

Mentor Program Allotment

Cycle 3 FAQ: Posted on February 2, 2022

FAQ Overview

This document is a compilation of responses to Frequently Asked Questions that were submitted by the January 24th deadline about Cycle 3 of the Mentor Program Allotment (MPA). Districts are encouraged to review the following materials that are posted on the [MPA website](#) as they will be referenced throughout this document:

- [MPA Guidelines](#)
- [Scoring Guide](#)
- [Scope & Sequence Model](#)
- [Application Webinar](#)
- Texas Education Code [§21.458](#) and [§48.114](#)
- 19 Texas Administrative Code, [§153.1011](#), Mentor Program Allotment

Section A: MPA Application Questions

Question A-1

Who is eligible to apply for MPA?

As stated on page 4 of the MPA Guidelines, Texas districts who are committed to meeting the requirements in TEC §21.458, TEC §48.114, and 19 TAC §153.1011 are eligible applicants. Previous approval in Cycles 1 or 2 does not guarantee approval for Cycle 3. If interested in Cycle 3 MPA funding, districts that were approved in Cycles 1 and 2 must re-apply for Cycle 3.

Question A-2

What should districts consider before applying?

As shared in the pre-recorded webinar posted to the MPA website, districts should ask themselves the following questions:

- Is my district looking to improve on supports for beginning teachers?
- Is my district committed to improving supports and retention of first- and second-year teachers?
- If approved for Cycle 3 funding, will my district be able to meet MPA requirements such as:
 - Providing release time or reduced teaching load for mentors to meet with each beginning teacher for at least 12 hours per semester
 - Ensuring that mentor teachers receive mentor training before the beginning of the school year and throughout the school year
- If approved for Cycle 3 funding, will my district have the people and means necessary to implement a high-quality mentoring program?

Question A-3

Is this application associated with the TCLAS grant application?

The Mentor Program Allotment is its own application. Districts can only apply through this application process for Cycle 3.

Question A-4

Is there a tutorial video for this allotment application?

A pre-recorded webinar and its associated PowerPoint deck are available on the MPA website. Content covered in the webinar includes information on the MPA, how MPA works, partnering with an Approved Provider, MPA funding, and the Cycle 3 application.

Section B: MPA Funding Questions

Question B-1

How many districts will be approved for funding?

The number of districts approved for funding is dependent upon (1) the number of districts that apply, (2) the number of districts that are eligible, and (3) the amount of funding approved for each district. If district interest and eligibility exceed the state funding amount, priority points will be assigned based on district need. Refer to the Priority Point Assignment section on pages 6-7 of the MPA Guidelines.

Question B-2

What is the maximum allotment that a district can be awarded?

As shown on page 6 of the MPA Guidelines through the table below, the Cycle 3 funding formula varies depending on the provider of mentor training. The allotment is calculated based on the estimated number of beginning teachers who have less than two years of teaching experience in the profession, with an allotment cap of 55 beginning teachers per district or charter network. For instance, districts partnering with an MPA Approved Provider for mentor training purposes only are eligible to receive an allotment of \$2,000 per beginning teacher. The maximum allotment that the district can receive is \$110,000 with the allotment cap of 55 beginning teachers.

Provider of mentor training	District	MPA Approved Provider	MPA Approved Provider with coaching and implementation supports
Funding per BT	\$1,500	\$2,000	\$2,500
Number of BTs funded	55	55	55
Allotment cap per district or charter network	\$82,500	\$110,000	\$137,500

Question B-3

Which school year does MPA Cycle 3 funding apply to?

Districts approved for funding may be awarded for three years (2022-2025) of continuous funding contingent upon district compliance with MPA requirements and availability of funds.

Section C: Beginning Teachers Questions

Question C-1

Who is considered an eligible beginning teacher?

According to 19 TAC §153.1011, beginning teachers are defined as teachers with less than two years of teaching experience in the grade or subject that they are assigned. Due to limited state funding and the high attrition rates of new teachers, the Cycle 3 funding formula is based on the number of beginning teachers who have less than two years of teaching experience in the profession, not the grade or subject that they are assigned. This refers to teachers who have served as a classroom teacher for less than two years, including year 0 and year 1 teachers. As stated in the Funding Formula section on pages 5-6 of the MPA Guidelines, TEA will determine district participation and mentor program allotments based on districts' estimated number of beginning teachers.

Question C-2

Who generates an allotment through MPA?

Eligible beginning teachers may generate an allotment if they meet MPA requirements. As described in the Compliance Reporting section on page 11 of the MPA Guidelines, districts will report their final number of eligible beginning teachers that were matched with a mentor teacher who met the requirements of MPA. If the final number of beginning teachers that qualify for MPA funding differs from the estimate submitted in the district's application and TEA either underpaid or overpaid districts, the funding differences will be reconciled during the settle-up process. Refer to the Settle-up Process section on page 11 of the MPA Guidelines for more information.

Question C-3

For charter districts that do not require teacher certification, how are years of experience determined for eligibility of MPA beginning teachers?

Charter districts may use service records to identify years of experience and determine eligibility as a MPA beginning teacher. TEA will verify eligibility of MPA beginning teachers based on information that districts submit in their end-of-year compliance report.

Section D: Mentor Teachers Questions

Question D-1

Who is considered an eligible mentor?

As stated in the Eligible Mentors section on page 4 of the MPA Guidelines, any beginning teacher in Texas that generates an allotment through the MPA must be assigned a mentor that fits the definitions and meets the mentor teacher requirements of TEC §21.458 and 19 TAC §153.1011. Per these sections of statute and rule, a mentor teacher must meet the following requirements:

- Must be current classroom teachers and teach at least four hours daily;
- Must have three years of teaching experience with a track record of improving student outcomes; and
- Must demonstrate strong interpersonal and leadership skills.

Additionally, under TEC §21.458(a), a teacher assigned as a mentor must to the extent practicable, teach in the same school, subject, or grade level, as applicable. In other words, if it is not possible or in the effort to best support a beginning teacher, the assigned mentor teacher may teach in a different school, subject, or grade level as the beginning teacher.

Question D-2

Can an instructional coach serve as a MPA mentor teacher?

As mentioned in Question D-2, a MPA mentor teacher must meet the requirements outlined in statute and rule. If districts choose to assign other staff to mentor beginning teachers and do not meet the requirements, those beginning teachers will not generate funding through the Mentor Program Allotment.

Section E: Mentor Training

Question E-1

Who is considered an eligible mentor training provider?

A list of approved mentor training providers and their program information can be found on the MPA website. They include:

- BloomBoard, Inc.
- Education Service Center, Region 1
- Education Service Center, Region 18 – Texas Center for Educator Excellence (TxCEE)
- Education Service Center, Region 20
- Learning Forward
- National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET)
- New Teacher Center (NTC)
- Resources for Learning / Scaffolded Solutions

Question E-2

What should districts consider when partnering with an approved provider?

As shared in the pre-recorded webinar posted to the MPA website, districts looking to partner with an approved provider may wish to discuss the following with them:

- What are your primary goals for mentor and beginning teachers?
- Preview the mentor training scope and sequence
 - By the end of Year 1, what are mentors expected to know and be able to do as a result of the training and support?
 - How might this differ or change in Year 2? Year 3?
- What kind of implementation and coaching supports do you provide (if applicable)?
- What are the costs associated with training? With implementation and coaching supports (if applicable)?
- How do you measure success of your training and district supports?
- What will the partnership look like during Cycle 3? How will it evolve over time?
- What will happen after the 3 years?

Question E-3

Are mentor teachers required to complete MPA mentor training beyond one year?

Mentor teachers must complete or have previously completed one year of MPA mentor training to be considered an eligible MPA mentor teacher. However, districts and approved mentor training providers may choose to require ongoing training and supports of mentor teachers beyond one year. TEA encourages districts to consider providing ongoing professional learning and supports for all their mentor teachers.

Question E-4

If a district has worked with an external partner before, can they continue working with them to develop a district-created mentor training scope and sequence?

For Cycle 3, districts must use a district-created mentor training program or partner with an MPA Approved Provider of mentor training. Districts may collaborate with an external partner, such as education service centers and non-profit organizations, to develop a district-created mentor training scope and sequence. As mentioned in the MPA Approved Mentor Training Providers section, MPA funds cannot be used to pay for the services of an external partner unless they are an MPA Approved Provider.