtrics application form posted to the MPA webpage.

Application Directions

All application materials will be released on June 20, 2023 and are linked within the Qualtrics application. Please follow the steps below to complete an application.

1. Read this document and the Application Review Criteria document.
2. Download, complete, and save all attachments listed below from the Qualtrics application form to your computer using the appropriate file naming conventions.
3. Upload all completed attachments to Qualtrics.
4. Check submission and update as needed using information from Qualtrics confirmation email.

Attachment	Requirements	Purpose
Attachment A: Narrative Responses	Required for all applicants	Provides high-level overview of the applicant's mentoring program and its components
Attachment B1: Mentor Training Scope & Sequence	Required for all applicants	Includes all aspects of training that are practice-based and aligned with MPA requirements
Attachment B2: Performance tasks for mentor training	Required for all applicants	Demonstrates the quality of tools used to measure mentor teachers' proficiency of specific, objectives-aligned competencies during mentor training
Attachment C: District and Campus Leader Scope & Sequence	Required for all applicants	Includes all aspects of training that are aligned with MPA requirements
Attachment D1: Evidence of Impact	Required for all applicants	Indicates how the program's intervention has positively impacted mentoring work in districts through various tiers of evidence
Attachment D2: Supplemental data to support evidence of impact	Required for applicants submitting Tiers 3 or 4 evidence of impact	Adds specificity and detail to the evidence submitted in Attachment D1
Attachment E: Coaching Tools	Required for applicants applying for training and coaching support	Provides greater detail of the program's coaching model through its tools and protocols
Attachment F1: Implementation Plan	Required for applicants applying for training and implementation support	Includes all aspects of implementation support that are aligned with MPA requirements
Attachment F2: Implementation Tools	Required for applicants applying for training and implementation support	Provides greater detail of the program's implementation support model through its tools, protocols, and processes

Application Process & Timeline

Dates	Event
June 20, 2023	MPA AP application opens
June 20 – July 5, 2023	Applicant questions collected via mpa@tea.texas.gov
July 14, 2023	Optional application info session from 10-11am via Zoom
July 21, 2023	Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) responses posted to MPA website
August 11, 2023	**MPA AP applications due by 5:00 p.m. via Qualtrics**
September 2023	Notifications sent to applicants
September 2023	APs submit additional information to post to MPA website
September 2023*	Approved provider list posted to MPA website
School Year 2024-25*	Cycle 4 MPA district application window opens

*Dates are tentative

Application Reviews & Notifications

Applications will be holistically reviewed based on the extent to which they demonstrate ability to effectively meet the requirements listed in these guidelines and support districts in effectively implementing MPA training. Please visit the Application Review Criteria document for requirements. During the application review process, TEA may request additional information or clarifications of the applicant.

Current MPA APs will need to re-apply for commissioner approval for Cycle 4. Current MPA will be asked to provide evidence of impact for their work supporting districts for whom MPA funding was used. See the section on Evidence of Impact and Ongoing Performance Management for more information.

Frequently Asked Questions

All questions about the MPA AP Application must be submitted in writing to mpa@tea.texas.gov by July 6, 2023. This ensures that no prospective applicant acquires information unknown to other prospective applicants. The questions and their answers (in the form of FAQs) will be published on the MPA website on July 14, 2023. Any questions received after the specified date will not be answered by TEA so that all applicants have equal opportunity to review all FAQs before submitting their application.

Timeline for Partnering with Districts

Organizations may work with districts who do not receive MPA funding at any point. Organizations that are approved through this Summer 2023 process will be included in the updated AP list in time for the MPA Cycle 4 district application. Districts or providers may reach out to one another directly; TEA will not be involved in making these connections. If a district chooses to partner with an AP, they are expected to communicate with the AP before applying for MPA funds. Districts will be asked in their application to indicate with which organization they are partnering.

Completion of MPA Training

Mentor teachers that complete one year of MPA training are not required to participate in any additional MPA training. However, it is strongly recommended that these mentor teachers continue to receive some form of training and support which may look like a differentiated "returner" training as well as coaching support. Given this, it is up to APs and districts to track and document mentor teacher attendance in MPA training.

Training Overview

MPA statute requires that training be provided to mentor teachers and any appropriate district and campus employees who work with or supervise beginning teachers. Starting with MPA Cycle 4, APs must differentiate training for (1) mentors and (2) district and campus leaders who work with or supervise beginning teachers.

Mentor teacher training is anchored in competencies across five categories: effective mentoring partnerships, coaching cycles, data-driven instruction, lesson planning, and learning environments. APs are required to provide this training synchronously and may opt to apply for additional mentor coaching support. The following pages provide details and additional requirements, such as specific content and duration of training.

District and campus leader training is aligned to separate competencies in five categories: program vision-setting; mentor recruitment, selection, and assignment; mentor training and support; master schedule and release time; and program sustainability. APs are required to provide this training synchronously and may opt to apply for additional district and campus leader implementation support. The following pages provide details and additional requirements, such as specific content and duration of training.

Synchronous and Virtual Training Requirements

Mentor training, coaching, and implementation support may be offered virtually, in-person, or a combination of both upon district request. The following guidelines ensure that APs meet the needs of districts while also maintaining a high level of implementation.

Synchronous: refers to facilitators and participants gathering at the same time and (virtual or physical) place and interacting in "real-time."

Asynchronous: refers to participants accessing materials at their own pace and interacting with each other over longer periods.[1]

1. APs must deliver 100% of training synchronously (i.e., all participants must be in attendance either in-person or virtually while the facilitator is delivering the training in real time).
2. APs may provide asynchronous make-up sessions for absent participants.
3. APs may use asynchronous activities with the whole group only if they supplement content from synchronous sessions and should allow for feedback or response from facilitators.
4. APs are encouraged to offer in-person training when and where possible.
5. AP facilitators, if delivering content virtually, must engage in the following best practices:
    a. Establish core participant norms for virtual work.
    b. Define all plans for audience engagement (i.e., cold calling, breakout rooms, etc.).
    c. Provide clear instructions and checks for understanding for all activities.
    d. Share all materials via multiple modalities (through chat, resource folders, email, etc.).
    e. Push the audience's thinking to exemplary response through questioning and group discussions.
    f. Collect, analyze, and act on audience feedback.
    g. Share post-session follow-ups with a summary of content, resources, next steps, dates, and plans for monitoring progress.

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[1] Stanford University, IT Teaching Resources

Requirements for Mentor Training (Group 1)

Evidence Basis: The Mentor Training…

1. Is based in research or evidence that influenced both the content[2] and design of the training.

Design: The Mentor Training…

1. Includes clear, actionable, and observable objectives that are shared at the beginning and throughout the training (e.g., mentors will be able to script observation notes that meet 4/4 success criteria).
2. Includes performance tasks within the training that:
    a. Are specific to the training session.
    b. Occur during or at the end of the training session.
    c. Evaluate mentors' skill development.
3. Provides explicit opportunities for mentor teachers to practice using effective feedback models like the "See It, Name It, Do It" framework briefly outlined below:
    a. **See it:** The trainer(s) provide a clear model of what the actionable objectives look like when implemented effectively with success criteria (e.g., modeling a particular practice such as a mentor scripting observation notes).
    b. **Name it:** The trainer(s) facilitate activities that allow participants to explicitly identify and name, with specificity, the actions necessary to execute a practice at a high level (e.g., the specific actions needed to effectively script observation notes).
    c. **Do it:** The trainer(s) include dedicated time for repetition and feedback (e.g., the mentors have multiple opportunities to practice scripting observation notes and receive feedback).
4. Provides time for whole group and small group discussions as well as individual think time.
5. Incorporates strategies that heighten participation such as relationship-building questions, discussions that activate prior knowledge or experiences, and opportunities to interrogate strong models.

Duration and Cadence: The Mentor Training…

1. Is sequenced with the highest-leverage, most urgent mentoring topics first.
2. Allocates sufficient time to build mentorship competencies, including through practice.
3. At minimum, occurs once before the school year starts and once per semester for a total of **18 hours**.
    a. The training must include at least 14 hours of synchronous training.
    b. The training may include coaching support, which could count as **4 hours** of training.

Mentor Competencies[3]: The Mentor Training…

1. Trains mentor teachers (MTs) to provide **effective mentoring partnerships** including…
    a. Developing a trusting and caring relationship with beginning teachers (BTs)[4].

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[2] The *content* refers to what is covered in the training (e.g., training categories and mentorship competencies, such as coaching cycles and data-driven instruction).

[3] These competencies were developed through a review of Texas Education Code, Texas Administrative Code, New Teacher Centers' Mentor Practice Standards, Center for Great Teachers and Leaders' Mentoring & Induction Toolkit, and the Texas Instructional Leadership Competencies.

[4] The term beginning teachers (BTs) refers to mentee teachers to which mentor teachers are assigned.

   b. Meeting frequently with BTs and use mentoring time effectively and efficiently[5].
   c. Communicating effectively with BTs and using mentoring and coaching language.
   d. Applying tenets of adult learning theory in interactions with BTs.
   e. Understanding the typical BT experience and tailoring support to meet their needs.
   f. Leveraging campus structures such as professional learning communities, team meetings, and individual mentoring meetings to support BT skill development.

2. Trains MTs to implement **coaching cycles** including…
   a. Conducting effective and differentiated instructional coaching cycles with BTs based on a research-based instructional rubric (e.g., T-TESS, Danielson, TAP).
   b. Using an observation schedule that allows them to observe and meet face to face with BTs following each observation for the purpose of feedback & coaching.
   c. Identifying quality action steps that name the highest leverage issue in the BT's class and create action steps that are measurable and observable.[6]
   d. Using a common system for tracking, delivering, and following-up on feedback for their BTs that allows them to track: the number of observations they have conducted, the action steps issued, and the trends across their BTs that can be used to inform professional development.[7]
   e. Planning, executing, and following up on observation feedback conversations using the protocol or script that focuses on opportunities to practice new learning.
   f. Building BT skills related to effective teacher-family partnerships and coach BTs on how to conduct conferences with family members.

3. Trains MTs to build BTs' skills in **data-driven instruction** including…
   a. Using data to support BTs in setting professional goals.
   b. Supporting BTs' use of appropriate formative and summative assessments.
   c. Building BT skills and investing them in analyzing and responding to student work and data; identifying where objectives are spiraled back into the curriculum and possible reteach plans.
   d. Supporting the use of formative assessments that meet or exceed the rigor of the TEKS and end-goal assessments (i.e., state tests, college entrance exams).
   e. Supporting BT skill development around data analysis through structures such as Professional Learning Communities, team meetings, and mentoring meetings.

4. Trains MTs to build BTs' skills in **lesson planning** including…
   a. Guiding BTs in utilizing campus or department-level lesson planning tools such as scripted lessons, curricular resources, and lesson planning templates that align to the rigor of the TEKS.
   b. Supporting BTs in developing or preparing lessons that are TEKS-aligned, differentiated, and use research-based techniques.
   c. Supporting BTs in understanding the depth and rigor of TEKS to ensure effective lesson delivery.
   d. Supporting BTs in planning for implementation of daily formative assessments that align to the rigor of the TEKS.
   e. Supporting BTs in preparing to execute lessons through activities such as preparing materials, rehearsing parts of a lesson, anticipating common misconceptions, etc.

5. Trains MTs to assist BTs in planning for an **effective learning environment** including…
   a. Supporting BTs to create a welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment for all students.

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[5] As a reminder, TEC requires mentors and beginning teachers to meet for a total of 12 hours per semester during the instructional day.

[6] Example: Based on the observation, the MT chooses an aspect of the BT's instruction that the BT can act on immediately and will positively impact student learning. For example, the during an observation, the MT tracks the BT's movement about the classroom and notices that the BT teaches to one side of the room more than the other, so MT shares that data with the BT, models the skill, and challenges the BT to track their movement/interactions with both sides of the room.

[7] Example: BT observation binders, observation and coaching calendars and schedules, observation trackers, feedback notes/scripts.

b. Supporting BTs in the development of a vision for classroom culture that clearly articulates to students (and parents) classroom routines, procedures, and expectations.
c. Building BT capacity in developing and implementing classroom routines and procedures that maximize instructional time by modeling and facilitating BT practice.
d. Building BT capacity to manage student behavior by implementing an effective behavior system, including routines and procedures.
e. Supporting BT skill development around classroom culture and learning environment through structures such as Professional Learning Communities, team meetings, mentoring meetings.

Adjusting the Scope and Sequence After TEA Approval

The following outlines allowable and unallowable modifications to the training scope and sequence after TEA approval. Any modifications that do not fall within the allowable actions must be submitted to TEA for approval prior to May for the year preceding implementation.

 Allowable scope and sequence modifications that do not require TEA approval:

1. Changing the *sequence* of training topics
2. Adding more training topics
3. Adding to the duration of each training

Unallowable scope and sequence modifications (may request approval from TEA prior to May for the year preceding implementation):

1. Deleting content from the scope and sequence submitted for approval
2. Deleting required participants
3. Shortening the duration of each training
4. Moving aspects of training from synchronous to asynchronous delivery

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Mentor Coaching Requirements (Optional)

Duration, Cadence, and Grouping: Mentor Coaching…

1. Has the length and depth required to diagnose and address priorities.
2. Must occur at least twice per semester, for a total of four hours over the year, for each mentor teacher.
3. May occur individually or with a small group of up to 5 mentors.

Activities and Content: Mentor Coaching…

1. Is aligned to the training's objectives and focuses on closing mentors' gaps in implementing skills that were previously practiced in training.
2. Includes observations of mentor teachers in their roles[8]. However, specific coaching sessions may be based on observations and/or may also focus on mentors' self-identified priorities/areas for growth and includes a follow-up plan.
3. Focuses on high-leverage growth areas and follows a "See It, Name It, Do It" framework, including:
   a. A clear, bite-sized, high leverage action step that aligns to the most urgent gap in the mentors' practice (this serves as the focus for the coaching).
   b. See it: An opportunity for the mentor(s) to see a strong model of success for the gap in question and compare the model to the mentors' own implementation.
   c. Name it: An opportunity to identify the discrete steps to take to close the gap and explicit naming of the highest-leverage action step.
   d. Do it: An opportunity for the mentor(s) to practice action steps through planning a script and multiple at-bats with real-time, corrective feedback from the coach.

Plans and Resources: Mentor Coaching…

1. Utilizes effective tools, such as templates and protocols, to ensure fidelity of implementation.

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[8] Examples: co-observations of beginning teachers, observations of the mentors' coaching conversations with beginning teachers, etc.

Requirements for District and Campus Leader Training (Group 2)

Design: The District and Campus Leader Training…

1. Includes an overview of MPA requirements.
2. Previews the content, cadence, and frequency of the AP's mentor training program (i.e., scope and sequence).
3. Introduces the AP's staff that will be partnering with the district and campus employees.
4. If applicable, describes the AP's intended approach for one-on-one or small group coaching of mentors in their roles.
5. If applicable, provides an overview of the AP's implementation support for district and campus leaders.

Duration and Cadence: The District and Campus Leader Training…

1. Is sequenced with the highest-leverage, most urgent leadership topics first.
2. Allocates sufficient time to build leadership competencies, including through practice.
3. At minimum, occurs at a regular cadence throughout the school year for a total of **8 hours**.
   a. The training must include at least 3 hours of synchronous training.
   b. The training may include implementation support, which could count as **5 hours** of training.

District and Campus Leader Competencies: The District and Campus Leader Training…

1. Trains district and campus leaders (DCLs) to **set a vision for the mentor program** including…
   a. Setting a vision and developing a mentor program focused on…
      i. improving student learning.
      ii. improving beginning teacher effectiveness.
      iii. improving beginning teacher retention.
   b. Using the vision to set specific goals for student learning, beginning teacher effectiveness, and beginning teacher retention.
   c. Ensuring mentoring goals are tied to district and campus priorities and initiatives.
   d. Determining how to monitor progress towards mentoring program goals by…
      i. identifying data sources.
      ii. using data analysis protocols.
      iii. establishing a cadence for data collection and analysis.
2. Trains DCLs to implement **effective mentor recruitment, selection, and assignment practices** including…
   a. Developing clear roles and responsibilities of MTs and individuals that will coach the MTs.
   b. Establishing an effective process, with clear criteria and protocols, to recruit and select MTs and ensure that they…
      i. Have 3 years of teaching experience.
      ii. Have a track record of success in improving student outcomes.
      iii. Demonstrate strong interpersonal skills, leadership, and instructional effectiveness.
      iv. Demonstrate an interest and commitment to their role as a MT.
   c. Assigning MTs to BTs and ensuring that they, to the extent practicable…
      i. Teach in the same schools, grade level, and content area.
   d. Ensuring MTs support a reasonable number of BTs, specifically ensuring that…
      i. MTs that teach at least six hours a day are assigned to no more than 2 BTs.
      ii. MTs that teach less than six hours a day are assigned to no more than 4 BTs.
   e. Providing an onboarding experience for MTs, that, at minimum,
      i. Sets expectations for the MT role.

        ii.   Outlines the school's instructional leadership team (ILT) structure and strategies to mitigate the risk of BTs receiving contradictory feedback and coaching.

        iii.   Outlines MT support provided by the ILT and APs.

   f.   Creating and implementing plans to retain MTs in their roles, including MT satisfaction tracking.

   g.   Implementing data collection and analysis systems to measure effectiveness of MT recruitment, selection, onboarding, and retention; planning and implementing next steps.

3.   Trains DCLs to implement strong **mentor training and support ongoing mentor development** including…

   a.   Supporting mentor teachers in completing research-based training required by MPA through means such as…

        i.   securing and communicating training days far in advance.

        ii.   securing substitute teachers as needed.

        iii.   investing mentor teachers in the benefits of mentor training.

   b.   Observing mentoring activities, using specific tools and processes, which focus on application of mentoring competencies aligned to MPA requirements.

   c.   Coaching mentor teachers, in group or individual settings, on mentor competencies developed through training using specific protocols and tools.

   d.   Implementing data collection and analysis systems to measure mentors' progress towards goals; planning and implementing next steps aligned to those goals.

4.   Trains DCLs to plan a **master schedule and release time** that supports mentors including…

   a.   Designing schedules to allow for a reduced teaching load and/or providing release time for both beginning teachers and mentors to ensure they can meet for 12 hours each semester during the school day, ideally on a weekly basis.

   b.   Designating specific time during regular school day for mentoring to occur.

   c.   Implementing data collection and analysis systems to measure, monthly at minimum:

        i.   Progress towards 12 hours of mentoring activities per semester.

        ii.   The number of mentoring activities that occur during a designated time during the school day through release time or a reduced teaching load.

   d.   Responding to quantitative and qualitative data gathered regarding mentoring time with focused priorities, clear timelines, and task owners.

5.   Trains DCLs to plan for **program sustainability** including…

   a.   Investing key district leaders, including the school board, in the mentoring program by sharing the vision and goals.

   b.   Identifying "champions" of the mentor program to share success stories along with qualitative and quantitative impact of the program.

   c.   Codifying the mentor program by creating plans and resources aligned to MPA requirements.

   d.   Identifying opportunities and timelines and developing and implementing plans for scaling the mentor program within or across campuses, as applicable.

Implementation Support Requirements (Optional)

Duration and Cadence: Implementation Support…

1. Has a regular cadence of no less than 5 hours throughout the school year, occurring at least twice per semester.

Activities and Content: Implementation Support…

1. Follows a continuous improvement cycle model that occurs between DCLs and APs and includes the following:
   a. A kick-off meeting in which the vision and goals of the district's mentoring program are reviewed or co-established.
   b. Observations of the mentor program in action, through which DCLs collect evidence and/or artifacts to identify the highest-leverage growth area to be addressed during check-in meetings that focus on…
      a. Beginning teachers' effectiveness via student achievement data.
      b. Mentor teachers' effectiveness & application of competencies developed in training.
      c. Mentor teachers' satisfaction with program implementation.
      d. Implementation of leadership competencies developed through training.
   c. Recurring meetings, with real-time feedback to provide an opportunity for DCLs to
      a. Review the vision and goals of the mentor program.
      b. Monitor program implementation through observations and evidence/artifact collection & analysis.
      c. Establish priorities for mentor program implementation aligned to the district's vision and goals and the leadership competencies.
      d. Determine a plan for following up on action steps identified through observation and/or data analysis.

Plans and Resources: Implementation Support…

1. Utilizes tools or processes for collecting evidence and/or artifacts and scheduling observations related to program implementation during check-in meetings with DCLs.

Adjusting the implementation plan after TEA approval

Any modifications to the implementation plan after TEA approval must be submitted to TEA for approval prior to May of the year preceding implementation.

Evidence of Impact

TEA has developed MPA goals in the following three areas, in alignment with research on the impact of beginning teacher induction and mentoring programs:

1. Beginning teacher effectiveness
2. Beginning teacher retention
3. Mentor teacher effectiveness, which drives beginning teacher effectiveness and retention

Evidence of a training program's impact is one of the requirements of the approval process, and applicants will provide data using attachments D1 and D2. There are four tiers of evidence that applicants may use to demonstrate evidence of program impact, which align to MPA goals. High-quality evidence that reflects a positive impact on mentoring results has stronger likelihood of approval.

Tier 1: Improvements in Beginning Teacher Effectiveness

The evidence included in Attachment D1 demonstrates *comparative improvement* in the effectiveness of the beginning teachers that the program directly worked with. This could include, but is not limited to, improved appraisal ratings and student growth ratings of those beginning teachers.

For example, a training provider may provide comparison data on the average T-TESS appraisal scores of first year teachers in a partner district *prior* to program implementation as a baseline with the average T-TESS appraisal scores for the cohorts of beginning teachers supported by the program *after* implementation to show comparative improvements because of program intervention. Additionally, training providers may provide comparison data for average Student Learning Objective (SLO) scores from the students of beginning teachers *prior* to program implementation as a baseline with SLO scores from the cohort of beginning teachers supported by the program *after* implementation.

More information on the requirements of tiers of evidence can be found in the scoring guide.

Tier 2: Improvements in Beginning Teacher Retention

The evidence included in Attachment D1 demonstrates year-over-year improvement retention of beginning teachers that the program directly worked with.

For example, a training provider may provide a comparison of baseline beginning teacher retention data for the partner district *prior* to program implementation to the retention rates of the cohort of beginning teachers supported by the program *after* implementation to show comparative improvements as a direct result of the program's intervention.

More information on the requirements of tiers of evidence can be found in the scoring guide.

Tier 3: Fidelity of Program Implementation

The evidence included in Attachments D1 and D2 demonstrate effective program implementation based on fidelity of implementation tools used to evaluate the district's implementation of the mentor program in action. Fidelity of implementation tools may include rubrics, checklists, implementation trackers, or protocols. These tools, if used, must show direct alignment to mentor training and program goals (created by the provider or co-created between the provider and district).

For example, a training provider might have a suite of tools used by mentors when coaching beginning teachers including a template with a protocol for planning and leading coaching conversations with a

beginning teacher. The training provider may then have internal rubrics they use during district site visits to evaluate the mentor teachers' use of those coaching protocols. The training provider may also have a data tracking tool used to input (a) rubric ratings for the mentors' use of the coaching protocol, and (b) the total number of coaching conversations in which mentors and beginning teachers engage. Using this example, data aggregated using the tools could be submitted as Tier 3 evidence.

If the applicant submits evidence of impact for this tier, they must include sample trackers (as part of Attachment D2) that show the aggregate outcomes of the fidelity of implementation tools. TEA requires that the applicant also include sample, completed tools, such as rubrics, which help illustrate how the fidelity of implementation tools were used.

More information on the requirements of tiers of evidence can be found in the scoring guide.

Tier 4: Perceptions of Program Effectiveness

The evidence included in Attachments D1 and D2 demonstrates a positive impact on beginning teachers and/or mentor teachers through perception survey data. For applicants that participated in Cycles 1-3 of the Mentor Program Allotment, they must include TEA's MPA Survey results as part of their evidence for this tier (they are encouraged to submit additional perception data if available). After initial approval, MPA APs will seek approval for each new cycle of MPA by demonstrating effectiveness using evidence gathered through MPA implementation.

For example, a training provider might administer surveys quarterly or at the end of training that examine the perceptions of mentor and/or beginning teachers on the training model, program implementation, teacher effectiveness, teacher retention, additional support, and/or general program feedback. The results of surveys should reflect the impact of the mentor program's intervention per district partner. A sample of the perception survey may be included to demonstrate the types of questions asked.

If the applicant submits evidence of impact for this tier, they must include the full survey and data (as part of Attachment D2) that show the aggregate outcomes of the survey.

More information on the requirements of tiers of evidence can be found in the scoring guide.

Ongoing Performance Management

To ensure continuous improvement with MPA, TEA will engage in data-driven conversations with APs periodically to examine bright spots and opportunities to scale mentor program best practices across the state. Additionally, these conversations will help surface implementation challenges, examine barriers, and develop solutions to ensure MPA success. In preparation for these conversations, APs are expected to collect evidence of impact and will be asked to submit this data to TEA at least twice yearly, in advance of check-in calls with TEA.

As a part of the approval process, APs must agree to continue monitoring evidence of impact using the data and processes described in its application Attachment A and D1. TEA refers to this as the AP performance management plan. If the applicant is going to modify any of its performance management plan (monitoring and responding to evidence of impact throughout an MPA cycle), it must include specific rationale for its changes in Attachment A. Additionally, the applicant must include in its application any tools that it will use to measure ongoing impact of their work in districts.

Consistent with Cycles 1-3 of MPA, TEA will administer end of year surveys to mentor and beginning teachers and share the data back with districts and APs. Starting in the 2023-24 school year, TEA intends to pilot the administration of a middle of year mentor teacher survey and share that data back with APs and districts.

TEA reserves the right to remove programs from the MPA Approved Provider list if it determines that the information, evidence, or data available to it indicates that the organization's program does not adequately train and support mentor teachers.

Other Considerations

Future MPA Cycles: This application is for approval to provide training and support services to districts in MPA Cycle 4. There will be an application process for future cycles of MPA beyond Cycle 4.

MPA Spending: Districts may spend their allotment on (1) mentoring support through providers of mentor training, (2) mentor stipends, and (3) scheduled release time for mentoring activities.

Limited State Funding: MPA state funding is capped at an amount based upon appropriations made by Texas Legislature. Based on past cycles, district interest and eligibility tend to exceed the state funding amount. Given limited state funding, priority points may need to be assigned based on district need.

Approved Provider Fees: APs will establish fees for services and communicate this directly to districts.

Procurement Processes: Districts are expected to follow their local procurement policies when contracting with an AP.

References

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        Teachers and Leaders. American Institutes for Research, 2019.

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"Mentor Practice Standards." New Teacher Center. 2018.

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"Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System." Texas Education Agency. 2020.