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Cooperating Teacher and Beginning Educator Support and Assessment Programs

Sec. 10-220a-1. Definitions

Definitions of and requirements for certificates referenced in Sections 10-220a-1 to 10-220a-19, inclusive, of these regulations are contained in Sections 10-145d-100 to 10-145d-306, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

As used in Sections 10-220a-1 to 10-220a-19, inclusive:

(a) “Alternate route beginning teacher” means an individual who initially holds a temporary 90-day certificate and who participates in an alternate route beginning educator program leading to the issuance of a provisional educator certificate.

(b) “Assessment instrument” means the instrument or instruments developed and validated by the Department and based on the Connecticut Teaching Competencies.

(c) “Assessor” means an individual who has successfully completed a Department approved training program for assessors.

(d) “Assessor candidate” means an individual who has been selected for assessor training but has not yet successfully completed such training.

(e) “Beginning educator program” means the support and assessment program, as made available by the Board, required of beginning teachers.

(f) “Beginning teacher” means an individual serving under an initial educator certificate, interim initial educator certificate, temporary 90-day certificate or durational shortage area permit.

(g) “Board” means the Connecticut State Board of Education.

(h) “Board of education” means a local or regional board of education, regional educational service center, unified school district, cooperative arrangement established pursuant to Section 10-158a of the General Statutes, approved private special education facility, the Gilbert School, Norwich Free Academy and Woodstock Academy. For the regional vocational-technical school system, “board of education” means the vocational-technical school committee of the Board. In addition, for the cooperating teacher program only, boards of education include the governing bodies of other prekindergarten, elementary and secondary institutions approved by the commissioner.

(i) “Classroom teacher” means an individual who holds a professional educator certificate or a provisional certificate with a minimum of three years of teaching experience and who provides direct instruction to students.

(j) “College supervisor” means the individual designated by a college or university to supervise student teachers.

(k) “Commissioner” means the Connecticut Commissioner of Education.

(l) “Connecticut Teaching Competencies” means those descriptors, as adopted by the Board, of skills and abilities which a teacher should possess.

(m) “Cooperating teacher” means an individual who has been selected and trained to provide support and instructional assistance to a student teacher.

(n) “Cooperating teacher candidate” means an individual who has been selected for training as a cooperating teacher but who has not yet successfully completed such training.

(o) “Cooperating teacher team” means a group of individuals, led by a cooperating teacher, which provides support and instructional assistance to a beginning teacher or group of student teachers.

(p) “Cooperating teacher program” means the program of training, as made available by the Board, which is designed to prepare classroom teachers to serve

as cooperating teachers in the student teaching component of a teacher preparation program.

(q) "Department" means the Connecticut State Department of Education.

(r) "District committee" means the committee formed by an employing agent to implement the cooperating teacher program and the support component of the beginning educator program.

(s) "District facilitator" means the professional employee employed in a position requiring a certificate issued by the Board who is appointed by the employing agent to serve as the liaison between the board of education and the Department for the beginning educator program and the cooperating teacher program.

(t) "Employing agent" means the chief executive officer or other official authorized by the chief executive officer or supervising authority of a board of education.

(u) "Mentor" means an individual who has successfully completed a Department approved training program to provide support and instructional assistance to a beginning teacher.

(v) "Mentor candidate" means an individual who has been selected for training as a mentor but has not yet successfully completed such training.

(w) "Mentor team" means a group of individuals, led by a mentor, which provides support and instructional assistance to a beginning teacher or group of beginning teachers.

(x) "School administrator" means a principal, director or other designated administrator of a school building.

(y) "Student teacher" means an individual enrolled in a teacher preparation program and placed in a cooperating teacher's classroom for instruction and practice in teaching.

(z) "Teacher assessor" means a classroom teacher who has successfully completed a department approved training program for assessors.

(aa) "Teacher preparation program" means a planned program of preparation provided by a regionally accredited institution or a Connecticut institution accredited by the Connecticut Board of Governors of Higher Education and which is approved by the Board or other appropriate governing body in the state in which the institution is located.

(Effective July 24, 1992)

Sec. 10-220a-2. Responsibilities of employing agents

Each employing agent shall:

(1) appoint a district facilitator;

(2) form a district committee;

(3) ensure that the district facilitator orients district committee members to all facets of the cooperating teacher and beginning educator programs, to include, but not be limited to, the goals of the programs; the application and selection process for cooperating teachers, mentors, and teacher assessors; the responsibilities of cooperating teachers, mentors, and assessors; and the process for annually reviewing the work of the district committee;

(4) ensure that the process for nominating and selecting individuals for training as cooperating teachers, mentors, and teacher assessors is implemented;

(5) develop a process for nominating and selecting administrators to be trained as assessors;

(6) notify, at such time and in such manner as the Commissioner shall prescribe, teachers and administrators about professional opportunities to serve as cooperating

teachers, mentors, and assessors, and about the selection criteria and the selection processes;

(7) ensure that each beginning teacher is placed with a mentor or mentor team;

(8) report to the Department no later than 10 days after the beginning teacher is assigned to a school building, in such manner as the Commissioner shall prescribe, data for each beginning teacher including, but not limited to, name of the beginning teacher, school assignment, date of hire, and teaching assignment;

(9) ensure that times and locations for pre-observation and post-observation interviews are arranged between beginning teachers and their assessors;

(10) ensure that, during the time when an assessor is observing the beginning teacher, neither the mentor of the beginning teacher, any board of education administrator, nor other adult whose presence is not required in the delivery of instruction or assistance of students is present, and that the classroom is not audio- or video-taped;

(11) provide released time for beginning teachers to observe and be observed by their mentors or members of the mentor team and assessors;

(12) provide released time for assessors to conduct assessments;

(13) submit to the Department local school calendars, at such time and in such manner as the Commissioner shall prescribe;

(14) develop and implement a special plan for supervision of alternate route beginning teachers and submit, upon Department request, documentation of such plan to the Department;

(15) develop and make available to college and university placement coordinators written procedures for placing student teachers with cooperating teachers;

(16) require, at such time and in such manner as the Commissioner shall prescribe, attestation by district committee members of service on the district committee;

(17) provide to the Department a list of names of cooperating teachers and mentors who have not successfully met their responsibilities pursuant to Section 10-220a-6 and who shall be removed from the list of individuals eligible for placement as cooperating teachers and mentors;

(18) annually review and, as necessary, revise procedures as specified in this section for the operation of the cooperating teacher program and support component of the beginning educator program;

(19) ensure conformance with applicable provisions of these regulations; and,

(20) secure the applications of teachers and administrators to participate as assessors in accordance with the department's assessor recruitment goals. In the event that the commissioner determines that a shortage of assessors exists, the commissioner shall require that districts make available during each school year a minimum number of trained assessors as follows:

(A) For boards of education with fewer than 50 certified professional employees, a minimum of one assessor;

(B) For boards of education with at least 50, but fewer than 100 certified professional employees, a minimum of two trained assessors;

(C) For boards of education with at least 100, but fewer than 200 certified professional employees, a minimum of three trained assessors;

(D) For boards of education with at least 200, but fewer than 400 certified professional employees, a minimum of five trained assessors;

(E) For boards of education with at least 400, but fewer than 700 certified professional employees, a minimum of seven trained assessors; or

(F) For boards of education with at least 700 certified professional employees, a minimum of ten trained assessors.

(21) support the commitment of mentors, cooperating teachers, and assessors to participate in those roles for a minimum of two years following successful completion of initial training. In the event that mentors, cooperating teachers, or assessors are unable to meet the two year participation commitment, the employing agent shall recruit additional teachers and administrators to serve in those roles.

(Effective July 24, 1992)

Sec. 10-220a-3. Formation and responsibilities of the district committee

(a) The district committee shall be composed of certified professional employees employed in positions requiring a certificate issued by the Board, including, but not limited to, a member from the teachers' and administrators' exclusive bargaining representatives, provided a majority of the members of the district committee shall be classroom teachers. The members of the district committee shall be representative of the elementary, middle, and secondary school levels, as applicable.

(b) The employing agent and the district facilitator shall determine the size of the district committee with consideration being given to the number of classroom teachers employed by the board of education and the anticipated numbers of student teachers and beginning teachers.

(c) A fair and equitable process for selecting district committee members shall be established by the board of education and the teachers' unit and administrators' unit exclusive bargaining representatives, as applicable, provided, however, that the provisions of Sections 10-153a through 10-153n, inclusive, of the General Statutes shall not be applicable to the establishment of such process.

(d) The district committee shall adopt written procedures which shall include, but not be limited to, rotation of district committee members, the application process and the selection process for cooperating teachers and mentors, criteria for selecting mentors, cooperating teachers, and teacher assessors, procedures for dissolving placements, and removal for good cause of teachers from the eligible pool.

(Effective July 24, 1992)

Sec. 10-220a-4. Selection of cooperating teachers, mentors, and assessors

(a) Individuals who are employed by a board of education and apply to become cooperating teachers, mentors, and teacher assessors shall present evidence to the district committee of meeting the following prerequisites:

(1) possession of a professional educator certificate or a provisional certificate and a minimum of three years of teaching experience;

(2) employment by the board of education for at least one school year if applying to become a cooperating teacher or mentor;

(3) demonstration of effective teaching practice as defined by the Connecticut Teaching Competencies or their equivalent;

(4) ability to work cooperatively as team members to aid the professional growth of student teachers and beginning teachers;

(5) professional commitment to improving the induction of student teachers and beginning teachers into the teaching profession;

(6) ability to relate effectively to adult learners;

(7) ability to be reflective and articulate about the craft of teaching; and,

(8) such other criteria as may be deemed necessary by the district committee.

(b) District committee members shall review all applications and recommend to the board of education through its employing agent those classroom teachers eligible to be cooperating teachers, mentors, and assessors.

(c) The board of education shall review and approve or disapprove the recommendations submitted to it by the district committee.

(d) Individuals who are employed by a board of education as administrators shall be selected to become assessors by the board of education.

(e) The district facilitator shall submit to the Department by March 30th of each year, in such form as the Commissioner shall prescribe, the names of cooperating teachers, mentors, and assessors who were selected to be trained.

(f) Individuals who are not employed by a board of education who apply to become assessors shall present evidence to the department of meeting prerequisites which shall include, but not be limited to:

- (1) demonstration of success as an educator;
- (2) possession of a variety of educational experience and training;
- (3) demonstration of effective communication skills;
- (4) ability to work well with adults; and,
- (5) ability to reflect and be articulate about effective teaching practices.

(g) The department shall select candidates for assessor training in order to meet assessor staffing needs.

(h) Teachers selected by their boards of education and prepared by the department to be cooperating teachers and mentors prior to July 1, 1988, may be included by the department on the list of individuals eligible for placement as either cooperating teachers or mentors.

(Effective July 24, 1992)

Sec. 10-220a-5. Training of cooperating teachers, mentors, and assessors

(a) The Department shall provide:

- (1) training programs for cooperating teachers, mentors, and assessors;
- (2) lists of district personnel eligible to serve as cooperating teachers, mentors, and assessors to district facilitators annually;
- (3) access to lists of cooperating teachers to the appropriate administrative officials of teacher preparation programs annually;
- (4) training for beginning teachers; and,
- (5) technical assistance to district facilitators.

(b) In order to serve as assessors, assessor candidates shall successfully demonstrate proficiency as determined by the department in the use of the assessment instrument.

(c) In order to serve as mentors or cooperating teachers, mentor candidates and cooperating teacher candidates shall successfully demonstrate a prescribed set of skills as determined by the department.

(d) Cooperating teachers, mentors, and teacher assessors who change employment from one board of education to another and who are approved through the selection process of the board of education in which they are newly employed shall not be required to repeat initial training as the result of the employment change.

(Effective July 24, 1992)

Sec. 10-220a-6. Responsibilities of cooperating teachers and mentors

(a) A teacher shall successfully complete a training program in order to serve in the role of cooperating teacher or mentor.

(b) Cooperating teachers and mentors are expected to be available to accept placements for a minimum of two years following successful completion or training.

(c) The cooperating teacher or cooperating teacher team's responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- (1) providing daily supervision of the student teacher;
- (2) providing support for the development of the student teacher's knowledge and instructional skills, as defined by the Connecticut Teaching Competencies; and,
- (3) assisting the college or university in its evaluation of the student teacher in meeting the requirements of the student teaching component of the teacher preparation program.

(d) The mentor's or mentor team's responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- (1) meeting weekly with the beginning teacher during the school year and recording such activities;
 - (2) observing the beginning teacher and providing classroom demonstrations for the beginning teacher on at least eight occasions during the school year, except for mentors of alternate route beginning teachers who shall perform such activities on at least ten occasions during the school year;
 - (3) providing support for the development of the beginning teacher's skills, as defined by the Connecticut Teaching Competencies, including planning of instruction, classroom management, instruction and assessment of student learning; and,
 - (4) assisting the beginning teacher in preparing for the assessment process.
- (Effective July 24, 1992)

Sec. 10-220a-7. Placement conditions for cooperating teachers and mentors

(a) Beginning teachers shall be placed with mentors under the following conditions:

- (1) each beginning teacher will be placed with a mentor or a mentor team;
- (2) placement of a beginning teacher with a mentor or mentor team shall be made as soon as possible after a beginning teacher is assigned to a school building, but in no event, later than ten school days after the beginning teacher has been so assigned;
- (3) beginning teachers shall not be placed with mentors who will evaluate such beginning teachers pursuant to Section 10-151b of the General Statutes;
- (4) the district facilitator, at such time and in such manner as the Commissioner shall prescribe, shall provide lists of trained mentors to school administrators to enable such school administrators to match mentors with beginning teachers; and,
- (5) a mentor and a beginning teacher, in collaboration with the school administrator, may discontinue a placement following a local review and approval under written procedures developed by the district committee.

(b) The appropriate administrative official of the teacher preparation program, in collaboration with the district facilitator and school administrator, shall place student teachers with cooperating teachers under written procedures developed by the employing agent.

(Effective July 24, 1992)

Sec. 10-220a-8. Exceptions to placement procedures for cooperating teachers and mentors

The Commissioner, or the Commissioner's designee, may grant exceptions to Section 10-220a-7 upon timely petition by the employing agent and a showing of good cause.

(Effective July 24, 1992)

Sec. 10-220a-9. Participation in the assessment component of the beginning educator program

(a) Beginning teachers shall participate in the beginning educator assessment program as made available by the Board.

(b) Beginning teachers are required to achieve a satisfactory evaluation on the assessment in order to be eligible for a provisional educator certificate.

(Effective April 24, 1991)

Sec. 10-220a-10. Assessment of beginning teachers

(a) The assessment of each beginning teacher shall be based upon, but not be limited to, data obtained from on-site observations conducted by assessors using the assessment instrument provided.

(b) Each beginning teacher shall be observed by assessors, at least one of whom shall be a certified teacher employed by a board of education.

(c) Assessors may include, but are not limited to:

(1) professional employees who are currently or have been previously employed in positions requiring a certificate issued by the Board; and,

(2) higher education faculty.

(d) Assessors shall not be employed by the same board of education as the beginning teachers they assess, except for assessors who are school administrators and assessors employed by the regional vocational-technical school system or a unified district who shall not assess beginning teachers who are assigned to the same building or facility as the assessor.

(e) Assessors who were but are not currently employed by a board of education shall not assess beginning teachers employed by the same board of education in which they were last employed, except for assessors who were but are not currently employed by the regional vocational-technical school system or a unified school district, who shall not assess beginning teachers who are assigned in the same building or facility as the one in which the assessor was last employed.

(f) Cooperating teachers and mentors shall not serve as assessors for beginning teachers with whom they are or have been placed.

(g) Upon approval of the employing agent of the cooperating teachers and mentors, cooperating teachers and mentors may concurrently serve as assessors of beginning teachers.

(Effective July 24, 1992)

Sec. 10-220a-11. Assessment results and reporting

(a) A formative report, which is a feedback report documenting the results of one or more assessments, shall be provided to each beginning teacher prior to the issuance of a composite report.

(b) A composite report, which includes the combined results of the assessments and the standard of performance, shall be provided by the Department to the beginning teacher and the employing agent.

(c) A beginning teacher's standard of performance, as determined by the Board, on the composite report shall be categorized as one of the following:

(1) a standard of acceptable performance evidencing that the beginning teacher has demonstrated teaching competency required for provisional educator certificate eligibility;

(2) a standard of conditional performance evidencing that the beginning teacher has demonstrated teaching competency sufficient for an extension of the assessment period, but not sufficient for provisional educator certificate eligibility; or,

(3) a standard of unacceptable performance evidencing that the beginning teacher has not demonstrated teaching competency requisite for provisional educator certificate eligibility or for an extension of the assessment period.

(Effective April 24, 1991)

Sec. 10-220a-12. Eligibility for extension of assessment period

(a) The Commissioner, or the Commissioner's designee, may grant a one-time extension of the assessment period for one year upon a showing of good cause. Good cause shall be established as follows:

(1) if the assessors determine on the basis of the composite report that the beginning teacher has met a standard of conditional performance, said determination shall constitute a request for such extension; or,

(2) if the assessors determine on the basis of the composite report that the beginning teacher has met a standard of unacceptable performance, and, within 30 days of receipt of the composite report, the employing agent requests in writing to the Commissioner such extension with supporting reasons and documentation.

(b) Within 20 days after receipt of the request for such an extension, the Commissioner, or his designee, shall send to the beginning teacher and the employing agent a determination either approving or disapproving such request.

(c) Within 30 days after receipt of the determination of the Commissioner or his designee, a beginning teacher or the employing agent may request a review of such determination by the Board. The request for review shall contain: the full name, address and telephone number of the person making the request or for whom the request is being made and a clear and concise statement of the reasons, including relevant evidence, upon which the request is made.

(d) The Board shall render a written decision within 30 days of the conclusion of the review.

(Effective July 24, 1992)

Secs. 10-220a-13—10-220a-14.

Repealed, July 24, 1992.

Sec. 10-220a-15. Responsibilities of assessors

Assessors' responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(1) using the assessment instrument to conduct assessments of beginning teachers;

(2) in the course of their duties, informing the Department about any potential conflicts of interest which would impair their ability to assess objectively the performance of a beginning teacher;

(3) except as required in the performance of their duties as assessors, maintaining strict confidentiality concerning their observations of beginning teachers;

(4) following each assessment observation, submitting documentation according to timelines determined by the Department; and,

(5) following successful completion of training, participating as an assessor for a minimum of two years.

(Effective July 24, 1992)

Sec. 10-220a-16. Special program for alternate route beginning teachers and holders of a durational shortage area permit

(a) Each alternate route beginning teacher and holder of a durational shortage area permit in order to be eligible for a provisional educator certificate shall successfully

complete a specially designed beginning educator program, as made available by the Department, which includes, but is not limited to:

(1) the assignment of a mentor or mentor team for not less than two years;

(2) a training program designed especially for alternate route beginning teachers and holders of a durational shortage area permit, as may be provided by the Department, which supplements the Institute for Effective Teaching program successfully completed by the alternate route beginning teacher of the planned program leading towards certification in the field for which the durational shortage area permit was issued.

(3) an assessment program for up to two years; and,

(4) a special plan of supervision for alternate route beginning teachers and holders of a durational shortage area permit provided and attested to by the employing agent.

(b) The special plan shall be in place prior to, and implemented during both the 90-day temporary certificate and initial educator certificate periods for alternate route beginning teachers or the period during which the durational shortage area permit is issued. The plan must include, but is not limited to:

(1) an orientation to the policies and procedures of the employing agent;

(2) classroom observations of the alternate route beginning teacher or holder of a durational shortage area permit and the provision of feedback by the employing agent or designee no less than once every three weeks during the 90-day temporary certificate period or during the first ninety days under a durational shortage area permit; and,

(3) arrangements for the mentor or mentor team to provide classroom demonstrations for the alternate route beginning teacher or holder of a durational shortage area permit and observations of the alternate route beginning teacher or holder of a durational shortage area permit on at least ten occasions during the school year.

(c) During the temporary 90-day certificate period or the first ninety days of the durational shortage area permit, assessors shall assess each alternate route beginning teacher or holder of a durational shortage area permit who shall receive a formative report. These assessments shall not become part of the composite report.

(d) During the initial educator certificate period or the period following the first ninety days of the durational shortage area permit, assessors shall assess each alternate route beginning teacher or holder of a durational shortage area permit who shall receive a formative report. These assessments shall become part of the composite report.

(e) Each alternate route beginning teacher or holder of a durational shortage area permit shall receive at least one composite report which includes the combined results of assessments conducted after the temporary 90-day certificate period or the first ninety days of the durational shortage area permit and the resulting standard of performance as described in subsection (c) of Section 10-220a-11. The alternate route beginning teacher or holder of a durational shortage area permit shall be eligible for an extension of the assessment period in accordance with Section 10-220a-12.

(Effective July 24, 1992)

Sec. 10-220a-17. Compensation for assessors and school districts

Compensation for assessors and school districts shall be paid by the Department within available program appropriations based on the following:

(1) for assessors employed by a board of education, a stipend, which shall not exceed actual assessment expense reimbursement;

(2) for assessors not employed by a board of education, a stipend which shall be a per diem rate as determined by the department; and,

(3) funds shall be paid directly to school districts for the provision of substitute teachers when cooperating teachers, teacher mentors, beginning teachers, and assessors are released from regular classroom responsibilities and for the provision of professional development activities for cooperating and student teachers, teacher mentors, assessors and beginning teachers.

(Effective July 24, 1992)

Sec. 10-220a-18. Released time for mentors, beginning teachers, and assessors

(a) From the date of placement, mentors or mentor teams and their beginning teachers shall receive annually not less than the equivalent of four school days of released time per beginning teacher consisting of no less than eight meetings for planning, demonstration, observation and feedback on teaching, except that a mentor or mentor team supporting an alternate route beginning teacher shall receive annually not less than the equivalent of five school days of released time consisting of no less than ten meetings.

(b) Assessor candidates and assessors shall be provided with released time for the purpose of attending initial and continuing assessor training and conducting assessments. Released time for conducting assessments shall not exceed six school days in each school year without the approval of the employing agent.

(c) The Department shall reimburse each board of education for the expense of substitutes who are needed as a result of assessors being released pursuant to these regulations at a rate which shall not exceed a daily rate to be set annually by the Department.

(Effective July 24, 1992)

Sec. 10-220a-19. Exceptions to assessment procedures for beginning teachers

The Commissioner or the Commissioner's designee may waive the requirements of subsection (b) of section 10-220a-9 for an individual upon a determination that such assessment is not valid for the individual's current teaching assignment.

(Effective July 24, 1992)