

The Mentor Guidebook: Supporting New Special Education Teachers in Mississippi

2021 – 2022

Pilot Year 1





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Introduction

The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) seeks to create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in college and in the workforce and to flourish as parents and citizens. To make this vision a reality, the State Board of Education has established the following rigorous strategic goals that are focused on achievement at every level of Mississippi's public education system, including districts, schools, classrooms, and individual students:

1. All Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas
2. Every Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career
3. Every Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program
4. Every School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders
5. Every Community Effectively Using a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes
6. Every School and District is Rated C or Higher

Purpose of the Mentor Guidebook

The purpose of this guidebook is to guide mentors as they support new special education teachers, promoting effective, evidence-based professional practice, professional learning, collaboration, accountability, and communication.

Since 2016, the MDE has partnered with the Center for Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR Center) to improve outcomes for Mississippi's students with disabilities through technical assistance in building capacity within state systems of educator preparation and practice to implement evidence-based and high-leverage practices within multi-tiered systems of support¹. These efforts are advanced by the Teaching and Leading Solutions Group (TLSG); comprised of CEEDAR representatives, personnel in offices throughout MDE, and educator preparation partners throughout Mississippi; to ensure resulting systemic transformations are implemented effectively and are ultimately sustainable.

Mississippi's TLSG has developed a blueprint to guide the work, promote advancement, and ensure accountability. The blueprint goals and tasks are aligned to the State Board of Education goals above, specifically goals 1, 2, 4, and 6. The comprehensive, multi-year plan represented by the blueprint includes efforts to recruit, prepare, license, support, and retain effective teachers and leaders to improve outcomes for EACH and EVERY learner.

Beginning in the 2021 – 2022 school year, efforts to retain effective special education teachers will include supporting Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in mentoring and induction efforts for new special education teachers. This support will include assistance in mentor selection, ongoing professional learning for mentors, induction resources, professional learning for new special education teachers and their general education co-teachers, stipends for mentor teachers, and support for school leaders.

Pilot Program for 2021 – 2022

The overall goals for the mentoring and induction program include the following:

Improving Instructional Effectiveness

Beginning special educators will improve their knowledge and skill in implementing high-leverage practices.

Collaboration

Beginning special educators will demonstrate knowledge and skill in communicating, interacting, and solving problems with other special education teachers, general education colleagues, paraprofessionals, parents, administrators, and other service providers.

Data Management

Beginning special educators will use methods of collecting, recording, analyzing, and organizing student data in ways that inform instruction.

Teacher Commitment and Support

Beginning special educators will report an overall positive and supportive experience in their schools during the first three years; they will indicate that they feel valued and connected to their students, general and special educators, and administrators.

Teacher Satisfaction and Retention

Beginning special educators will report being satisfied with their jobs resulting in an increase in district retention rates.

The six (6) participating school districts in year one (1) of the pilot program are

Clarksdale Municipal School District,
DeSoto County Schools,
Greenville Public School District,
Laurel School District,
Moss Point School District, and
Walthall County School District.

Mentoring new special education teachers in their first and second year of professional practice is one component of a much larger plan to recruit and retain special education teachers in Mississippi, and the pilot program includes several coordinated strategies designed to work together to address reasons teachers report they leave schools and/or the profession in its entirety. In a 2021 survey of exiting special education teachers in seven (7) districts in Mississippi conducted by the Teacher Shortages Workgroup, ten (10) of the twenty-four (24) respondents left special education for a different position in education. Five (5) respondents noted a challenging school culture and climate as a reason for leaving, and four (4) cited a contributing factor as the paperwork burden. Three (3) alleged the workload was too heavy. Of the total respondents, only two (2) left due to retirement. Two (2) respondents specifically cited lack of administrative support; however, others mentioned similar reasons in the comments. When asked what factors would have

encouraged teachers to stay, six (6) respondents cited respect and consideration for his/her knowledge of student needs.

To address the reasons teachers say they leave, pilot districts participate in the following:

- Mentor selection and training with ongoing monthly check-ins
- Orientation before school begins for first-year special educators
- Ongoing mentoring for first- and second-year special educators
- Monthly professional learning for first-year special educators
- Professional learning community for second- and third-year special educators with collaborating general educators
- Monthly administrator professional development beginning in July 2021

Pilot districts also agree to provide data related to teacher shortages and for the purpose of measuring progress towards program goals.

MISSISSIPPI SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER SHORTAGE PILOT PROCESS



ENGAGE PARTNERS

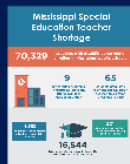
Assembled a team with representatives from:

- state department of education
- educator preparation programs
- national technical assistance center
- local special education directors

COLLECT STATE DATA

Data collected and assembled into an infographic to communicate about the shortage:

- # of students with disabilities
- # of prep programs that offer a degree in special education
- # of graduates in teaching special education
- # of special education teacher vacancies
- # of teachers licensed in special education
- # of practicing special educators



COLLECT LOCAL DATA

Data collected from partner districts included:

- # of special educator vacancies
- # of interviews conducted
- # of job offers
- # of people hired
- # of unfilled positions
- List of where teachers hired were prepared

IDENTIFY AREAS OF NEED

Data collected revealed:

- supply is not meeting demand
- few strong partnerships with preparation programs
- school culture including principal support
- teachers stay after one year, but leave after three
- inconsistent collection of shortage data



BRAINSTORM STRATEGIES

The team brainstormed strategies in the following areas:

- educator preparation and certification
- recruitment, selection and hiring
- induction and mentoring
- compensation and incentives



RATE STRATEGIES AND SELECT

- used Padlet to work collaboratively
- rated each strategy independently based on feasibility and likelihood of impacting shortage
- discussed each strategy
- reviewed overall ratings
- came to consensus on strategy for year 1 pilot



IMPLEMENT PILOT

Induction and Mentoring with Inclusive Leadership

The pilot will include:

- mentor training (consideration of certificate) and monthly check ins with mentors
- ongoing administrator professional development
- ongoing mentoring for first and second year special educators
- monthly professional development for first year special educators focused on HLPs
- professional learning community for third year special educators with general education collaborators
- collection of shortages data



Shortages Toolkit

<https://cedar.education.ufl.edu/shortage-toolkit/>

Teacher Shortage Workgroup Efforts to Date

In collaboration with the CEEDAR Center and MDE, the Teacher Shortages Workgroup has approached shortage work with an attack strategy on multiple fronts after engaging in foundational efforts, such as engaging partners, collecting state and local data, identifying areas of need, brainstorming strategies, and rating and selecting strategies. The Teacher Shortages Workgroup is now ready to implement selected strategies in the pilot districts, with the mentoring program strategy starring in a key role.

This infographic documents the work of the Teacher Shortages Workgroup to date. The next step is to implement the special education teacher mentoring pilot in the 2021 – 2022 school year.

Mississippi Special Education Teacher Shortage

67,162

students with disabilities currently enrolled in Mississippi public schools



13

preparation programs in Mississippi currently offer a degree in special education.

(9 Traditional, 4 Alt Route)

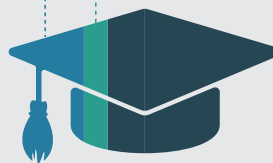
135

students graduated from special education teacher preparation programs in 2019

(41 Traditional, 94 Alt Route)

4,345

currently teaching special education who are fully licensed



17,809

total number of people currently licensed to teach special education in Mississippi for the 2020-2021 school year

627

Vacancies of special education teachers prior to 1st Day of School

146

Vacancies of special education teachers remained unfilled on 1st Day of School

*graduate data from 2018-2019, all other data from 2020-2021

Guidance for Selecting Mentors

Note: The majority of this content was taken from NCIPP manuals² & ³, and the links to the manuals can be found in the references section.

There are several considerations when selecting mentors for new special education teachers to support effective mentoring partnerships. Some of these considerations are context-specific (i.e., they depend upon the specific situation in the school and/or district). Others are necessary to meet the needs of all new teachers.

Mentors provide an array of services to meet the needs of new special education teachers, including the following:

- Instruction/Content/Procedure Support (role similar to beginner)
- Emotional Support & School Culture Support (must be at same school location)

Ideally, one person could serve the mentor role, but sometimes this is not possible. In this case, two mentors may be assigned to a new special education teacher—a school-based mentor and a role-based mentor.

Mentor Characteristics

There are many personal and professional characteristics identified as beneficial for mentors.

Personal Characteristics

Research in special education indicates that novice special education teachers prefer mentors with the following qualities:

- strong communicators
- approachable and available
- supportive and patient
- well-organized and responsible
- respectful
- complimentary of others
- willing to share ideas

Professional Characteristics

Research examining beginning special education teachers' satisfaction with mentoring suggests that successful mentors

- have veteran-teacher status (i.e., 3 or more years of successful teaching experiences in special education);
- have high expectations for each and every student;
- have effectively taught students who have similar disabilities, have taught at the same grade level, and have taught the same content as their mentees;
- have knowledge of system information pertaining to the school, district, and special education; and
- are interested in their own PD and collaborate well in their schools

Mentoring Models

Mentoring Models

Model	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
Full-Time Mentoring	Experienced district-based teachers devote 100% of their professional time to mentoring. Mentors are typically assigned 10 to 20 mentees. In addition to their base salaries, full-time mentors often receive stipends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on instructional mentoring. • Better mentor/mentee matching. • Increased mentor availability. • Time for collaboration and PD. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantial fiscal commitment. • Less immediate mentor availability. • Mentors not part of school culture.
Part-Time Mentoring	Experienced teachers receive mentee assignments in the same school as an added responsibility. Part-time mentors usually receive stipends for each mentee they mentor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal cost to the district. • Immediate mentor availability. • Assistance for mentees in brokering school culture and peer collaboration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to manage teaching and mentoring responsibilities. • Difficult to match mentors/mentees in some locations.
Group Mentoring	Full- or part-time mentors support a small group of mentees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased pool of qualified mentors. • Encourages collaboration. • Facilitates peer support. • Costs less than full-time mentoring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of mentor/mentee confidentiality. • Limited contact with mentors. • Difficult to meet individual needs.
E-Mentoring	Full- or part-time mentors interact with mentees via technology such as email, blogs, discussion boards, chat rooms, wiki, website content, and Skype.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not limited by location/time. • Precise mentor/mentee matching. • Allows for easy access. • Produces archived information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires technology infrastructure. • Mentors not a part of school culture. • Lack of assistance for immediate concerns.
Multi-Layered Support	Leaders utilize several models of mentoring to meet mentees' needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive support. • Mentees less likely to feel unsupported. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive communication between all levels of support. • Substantial fiscal commitment.

Note. Reprinted with permission from author from ³*District Induction Manual: Supporting Beginning Special Educators*, by M. Kamman, K. Zimmerman, M. Israel, B. Billingsley, E. McCray, M. Brownell, P. Sindelar, J. Heretick, S. Rice, & J. Bae, 2013, p. 48 (http://ncipp.education.ufl.edu/files/District_Induction_Manual_final.pdf). Copyright 2013 by the University of Florida, National Center to Inform Policy and Practice in Special Education Professional Development.

Description of Mentor Responsibilities

Mentors assigned to new special education teachers will help their mentees to navigate their new roles through strong support systems designed to promote professional growth, motivation, and job satisfaction and provide emotional support as they adapt to the demands of the teaching profession in general and to the role of special education teacher, in particular. Provided within the local context, this mentor support will help new special education teachers to acclimate to their new roles within the often complex, ever-changing school cultures in which these roles exist.

As noted in the previous section, Guidance for Selecting Mentors, mentors provide an array of services to meet the needs of new special education teachers. Therefore, mentors should possess a clear understanding of their role when assigned to mentees.

All Mentors

All mentors are expected to attend Mentor Boot Camp, participate in monthly check-ins, build successful relationships with mentees, set mentoring goals for the school year, provide ongoing mentoring to mentees throughout the school year, maintain and communicate the required documentation of efforts as described in this guidebook, serve as an advocate for new special education teachers, and ensure reasonable accessibility and availability to perform mentoring services.

Ideally, one person is assigned to be a mentor for a new special education teacher, and this person fulfills all mentoring responsibilities. However, oftentimes the supply of fully qualified mentors does not meet the demand, and roles and responsibilities must be split between two mentors to ensure new special education teachers receive the support they need. In these instances, the roles of the mentors need to be very clearly defined so the mentors will know and understand expectations of the mentoring role. An important question is this:

Is the mentor responsible for

- Instruction/Content/Procedure Support (role similar to beginner),
- Emotional Support & School Culture Support (must be at same school location),
or
- Both/All?

For Mentors Responsible for Instruction/Content/Procedure Support²

Mentors satisfying this role should have experience teaching in a role similar to that of the new special education teacher s/he is mentoring. Authentic experience and understanding of the challenges of the role are critical to the mentor's success. Specific duties of mentors responsible for instruction/content/procedure support include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Increase instructional effectiveness of new special education teachers
 - Determine areas in which mentees need additional preparation and support through action plans to develop instructional goals and progress.
 - Clearly communicate expectations with mentees.
 - Discuss lesson plans during pre-observation meetings.
 - Discuss lessons during post-observation meetings.
 - Plan for improvement in classroom practice.
 - Provide mentees with resources to improve instructional effectiveness.
 - Help mentees develop schedules that help protect their instructional time.
 - Locate and share materials and sample lessons.
 - Plan, direct mentees to, and participate in PD activities.
 - Co-teach with mentees, when possible.
 - Allow mentees to observe in classrooms and debrief afterwards.
 - Plan lessons with mentees, when needed.
 - Monitor mentees' progress.
 - Use reflective questioning.
 - Observe mentees in classrooms, mentees observe your classroom practice.
 - Conduct post-observation meetings to reflect and offer feedback.
 - Reflect on and discuss classroom practice.
 - Reference growth rubrics or action plans to determine goal attainment.
- Increase awareness and skills in applying special education policies and procedures
 - Ensure that mentees know and are meeting the legal requirements and policies in special education.
 - Consult state and district requirements and inform mentees of these requirements.
 - Set up appropriate data tracking systems.
 - Provide procedural support, including assistance with school and district paperwork and special education procedures (e.g., setting up, writing, and implementing individualized education programs [IEPs]).
 - Model and practice how to lead/participate in IEP meetings, MET meetings, etc.
 - Assist with classroom setup; if mentees are in co-teaching placements, generate ideas about setups that support the learning of students with disabilities (e.g., placement of students in the front of the room, grouping of desks).
- Promote collaboration among multiple disciplines.

For Mentors Responsible for Emotional Support & School Culture Support²

Mentors satisfying this role must be at the same location as the new special education teacher due to the nature of the support provided. Specific duties of mentors responsible for emotional & school culture support include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Socialize mentees to the school and district.
 - Guide mentees through their transition to a new environment.
 - Provide an overview of school and district rules and policies.
 - Connect with colleagues and broker school culture.
 - Advocate for mentees.
- Build successful relationships with mentees.
 - Use effective communication skills.
 - Establish consistent and authentic emotional support by being
 - approachable and available,
 - supportive and patient,
 - respectful,
 - complimentary of others, and
 - willing to share ideas.
 - Encourage mentees toward continued professional growth by
 - providing specific praise,
 - acknowledging understanding of mentees' challenges,
 - reinforcing and reminding mentees of the positive changes they have made, and
 - using action plans to stay focused.
 - Evaluate the mentoring relationship to determine whether mentees feel comfortable seeking out and confiding in mentors.



Types of Mentoring

Type of Mentoring	Description	Goals	Examples	Advantages	Disadvantages	When to Use
Reflective Mentoring	Also termed <i>cognitive coaching</i> , reflective mentoring helps mentees reflect on their teaching strategies and develop and improve instruction.	To critically think about teaching practices and lesson plans and develop a deeper understanding of the learning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What are some of the problem- solving techniques you could use?” • “What elements of the lesson helped your students succeed or not succeed?” 	Helps mentees develop critical thinking skills and efficacy and allows them to take ownership of mentoring sessions.	May not work well with mentees who are still in survival mode or who cannot identify their areas of weakness.	Works well with mentees who have acquired basic pedagogical skills, who can identify successful and unsuccessful teaching strategies, and who strive to improve.
Direct Mentoring	Mentors act as problem solvers and models for mentees.	To provide modeling and strategies for mentees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “One way I have dealt with this problem in the past is” • “A good suggestion for this issue is” • “Strategies that have proved successful for increasing fluency are” 	Provides mentees with problem-solving techniques; mentees do not need to develop their own solutions.	Does not allow mentees to identify their problem-solving strategies.	Works well with mentees who are not yet confident in their skills, are stuck on dilemmas, or do not have the knowledge base to identify and implement solutions.
Collaborative Mentoring	Also termed <i>instructional coaching</i> , in collaborative mentoring, mentors and mentees form partnerships.	To use open dialogue between mentors and mentees to facilitate partnerships in improving instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Let’s brainstorm some ways in which we can work out this problem together.” • “That is a great idea. What about adding this?” 	Encourages problem-solving dialogues among colleagues and allows mentors and mentees to contribute.	May not be appropriate for all mentees. Some mentees may be more reflective, and more needy mentees may require direct mentoring.	Serves as a bridge between direct mentoring and reflective mentoring.

Note. Reprinted with permission from author from “Kamman, M., Zimmerman, K., Israel, M., Billingsley, B., McCray, E., Brownell, M., . . . Park, Y. (2012). Mentor handbook: Supporting beginning special educators (NCIPP Document No. IT-1). Retrieved from University of Florida, National Center to Inform Policy and Practice in Special Education Professional Development website: <http://ncipp.education.ufl.edu/reports.php>, pp. 28-29.

Mentoring Logistics and Helpful Resources

In this section, processes, procedures, and helpful resources are provided to assist mentors in their duties and documentation thereof. Topics covered include the following:

- Classroom setup and management resources
- Needs assessment
- Mentoring goals
- Observations
- Mentor service tracking
- Time and effort documentation
- Monthly check-ins
- Travel reimbursement
- Other professional learning resources
 - Microteaching resources
 - Teacher Observation Rubric for Special Education

Classroom Setup and Management

Aligned with HLP #7, one's classroom or assigned space should be designed and established with instructional and functional purpose. Before school starts, if possible, mentors should discuss with mentees the mentees' plans for classroom setup, including design of the physical space, classroom rules/expectations, important routines, and use of wall space.

Some considerations regarding classroom setup include the following:

- Will the teacher need a whole group and a small group space? How can s/he best arrange the furniture to allow for the instructional groupings needed? Will the teacher utilize centers?
- Can the teacher see every student at all times?
- Can teachers and students easily add/remove words from the word wall? What constitutes a word that needs to be added to the word wall? How can the word wall be used regularly through interactive activities?
- When should anchor charts be developed/used? How long should they be displayed? How can they be stored to be used again later, if appropriate?
- How will the new special education teacher organize his/her classroom library?
- What rules or expectations does the teacher have displayed? Are they worded positively? Are there too many/too few? Do they clearly state expectations?
- What routines will the teacher be sure to explicitly teach at the beginning of the school year (and then practice until mastery)?
- What positive behavior practices will the teacher employ? How will the new teacher explicitly teach desired behaviors?
- What culturally responsive teaching practices will the teacher be sure to implement and incorporate into his/her practice?
- Discuss ways the new teacher display student data. (Be mindful of FERPA.)

Helpful Resources for Classroom Setup and Management

High-Leverage Practices in Special Education: A Professional Development Guide for School Leaders

HLP #7 Video



Needs Assessment

New special education teachers may or may not be able to identify their immediate needs at the beginning of the school year. A veteran teacher who is transitioning into special education from a general education role may have some idea of what s/he does or does not know, as s/he may have co-taught with a special educator, participated in IEP meetings, been a member of a MET team, etc. On the other hand, a recent college graduate entering the teaching profession as a new special education teacher may have never seen or participated in an actual IEP meeting, as this may not have been encouraged or allowed during student teaching. Similarly, the new special education teacher could have become certified through an alternate route and spent little to no time in a classroom and/or participating in duties related to special education teaching. Therefore, to ensure mentors are meeting the new special education teachers' needs, mentors should identify the new special educator's needs through a needs assessment.

There is no single tool to be used to determine all of a new special educator's needs; rather, the data from a variety of sources should be used. A good place to start is a needs assessment survey. See Appendix A for a sample survey. Mentors should have mentees complete the survey to see what the mentees already know they need. As mentors build relationship with mentees, other needs will become evident as well, either through conversations, observations, feedback sessions, or other similar interactions. We simply do not always know what we don't know, so the mentor should be prepared to identify new needs as the school year continues and adjust mentoring approaches accordingly. One method is to identify mentees' needs as they align directly to the selected HLP for the month and the monthly professional development the mentees are receiving.

Mentoring Goals

After considering district and school goals, how mentoring impacts goal attainment, and the needs of mentees, mentors should explicitly define mentoring goals for the school year. After goals are defined, action steps should be developed and implemented to meet goals set.

Steps for Setting Mentor Goals at the Beginning of the School Year

See Appendix B for the Sample Mentor Goals Form.

1. Locate district and school goals.
2. Meet with the principal/leadership team to discuss the following: How does mentoring support acquisition of district and school goals? Where does mentoring fit into the strategic plan?
3. Meet with the new special education teacher(s) to whom you are assigned. What are his/her/their preliminary needs?
4. Consider the mentor model and the type of mentoring you will most likely be providing. Consider the responsibilities you will have in your role as a mentor. What are your specific mentor goals?
5. What action steps are needed for you to meet the goals you set?

Monthly Identification of Needs Aligned to New Teacher Professional Development

Mentees will be participating in monthly professional development related to relevant job duties and also directly aligned to High-Leverage Practices in Special Education (HLPs). (See p. 22 for specific topics and HLPs to be addressed each month.) Mentors should assess new special education teachers' needs related to the specific HLP addressed that month and then set one or more goals and action steps to support mentees. These goals and action steps will be much more specific than the overarching goals set for the school year. See Appendix C for the HLPs Self-Assessment Tool developed by the CEEDAR Center and the American Institutes for Research (AIR). After the pre-assessment for the month's HLP, mentees should observe another teacher's professional practice related to this HLP and debrief with his/her mentor.

Helpful Resources for Setting Mentoring Goals

[Mentor Handbook: Supporting Beginning Special Educators²](#)

Observations

Observations represent an important aspect of professional learning—both when observing and when being observed. New special education teachers should be given the opportunity to observe other teachers, especially in areas where other teachers excel. New special educators should also become accustomed to being observed by mentors, other teachers, and administrators.

To maximize benefit when new special education teachers observe the professional practice of other teachers, there should always be a purpose, and it is helpful if the purpose is aligned to professional development and ongoing support the new special educator is receiving. What, specifically, is the new special education teacher observing? Classroom management techniques? Explicit instruction? How another special education teacher leads an IEP meeting? The tone or specific language/terms the teacher uses when speaking to students, parents, or others? By giving the special education teacher one or more specific practice(s) to observe, mentors can strengthen the debriefing conversation, amplifying the professional learning that results.

Frequency of Observations

There is no strict rule regarding how frequently observations should be conducted, and the rate will vary as the mentee's needs change. For the purposes of this mentoring program, the minimum should be once per month for the mentee to be allowed to observe another teacher's professional practice related to the professional development topic (and HLP) for that month. Additionally, the mentor should schedule at least one observation of the mentee per month. See Appendix D for a sample schedule. Funds for substitute pay have been built into the grant for the mentor work, so a half-day or full-day substitute can be hired, as appropriate and when needed.

Mentor-Mentee Check-ins

Although not as formal as an observation (and many are unscheduled), mentors should check-in with their mentees at least as often as follows:

- Week 1: Daily
- Week 2 through week 8: At least weekly
- Week 9 through the end of the school year: At least bi-weekly

See the following appendices for helpful resources related to observations:

- See Appendix E for the Collaborative Assessment Log to guide feedback conversations after the mentor observes the new special education teacher.
- See Appendix F for the PGS Special Education Teacher Observation Rubric to be used by administrators when observing a special education teacher.

Mentor Service Tracking

Mentors should track services provided and time spent on services for several reasons. First, it is human nature to do what is comfortable for us (and to avoid what isn't). If mentors feel very comfortable observing, for example, but less comfortable engaging in feedback conversations, the mentor might spend most, if not all, time simply observing mentees instead of providing other important mentor services, such as engaging in feedback conversations, co-teaching, or modeling. Tracking mentoring services helps mentors see how they spend their time and helps them to evaluate their own service delivery.

Next, mentors need to track their services to provide documentation to submit to support the funding being provided. Many funding sources are from Federal funds which require

documentation of time and effort but also evaluations of effectiveness of expenditures towards program goals. Tracking mentors' services, along with time and effort, provides important data that can be used to evaluate the mentoring program's effectiveness.

Additionally, tracking mentors' service helps both the district and school to determine if the mentoring program is meeting the needs and goals of the district and school. Is the money worth the return on investment? Is the effort worth it? Are the gains in teacher retention and satisfaction with school culture/climate worth the release time and smaller class loads for new teachers and mentors (if applicable)?

Finally, tracking mentors' service helps the mentor to grow professionally by analyzing how s/he spends her/his time, reflecting on her/his service, and determining ways to improve services to mentees.

See Appendix G for a sample monthly mentor log. This form can be submitted monthly along with time and effort documentation to the appropriate administrators. Another option is to utilize a shared, web-based folder containing documents that can be accessed by mentors and supervisors.

Time and Effort Documentation

Mentors should document all of their time and effort spent on mentoring tasks and services to submit as supporting documentation for audit purposes. Collectively, the mentor logs mentioned above document time and effort and serve as a great summary of the time spent on mentoring tasks and services in a given month. These logs will be available for mentors to submit electronically.

Monthly Check-Ins for Mentors

Mentors will participate in virtual check-ins with the Project Director and the other mentors in the pilot districts at least monthly. Two virtual check-ins will be scheduled each month (most months); however, mentors are only required to participate in one per month. Monthly check-ins should last no longer than an hour.

Virtual monthly check-ins will be scheduled every 2nd and 4th Thursday from 2:00 PM until 3:00 PM. The schedule for the 2021 – 2022 school year is as follows:

Fall 2021 Semester			Spring 2022 Semester		
Date		Time	Date		Time
August	08/12/21	2 PM – 3 PM	January	01/13/22	2 PM – 3 PM
	08/26/21	3:30 PM – 4:30 PM		01/27/22	3:30 PM – 4:30 PM
September	09/09/21	2 PM – 3 PM	February	02/10/22	2 PM – 3 PM
	09/23/21	3:30 PM – 4:30 PM		02/24/22	3:30 PM – 4:30 PM
October	10/14/21	2 PM – 3 PM	March	03/10/22	2 PM – 3 PM
	10/28/21	3:30 PM – 4:30 PM		03/24/22	3:30 PM – 4:30 PM
November	11/11/21	2 PM – 3 PM	April	04/14/22	2 PM – 3 PM
December	12/09/21	2 PM – 3 PM		04/28/22	3:30 PM – 4:30 PM

Travel Reimbursement

Mentoring travel will be reimbursed through the mentor's school district unless otherwise specified for specific events. Please check with your district's special education director for more information regarding district travel policy, required forms, etc.

Special events may have travel reimbursed from other sources, and in these instances, you will be informed. For example, travel for Mentor Boot Camp is being reimbursed through the North MS Education Consortium (NMEC) using CEEDAR funds. NMEC follows state travel policy and requires supporting documents be submitted with requests for reimbursements. See Appendix H for the travel reimbursement form and more information.

Other Professional Learning Resources

Other helpful resources for mentors working with new special education teachers include practice-based learning opportunities (PLOs) and the revised PGS Special Education Teacher Observation Rubric used as part of Mississippi's Professional Growth System.

Practice-based Learning Opportunities

Teachers can learn to use high-leverage practices⁵ (HLPs) when they have effective opportunities to practice using the HLPs in thoughtful ways. To support educators' use of HLPs, the CEEDAR Center, in collaboration with Educator Preparation Program faculty across the country, has collected a set of effective practice-based learning opportunities (PLOs)⁴. PLO resources are free and available for anyone to use, and they can be located at <https://cedar.education.ufl.edu/plos/>.

One of the PLOs with immediate relevance that can be easily implemented is the microteaching PLO used to teach HLP #16: Use Explicit Instruction. Although the PLO is linked to HLP #16, the resources can be used to guide feedback conversations after observation.

Steps for implementing the PLO⁴. Mentors utilizing this resource will see there are four (4) stages to implementing the microteaching PLO: planning stage, implementation stage, reflective commentary stage, and collaborative reflection stage.

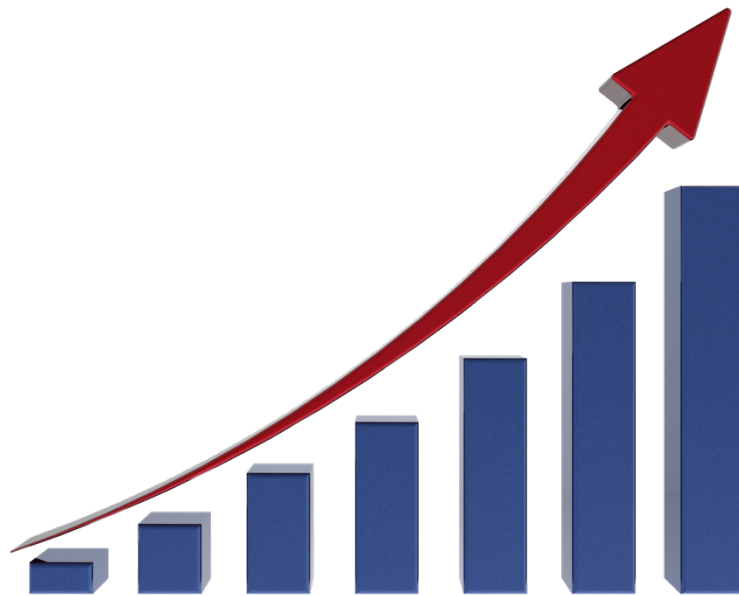
Planning Stage	Mentor builds develops knowledge of skill to be learned and helps mentees develop a lesson plan incorporating this skill. Baseline data should also be gathered.
Implementation Stage	The new special education teacher teaches the lesson, incorporating the skill. The new special education teacher videotapes herself/himself teaching the lesson.
Reflective Commentary Stage	The mentee uses reflective commentary to complete a running record of the lesson, stopping at one-minute intervals to record lesson events and comments. <u>Whenever possible, the mentee connects lesson events to learning theory.</u>
Collaborative Reflection Stage	The mentor and mentee use the Collaborative Assessment Log to reflect on the lesson together. The mentor leads the mentee through a series of reflective prompts to form the basis of the discussion.

More information can be found at <https://cedar.education.ufl.edu/portfolio/plo-microteaching/>.

See Appendix E for a sample Collaborative Assessment Log.

Professional Growth System (PGS) Special Education Teacher Observation Rubric

Finally, a resource of which new special education teachers need to be familiar is the PGS Special Education Teacher Observation Rubric. This tool provides special education teachers with guidance regarding how Mississippi defines an effective special educator (indicated by Level 3 performance on the tool's standards). Additionally, the tool can be used to identify areas of opportunity for professional growth. Aligned to both the High-Leverage Practices in Special Education and to the Teacher Observation Rubric used for general education teachers, the PGS Special Education Teacher Observation Rubric is a powerful tool that helps administrators and educators to define the roles and responsibilities of special education teachers with specificity and clarity while advancing knowledge of inclusive practices that support the learning needs of each and every student. See Appendix F for the PGS Special Education Teacher Observation Rubric DRAFT.



Monthly Professional Learning Topics for New Special Education Teachers

New special education teachers will participate in monthly professional learning activities to promote awareness of High-Leverage Practices (HLPs) and special education topics. These professional learning activities provide a springboard for deeper study and learning at the local level. When possible, mentors may participate with new special education teachers and then extend the learning within the local context.

Monthly sessions will be 2 hours in length and delivered in a virtual format. Sessions will be recorded and made available for later viewing.

Month	Topic(s)	HLP	Date	Time
August	Classroom setup	#7: Establish a consistent, organized, and respectful learning environment	08/19/21	2 PM – 4 PM
September	Planning for maximum impact	#18: Use strategies to promote active student engagement	09/15/21	2 PM – 4 PM
October	Providing feedback	#8 & #22: Provide positive and constructive feedback to guide students' learning and behavior	10/21/21	2 PM – 4 PM
November	Ongoing data collection	#4: Use multiple sources of information to develop a comprehensive understanding of a student's strengths and needs	11/10/21	2 PM – 4 PM
January	Explicit Instruction	#16: Use explicit instruction	01/20/21	2 PM – 4 PM
February	Accommodations and modifications	#13: Adapt curriculum materials and tasks	02/16/21	2 PM – 4 PM
March	IEP development; collaboration with families	#2: Organize and facilitate effective meetings with professionals and families & #11: Identify and prioritize long- and short-term learning goals	03/09/21	2 PM – 4 PM
April	Supporting student learning	#15: Provide scaffolded supports	04/21/21	2 PM – 4 PM

Monthly Administrator Professional Learning Opportunities

Select administrators in pilot districts will participate in monthly professional learning to improve their ability to support new special education teachers and the mentors helping them. Topics will include, but are not limited to, the following: High-Leverage Practices, supportive school culture and climate, orientation, effective induction and mentoring programs, characteristics of effective special educators, and the Special Education Teacher Observation Rubric.

The first administrator convening will be in-person in July 2021; trainings in subsequent months in the Fall 2021 semester will be in a virtual format (Zoom). In January 2022, another in-person convening will be held, followed in subsequent months by virtual meetings.

A tentative schedule is as follows:

Month	Date(s)	Time	Location(s)
July 2021	07/21/21 07/26/21	9 AM – 2 PM 10 AM – 3 PM	South MS: Laurel SD North MS: DeSoto County SD
August 2021	TBD	TBD	Zoom
September 2021	TBD	TBD	Zoom
October 2021	TBD	TBD	Zoom
November 2021	TBD	TBD	Zoom
January 2022	TBD	TBD	In-person (TBD)
February 2022	TBD	TBD	Zoom
March 2022	TBD	TBD	Zoom
April 2022	TBD	TBD	Zoom

Principal Update

After professional learning opportunities for mentors, administrators, new special education teachers, and other teachers, the Project Director will send the Special Education Director and designated principals an update with information regarding the professional learning opportunity. The topic, key points, resources, next steps, and any suggested follow-up will be included in the update. See Appendix I for the Principal Update format.



References

¹CEEDAR Center. (2020). About us. Retrieved from <https://cedar.education.ufl.edu/about-us/>

²Kamman, M., Zimmerman, K., Israel, M., Billingsley, B., McCray, E., Brownell, M., Park, Y. (2012). Mentor handbook: Supporting beginning special educators (NCIPP Document No. IT-1). Retrieved from University of Florida, National Center to Inform Policy and Practice in Special Education Professional Development website: <http://ncipp.education.ufl.edu/reports.php>

³ Kamman, M., Zimmerman, K., Israel, M., Billingsley, B., McCray, E., Brownell, M., Bae, J. (2013). District induction manual: Supporting beginning special educators (NCIPP Document No. IT-2). Retrieved from University of Florida, National Center to Inform Policy and Practice in Special Education Professional Development website: <http://ncipp.education.ufl.edu/reports.php>

⁴CEEDAR Center. (2020). About practice-based learning opportunities. Retrieved from <https://cedar.education.ufl.edu/plos/>

⁵McLeskey, J., Barringer, M-D., Billingsley, B., Brownell, M., Jackson, D., Kennedy, M., Lewis, T., Maheady, L., Rodriguez, J., Scheeler, M. C., Winn, J., & Ziegler, D. (2017, January). *High-leverage practices in special education*. Arlington, VA: Council for Exceptional Children & CEEDAR Center.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Sample Needs Assessment Survey

Sample Survey

Instructional Needs		
I need assistance with	planning.	Yes or No
	ideas for engaging students.	Yes or No
	identifying strategies that are appropriate for my students.	Yes or No
	figuring out effective practices for teaching the content.	Yes or No
	finding instructional materials appropriate for individual students.	Yes or No
	organizing instructional activities and materials.	Yes or No
Assessment Needs		
I need assistance with	finding appropriate assessments for my students.	Yes or No
	organizing data collection.	Yes or No
	interpreting data for parents.	Yes or No
	using data to develop IEP or lesson goals.	Yes or No
	involving students in goal setting.	Yes or No
Collaboration Needs		
I need assistance with	planning with my general education colleagues.	Yes or No
	negotiating accommodations for my students in the general education classroom.	Yes or No
	communicating with parents.	Yes or No
	supervising my paraprofessional.	Yes or No
	working with my building principal.	Yes or No
Paperwork Needs		
I need assistance with	developing IEPs.	Yes or No
	completing special education paperwork.	Yes or No
	using the data management system.	Yes or No
	managing the time I spend on paperwork.	Yes or No

Source: Kamman, M., Zimmerman, K., Israel, M., Billingsley, B., McCray, E., Brownell, M., Park, Y. (2012). Mentor handbook: Supporting beginning special educators (NCIPP Document No. IT-1). Retrieved from University of Florida, National Center to Inform Policy and Practice in Special Education Professional Development website: <http://ncipp.education.ufl.edu/reports.php>, p. 43.

Appendix B: Mentor Goals Form

School Year: _____

Mentor:	Mentee:
School:	Date:

District Goals:

School Goals:

**Mentee's Needs: What needs did the needs assessment survey reveal?
What other needs have you identified?**

Which mentor model will you be using?

- ☐ Full-time mentoring ☐ Part-time mentoring ☐ Group mentoring
☐ E-mentoring ☐ Multi-layered support

Which type(s) of support are you responsible for providing?

- ☐ Instruction/Content/Procedure Support
☐ Emotional Support & School Culture Support

What are your mentor goals?

Action Steps to Progress Towards Goal Attainment

Goal 1:			Goal Met Date:
Action Step:	How often?	By when?	Status?
1.			
2.			
3.			
Goal 2:			Goal Met Date:
Action Step:	How often?	By when?	Status?
1.			
2.			
3.			
Goal 3:			Goal Met Date:
Action Step:	How often?	By when?	Status?
1.			
2.			
3.			

High-Leverage Practices Self-Assessment Tool

Purpose: This resource is designed to help preservice and in-service teachers reflect on and assess how well they are implementing high-leverage practices (HLPs) for students with disabilities. In the tool, teachers and teacher candidates can self-assess on all 22 HLPs or target only specific HLPs. The content for this self-assessment is based on the [HLP resources](#) developed in the last several years (e.g., [HLP videos](#), [HLP Leadership Guides](#), [Practice-based Opportunities to Learn](#)).

The goals of this tool are as follows:

- To provide a resource that teacher candidates and inservice teachers can use to self-assess and reflect on their use of HLPs.
- To provide teacher candidates, faculty, inservice teachers, and administrators data on HLP implementation that can be used to guide professional learning and supports.
- To provide a broad measure on the teacher candidates and inservice teachers' ability to implement the HLPs that can serve as a basis of discussion with faculty and administrators.

Audience: This assessment tool is designed for general and special education teacher candidates and inservice teachers, faculty, and district administrators.

How to Use This Tool: This tool is divided across the four areas of practice: (1) Collaboration; (2) Assessment; (3) Social/Emotional/Behavioral and (4) Instructional. Teachers respond to the probes across the HLPs to indicate their understanding and use of the HLPs in their classrooms using the following scale:

5 = Mastered. I already apply this skill to my work and have noted improvements in student learning.

4 = I can apply this skill to my work with some confidence.

3 = Making progress. I am just beginning to understand how to apply this skill to my work.

2 = I believe this concept and/or skill is important but do not yet understand how to apply it in my classroom.

1 = I am unfamiliar with this principle or element.

N/A = Not applicable

Note: It is **not** expected that the entire self-assessment is given at one time. You can select which HLP(s) self-assessment subtests you would like to complete. Not sure which one(s) you want to focus on? Try taking the short screener first.

For more information on the HLPs, refer to <https://highleveragepractices.org/>.

Name: _____								Date: _____							
<p>Instructions: Rate the extent to which you feel successful in understanding and using the key skills from the HLPs in each domain.</p> <p>5 = Mastered. I already apply this skill to my work and have noted improvements in student learning.</p> <p>4 = I can apply this skill to my work with some confidence.</p> <p>3 = Making progress. I am just beginning to understand how to apply this skill to my work.</p> <p>2 = I believe this concept and/or skill is important but do not yet understand how to apply it in my classroom.</p> <p>1 = I am unfamiliar with this principle or element.</p> <p>N/A = Not applicable</p>															
Collaboration Domain															
HLP 1: Collaborate With Professionals to Increase Student Success															
		Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.				N/A	1	2	3	4	5				
1	I use verbal active listening skills, such as paraphrasing and asking clarification questions.														
2	I use nonverbal active listening skills, such as smiling and making eye contact, when I am talking with my colleagues.														
3	I ask open-ended questions to encourage active participation and sharing of information from others.														
4	I make statements that are accurate and descriptive rather than vague and evaluative.														
5	I share resources with colleagues that provide guidance on strategies to support students with disabilities.														
6	I problem-solve with colleagues using data to make decisions about services and instructional approaches designed to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities.														
7	My colleagues and I have shared responsibility and accountability for the success of students with disabilities.														
Comments:															
HLP 2: Lead Effective Meetings With Professionals and Families															
		Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.				N/A	1	2	3	4	5				
1	I set and articulate clear goals and expectations to ensure that meetings are informative and productive.														
2	I schedule meeting times to ensure members' participation and share the date, time, location, projected length, and														

	agenda for the meeting ahead of time, including any preparation expectations.						
3	I establish a welcoming and positive tone when greeting team members and ensure that all meeting members are introduced.						
4	During the meeting, I encourage each team member to contribute to and have an equal voice in discussions.						
5	I encourage and reinforce parent input during the meeting by asking guiding questions and including time on the agenda to garner parental input.						
6	I provide an explanation of student data, including progress monitoring data, in a way that all team members can use the data to make informed decisions.						
7	I summarize meeting accomplishments and establish next steps before the meeting ends.						
	Comments:						
HLP 3: Collaborate With Families to Support Student Learning and Secure Needed Services							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I communicate regularly with families openly and honestly, sharing student's successes, educational progress, and challenges.						
2	I communicate with families using multiple modes (e.g., email, telephone, in-person, learning management systems, blog, class webpage).						
3	I demonstrate a high level of knowledge in evidence-based strategies that support students with disabilities.						
4	I communicate high expectations for my students and their families.						
5	I treat families with dignity and respect.						
6	I take time to learn about and honor my students and their families' cultural diversity. I apply this knowledge to my practice.						
7	I make sure to clearly share ideas and actions that families can use to support a student's individualized education program goals and objectives.						
8	I communicate with parents using a language and method that would make the information most accessible. If I do not speak the language used by the family, I take necessary steps to ensure that they get the information in a way that they can understand it (e.g., use a translator).						
	Comments:						

	Assessment Domain						
	HLP 4: Use Multiple Sources of Information to Develop a Comprehensive Understanding of a Student's Strengths and Needs						
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I use formal assessments (unit tests, reading inventory) to gather information about my students' academic strengths and areas of growth.						
2	I use informal assessments (observations, checklists) to gather information about my students' academic strengths and areas of growth						
3	I ask my students about their preferences, strengths, needs, and long-term goals.						
4	I ask my students' family members about student interests, motivations, health, language, and cultural experiences in school and at home to inform instruction.						
5	I use information from various sources (school-based assessments, student input, and family input) to develop a comprehensive learner profile that will inform decisions related to individualized education programs. A comprehensive learner profile includes academic, social, functional, cultural, and motivational information to inform how the student learns best.						
	Comments:						
	HLP 5: Interpret and Communicate Assessment Information With Stakeholders to Collaboratively Design and Implement Educational Programs						
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I gather, organize, and share student assessment data with families and relevant educators while providing sufficient time for review before the individualized education program (IEP) meeting.						
2	I identify and summarize key findings from multiple data sources as they relate to student strengths and needs.						
3	I use students' culture and language to inform how I interpret their assessment results.						
4	I compare each student's assessment results to their same-age peers to identify areas of need.						
5	I use students' assessment data to determine needed accommodations and modifications.						

6	I present student data in an understandable format so that families and educators can use the data to guide programmatic decisions.						
7	I encourage discussion and problem-solving among families and team members to ensure that a student's IEP is high quality.						
8	I collaborate with team members to monitor student progress and make IEP adjustments accordingly.						
Comments:							
HLP 6: Use Student Assessment Data, Analyze Instructional Practices, and Make Necessary Adjustments That Improve Student Outcomes.							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I use a variety of assessment results to establish students' present level of performance.						
2	I set ambitious, realistically attainable, long-term goals (e.g., specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-based goals) for my students' achievement.						
3	I create goals for my students that are that are observable, measurable, positively stated, understandable, and always applicable.						
4	I can choose appropriate interventions to meet my students' long-term goals.						
5	I consistently implement high-quality, evidence-based instruction to meet my students' goals.						
6	I consistently monitor my students' progress toward their long-term goals to determine effectiveness of instruction.						
7	I use progress monitoring data to determine if changes in instructional practices, interventions, and/or services are needed.						
8	I use graphs or data tables so that the level of student progress can be clearly communicated to key stakeholders and team members.						
9	I am patient, systematic, and persistent in looking for what will work for my students.						
Comments:							

Social/Emotional/Behavioral Domain							
HLP 7: Establish a Consistent, Organized, and Respectful Learning Environment							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I discuss and provide the rationale for classroom expectations, rules, and procedures with students using terms that are observable, measurable, positively stated, understandable, and always applicable.						
2	I make sure that classroom expectations, rules, and procedures reflect the cultures, values, and beliefs of students and families from various ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds represented in the school.						
3	I explicitly teach, reteach, and model three to five positively stated expectations (e.g., be respectful, be responsible, and be safe).						
4	I incorporate student input in class expectations.						
5	I understand that behavior is a form of communication, and I take this under consideration when I interpret and respond to a student's behavior in the classroom.						
6	I limit the amount of unstructured time.						
7	I post expectations, rules, and procedures in highly visible areas of the classroom.						
8	I lay out the classroom and other high-traffic areas in a way that will meet the needs of the students.						
Comments:							
HLP 8: Provide Positive and Constructive Feedback to Guide Students' Behavior							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I provide positive and specific feedback on student behavior.						
2	When I give feedback, I focus on the process rather than making it about the person (e.g., Say "You worked really hard on that assignment" instead of "You are so smart!").						
3	I provide instructive feedback in which I emphasize the social or behavioral skill I want my students to learn.						
4	I provide corrective feedback when addressing my students' social/behavioral errors instead of reprimanding them (e.g., say "Remember, we are reading quietly to ourselves" instead of "Stop talking!").						
5	I provide timely feedback close to when the behavior occurs.						

6	I am sincere when I provide feedback to students and avoid using sarcasm and joking.						
7	I consider how students' age, learning history, cultural background, and preferences, as well as classroom dynamics, could influence their response to feedback.						
8	I adjust the type and frequency of feedback based on students' learning progress.						
	Comments:						
HLP 9: Teach Social Behaviors							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I systematically identify students with social skills deficits through a variety of data sources (e.g., disciplinary referrals, classroom data, family input).						
2	I proactively identify students with social skills deficits through a variety of data sources (e.g., disciplinary referrals, classroom data, family input).						
3	I provide targeted instruction in social skills for students.						
4	I consider the setting and circumstances of when a specific social skill is needed and develop examples, nonexamples, and role-playing scenarios to support students in generalizing the skill.						
5	I take into consideration students' culture, age, and natural environment when instructing and developing social skills.						
6	I organize and sequence examples by prioritizing instruction around the context where the social skill deficit would most likely lead to negative outcomes.						
7	I develop engaging and well-paced lessons in social skill instruction that mirror the core components of academic lesson plans (e.g., teach, model, practice).						
8	I encourage student mastery of social skills by providing immediate, consistent, specific, positive, and corrective feedback.						
9	I scaffold supports that are gradually faded to increase students' independent use of social skills.						
10	I encourage generalization of social skills by providing students with the opportunity to practice the skills in a variety of settings.						
	Comments:						

HLP 10: Conduct Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBA) to Develop Individual Student Behavior Support Plans							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I consider how social attention and communication may have contributed to the student engaging in a behavior.						
2	I consider how student behavior may be caused by trying to avoid, delay, or reduce the amount of time students need to do an undesired activity.						
3	I consider how a student's wish to avoid another student may influence student behavior.						
4	I make sure that the FBA has a clear description of the target behavior.						
5	I identify the events, times, and situations that predict the behavior in the FBA.						
6	I identify the consequences that maintain the target behavior in the FBA.						
7	Using data, I develop a hypothesis regarding the events that prompt and support the target behavior in the FBA.						
8	I apply the antecedent-behavior-consequence (A-B-C) model when developing the FBA hypothesis statement. For example, when someone coughs (A), a student might pinch them (B), leading them to get attention (C).						
9	I analyze data collected through the FBA to select an appropriate replacement behavior based on the function of the target behavior.						
10	I use the data to develop a behavior support plan.						
11	I explicitly teach and reinforce the selected replacement behavior to the student.						
12	I modify the environment with a student's behavior support plan to avoid problem behavior reoccurrence.						
13	I collect data and monitor student progress and adjust the behavior intervention accordingly.						
	Comments:						

Instruction Domain							
HLP 11: Identify and Prioritize Long- and Short-Term Goals							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I connect students' learning goals to the essential knowledge and skills depicted within standards and curricula.						
2	I use student data to identify students' strengths and needs that guide long- and short-term goal development.						
3	I use formative assessments (e.g., classroom assessments, opportunities to respond) to guide instruction and determine student progress toward individualized education programs goals and objectives.						
4	I use summative assessments (e.g., unit tests) to obtain data on students' progress.						
5	I develop ambitious, attainable, and socially significant goals to ensure that students can access and be successful in an inclusive setting.						
6	I collaborate with families to learn about their instructional priorities for the students and use this information to guide goal development.						
7	I recognize the big ideas that students need to learn from the standards and make sure to teach these ideas first.						
8	I am familiar with the grade-level standards I teach and can determine what students need to know and do to meet the standards.						
9	I can identify what prerequisite skills the student must have to successfully meet a standard.						
Comments:							
HLP 12: Systematically Design Instruction Toward Learning Goals							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I can translate students' long- and short-term goals into individual learning activities.						
2	I create lessons where student outcomes are clear, measurable, ambitious, attainable, and actionable.						
3	I am clear about where and how targeted skills and knowledge will be measured within a given lesson or setting.						
4	I develop goals that clearly define what students will do to demonstrate their learning.						

5	I have clear criteria to determine the extent to which students are achieving the goal.						
6	The goals and objectives I create for students are observable.						
7	The goals and objectives I develop are clear and measurable.						
8	I state students' goals and objectives in a positive manner.						
9	The goals I set for students are linked as much as possible to the general education curriculum.						
10	I ensure that there is a clear need of the goals and objectives set for each student.						
11	I ensure that the goals and objectives set are ambitious but mediated by students' individual needs.						
	Comments:						
HLP 13: Make Adaptations to Tasks and Materials							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I intentionally plan for differentiation in my instruction to meet individual student needs.						
2	I examine the directions of a task or activity to identify advanced vocabulary, sentence complexity, and/or length and simplify these directions as needed.						
3	I use visual aids to illustrate each step of the directions for a task or activity.						
4	I use technology to facilitate students' understanding of tasks and concepts.						
5	I use multiple adaptations (e.g., breaking down an activity or routine into smaller steps) to increase the likelihood of student success.						
6	I adapt materials by reducing the amount of content presented or required for completing a task.						
7	I differentiate my students' tasks and materials by starting with easier content and building toward more challenging content.						
8	I highlight important information from texts, notes, and/or worksheets to make important ideas more visible for my students.						
9	I support student learning by using guided notes to help with retention and improve student note-taking skills.						
10	I create and/or use graphic organizers to help students understand relationships and organize concepts.						

11	I provide and explicitly teach students to use mnemonic strategies to remember important aspects of lessons and content.						
12	I use physical objects (e.g., manipulatives) to support students in doing an activity or task.						
	Comments:						
HLP 14: Use Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategies							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I provide cognitive strategy instruction to reinforce student independence and self-direction. This includes activating background knowledge; discussing, modeling, memorizing, and supporting the strategy; and allowing for independent performance (i.e., self-regulated strategy development model).						
2	I examine sources of evidence-based practices to determine whether they will meet my students' needs.						
3	I use task analysis to determine the steps that students will need to take to accomplish goal.						
4	I clearly model and facilitate student practice to show students how to use self-regulation procedures (e.g., goal setting, self-monitoring) when participating in tasks and activities.						
5	I explicitly teach and use strategic instruction models (e.g., self-regulated strategy development) to enhance student memory and information recall.						
6	I break down, model, and provide step-by-step instruction to facilitate student strategy use.						
7	I provide frequent opportunities for students to practice strategy use across various settings and time.						
8	I monitor student strategy use and ensure that any modification a student makes does not impact the strategy's usefulness.						
9	I provide feedback and positive reinforcement to my students as they use the targeted strategy.						
	Comments:						

HLP 15: Provide Scaffolded Supports							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I create tasks with a focus on essential knowledge and skills.						
2	I provide scaffolded supports (e.g., graphic organizers, sentence stems) across a wide range of areas (e.g., academics, behavior, social skills).						
3	I use assessments to gauge student thinking, language, writing, or performance to determine the type and level of supports needed.						
4	I use my knowledge of standards/benchmarks, curriculum, and prerequisites to structure tasks from easiest to most difficult.						
5	I adjust student support to learn a strategy as needed.						
6	I make sure to provide only the amount of scaffolded support the student needs to perform a skill or task independently.						
7	I fade supports gradually to encourage student independence with concepts and tasks.						
8	I use a variety of supports (e.g., technology, checklists, graphic organizers) and adjust what is used based on students' support needs.						
Comments:							
HLP 16: Use Explicit Instruction							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I design carefully sequenced and organized lessons that focus on the most important content.						
2	I start lessons with a clear statement of the lesson goals and student expectations.						
3	I review prerequisite skills and knowledge before providing instruction on new content.						
4	I break down complex skills and strategies into smaller instructional pieces.						
5	I provide clear and concise step-by-step demonstrations of how to do a skill or explain a concept.						
6	When applicable, I incorporate a variety of examples and nonexamples into my lessons.						
7	I provide guided practice with scaffolded supports.						

8	I provide my students with frequent opportunities to respond to questions.						
9	I provide immediate affirmative and corrective feedback based on student performance.						
	Comments:						
HLP 17: Use Flexible Grouping							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I vary group size (e.g., whole or small group) based on students' instructional needs and learning objectives.						
2	I vary the type of group (e.g., same ability or mixed ability) based on students' instructional needs and learning objectives.						
3	I use same-ability groups when providing intensive instruction for students who have similar strengths, needs, and/or interests to meet short-term goals and objectives.						
4	I use mixed-ability groups to increase engagement in academic discussions.						
5	I use mixed-ability groups to improve interpersonal relationships between students with and without disabilities across racial/ethnic backgrounds.						
6	I use cooperative learning structures (e.g., jigsaw) to meet academic, behavioral, and/or interpersonal instructional objectives.						
7	I monitor the interactions between group members and their learning during group work time.						
8	I hold students accountable for what they do during group work to promote positive interdependence.						
	Comments:						
HLP 18: Use Strategies to Promote Active Student Engagement							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I build and maintain positive relationships with my students.						
2	I individualize engagement tools using technology, visuals, or other structured supports for students.						

3	I use a wide range of research-supported active student response practices (e.g., peer tutoring, digital tools, collaborative learning strategies).						
4	I provide students with opportunities to respond (e.g., asking questions) throughout my lessons.						
5	I encourage students to participate in group activities by including games and contingencies.						
6	I give detailed academic- and behavior-specific feedback with explanation of how students are meeting expectations.						
Comments:							
HLP 19: Use Assistive and Instructional Technologies							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I consider my students' assistive technology needs related to their goals, access to the general education curriculum, and extracurricular activities.						
2	I make assistive technology decisions based on students' strengths and needs.						
3	I make assistive technology decisions based on the environment in which my students learn and socialize.						
4	I consider the supports available in the environments where my students learn and socialize.						
5	I consider the tasks that students are expected to do when making assistive technology decisions.						
6	I directly integrate assistive technology into my students' individualized education programs goals, as applicable.						
7	I collect and analyze data about students' use of assistive technology across instructional settings.						
8	I determine if changes to assistive technology devices or services are needed based on student data.						
Comments:							
HLP 20: Provide Intensive Instruction							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I use progress monitoring to track student improvements.						
2	I create student-specific intensive intervention plans based on an examination of diagnostic assessment data.						

3	I can implement intervention plans, track student responses, and reexamine data as needed.						
4	I establish my students' present level of academic performance.						
5	I set ambitious long-term goals using established norms.						
6	I implement high-quality instruction or intervention with fidelity.						
7	I monitor student progress toward the goal.						
8	I use decision rules to evaluate instructional effectiveness and student progress.						
9	I generate a hypothesis about student progress to individualize instruction.						
10	I make instructional changes based on my chosen hypothesis.						
	Comments:						
HLP 21: Teach Students to Maintain and Generalize New Learning Across Time and Settings							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I apply the same techniques that changed a behavior in one setting to all settings where the target behavior is desirable.						
2	I help students recognize reinforcement options in the natural environment (e.g., a preferred snack).						
3	I use examples from a variety of settings and contexts to demonstrate a behavior or skill.						
4	I use reinforcement contingencies where students do not know when the reinforcement will happen (i.e., unpredictable).						
5	I use similar stimuli in the training setting and the setting where generalization is desired.						
6	I provide students training in self-management, in which they monitor and report on their own generalization of behavior.						
7	I use verbal instructions to promote generalization.						
8	I use reinforcement schedules to ensure that desirable behaviors persist across settings.						
9	I reduce the frequency of reinforcement as students demonstrate increased success with a behavior/skill.						
10	I build in opportunities for overlearning trials (i.e., extra instruction to reinforce learning).						

11	I build in opportunities for distributed practice (i.e., breaking up practice into several short sessions during a longer period of time).						
12	I review methods to increase generalization (i.e., use in multiple settings or activities) of the skill or behavior as needed.						
13	I review methods to increase and maintenance (i.e., continue to be able to perform across time) of the skill or behavior as needed.						
Comments:							
HLP 22: Provide Positive and Constructive Feedback to Guide Students' Learning							
	Rate the extent to which you incorporate this HLP.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1	I provide positive and specific feedback on student learning.						
2	When I give feedback, I focus on the process rather than making it about the person (e.g., Say "You worked really hard on that assignment" instead of "You are so smart!").						
3	I provide instructive feedback in which I emphasize the academic skill I want my students to learn.						
4	I provide corrective feedback when addressing my students' academic errors instead of reprimanding them (e.g., say "Remember, read the directions carefully" instead of "Pay attention!").						
5	I provide timely feedback close to when the behavior occurs.						
6	I am sincere when I provide feedback to students and avoid using sarcasm and joking.						
7	I consider how students' age, learning history, cultural background, and preferences, as well as classroom dynamics, could influence their response to feedback.						
8	I adjust the type and frequency of feedback based on students' learning progress.						
Comments:							

Appendix D: Sample Observation Schedule*

Month	PD Topic	HLP	Who is observing?	Who is being observed?
August	Classroom setup	#7: Establish a consistent, organized, and respectful learning environment	New SpEd Teacher	A fellow teacher who has mastered HLP #7
			Mentor	New SpEd Teacher (mentee)
September	Planning for maximum impact	#18: Use strategies to promote active student engagement	New SpEd Teacher	A fellow teacher who has mastered HLP #18
			Mentor	New SpEd Teacher (mentee)
October	Providing feedback	#8 & #22: Provide positive and constructive feedback to guide students' learning and behavior	New SpEd Teacher	A fellow teacher who has mastered HLP #8 & #22
			Mentor	New SpEd Teacher (mentee)
November	Ongoing data collection	#4: Use multiple sources of information to develop a comprehensive understanding of a student's strengths and needs	New SpEd Teacher	A fellow teacher who has mastered HLP #4
			Mentor	New SpEd Teacher (mentee)
January	Explicit Instruction	#16: Use explicit instruction	New SpEd Teacher	A fellow teacher who has mastered HLP #16
			Mentor	New SpEd Teacher (mentee)
February	Accommodations and modifications	#13: Adapt curriculum materials and tasks	New SpEd Teacher	A fellow teacher who has mastered HLP #13
			Mentor	New SpEd Teacher (mentee)
March	IEP development; collaboration with families	#2: Organize and facilitate effective meetings with professionals and families & #11: Identify and prioritize long- and short-term learning goals	New SpEd Teacher	A fellow teacher who has mastered HLP #2 & #11
			Mentor	New SpEd Teacher (mentee)
April	Supporting student learning	#15: Provide scaffolded supports	New SpEd Teacher	A fellow teacher who has mastered HLP #15
			Mentor	New SpEd Teacher (mentee)

*This schedule represents the minimum expected observations.

Appendix E: Collaborative Assessment Log

Teacher:	Grade/Subject:	# of Students:
Mentor:	Date:	
<p>Did all students meet the learning objective(s)? Explain the evidence for your response. How do you know?</p> <p>Which students met the learning objective(s)?</p> <p>Which students did not meet the learning objectives?</p>		
<p>What part of the learning experience was problematic or challenging?</p> <p>Did students share misconceptions or gaps in their prior knowledge that caused problems?</p> <p>What practical experiences will help these students meet the learning objectives?</p>	<p>What did you learn about the students?</p> <p>How will you use this new knowledge about your students to plan future lessons/learning segments?</p>	<p>Reflecting on the effectiveness of your lesson, what can you celebrate?</p> <p>In what areas could you improve the lesson?</p>
Teacher's Next Steps:	Mentor's Next Steps:	

Appendix F: Professional Growth System Special Education Teacher Observation Rubric



MISSISSIPPI EDUCATOR & ADMINISTRATOR
DRAFT OBSERVATION FORM
 SPECIAL EDUCATION GROWTH RUBRIC

Teacher Name			Grade Levels			Time of Day		
Date of Pre-Observation Meeting			Date of Observation			Date of Post-Observation Meeting		
District & School					Observer Name or Signature			
Informal Observation			Formal Observation			Setting		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Inclusive	Resource	Self-Contained

DOMAIN I: LESSON DESIGN

Standard 1: Lessons are aligned to the Mississippi College, Career Ready Standards, and/or the Mississippi Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (as appropriate) and represent a coherent sequence of learning.

Indicators

- Lessons include student learning outcomes and instructional activities that:
- 4 are fully aligned to the Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards and the Mississippi Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (as appropriate) and students' long-/short-term learning goals
 - are part of a coherent sequence of learning with ample evidence of identifying prerequisites, adapting curriculum based on student needs, and making connections explicit
 - reflect collaboration with general education teachers, support staff, **and families**
- Lessons include student learning outcomes and instructional activities that:
- 3 are **fully aligned** to the Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards and the Mississippi Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (as appropriate) **and** students' long-/short-term learning goals
 - are part of a **coherent sequence** of learning **with ample evidence of** identifying prerequisites, adapting curriculum based on student needs, and making connections explicit
 - reflect collaboration with general education teachers and support staff**
- Lessons include student learning outcomes and instructional activities that:
- 2 are **partially aligned** to the Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards and the Mississippi Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (as appropriate) **or** students' long-/short-term learning goals
 - are part of an **ineffective sequence** of learning **with limited evidence of** identifying prerequisites, adapting curriculum based on student needs, and making connections explicit
- Lessons include student learning outcomes and instructional activities that:
- 1 are **not aligned** to the Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards and the Mississippi Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (as appropriate) **or** students' long-/short-term learning goals
 - are **not part of a coherent sequence** of learning **with limited or no evidence of** identifying prerequisites, adapting curriculum based on student needs, and making connections explicit

Evidence Collected

Notes

- o Lesson Plans
- o IEPs
- o PLC Agendas
- o Progress Monitoring
- o Results of Formative and Summative Assessments
- o Content Enhancements

Performance Level

- ☐ Level 4
- ☐ Level 3
- ☐ Level 2
- ☐ Level 1

DOMAIN I: LESSON DESIGN

Standard 2: Lessons have high levels of learning for all students as indicated through general and specialized curriculum to inform instructional decisions for students with disabilities

Indicators

Lessons provide assignments and activities that contain the following components:

- 4**
 - appropriate scaffolding, coaching, and modeling through visual, verbal, and written supports **that are gradually removed when no longer needed**
 - use of multiple data sources to diagnose student strengths and needs in collaboration with general and special education colleagues
 - clear targeted goals for students in lessons/instruction/services and practice opportunities that align with individual student strengths and needs
 - differentiation that **empowers students to make decisions** based on IEP goals
 - relevant connections to students' prior knowledge
 - **opportunities for students to choose challenging tasks and instructional materials**
- 3**
 - appropriate scaffolding, coaching, and modeling through visual, verbal, and written supports as students learn skills or concepts
 - use of **multiple** data sources to diagnose student strengths and needs in collaboration with general **and** special education colleagues
 - **clear targeted** goals for students in lessons/instruction/services and practice opportunities that align with individual student strengths and needs
 - differentiation based on students' IEP goals and benchmarks
 - **relevant** connections to students' prior knowledge
- 2**
 - **appropriate** scaffolding, coaching, and modeling through visual, verbal, and written supports as students learn skills or concepts
 - use of data to diagnose student strengths and needs in collaboration with general or special education colleagues
 - **unclear connections** to targeted goals for students in lessons/instruction/services and/or practice opportunities that **misalign** with individual student strengths and needs
 - **some** differentiation based on students' IEP goals and benchmarks
 - **adequate** connections to students' prior knowledge
- 1**
 - **inadequate** scaffolding, coaching, and modeling through visual, verbal, and written supports as students learn skills or concepts
 - **little or no** use of data to diagnose student strengths and needs in collaboration with general **or** special education colleagues
 - **unclear connections** to targeted goals for students in lessons/instruction/services and practice opportunities that align with individual student strengths and needs
 - **rare connections** to targeted goals for students in lessons/instruction/services and/or **limited** practice opportunities
 - **little or no** differentiation based on students' IEP goals and benchmarks
 - **limited** connections to students' prior knowledge

Evidence Collected

Examples of Evidence

Notes

- Lesson Plans
- IEPs
- PLC Agendas
- Assessments
- Content Enhancements

Performance Level

- ☐ Level 4
- ☐ Level 3
- ☐ Level 2
- ☐ Level 1

DOMAIN II: STUDENT UNDERSTANDING

Standard 3: Assists students in self-regulation and monitors generalization of learning

Indicators

- | | |
|---|--|
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly opens the lesson with a clear introduction and review, model of skills and cognitive strategies, and/or provides clear explanation of concepts, depending on where the teacher is in a learning progression • Uses a variety of assessments to effectively monitor student learning and progress • Provides ample and effective opportunities for students to monitor their own learning through explicit modeling of strategies to solve problems, regulate attention, organize materials, and/or regulate thoughts • Provides students with timely, positive, and goal-directed feedback in the student's mode of communication (verbal, nonverbal, or written) • Creates opportunities for students to apply teacher and peer feedback to improve performance, enhance learning, and/or reach behavior goals • Collaborates with others so that students use learned skills in situations other than the original learning environment and in the absence of ongoing instruction |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opens the lesson with a clear introduction and review, model of skills and cognitive strategies, and/or provides clear explanation of concepts, depending on where the teacher is in a learning progression • Uses formative assessments to effectively monitor student learning and progress • Provides effective opportunities for students to monitor their own learning through explicit modeling of strategies to solve problems, regulate attention, organize materials, and/or regulate thoughts • Provides students with timely, positive, and goal-directed feedback in the student's mode of communication (verbal, nonverbal, or written) • Creates opportunities for students to apply teacher and peer feedback to improve performance, enhance learning, and/or reach behavior goals |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistently opens the lesson with an introduction and review, model of skills and cognitive strategies, and/or provides explanation of concepts that is sometimes unclear, depending upon where the teacher is in a learning progression • Uses formative assessments to adequately monitor student learning and progress • Provides adequate opportunities for students to monitor their own learning through explicit modeling of strategies to solve problems, regulate attention, organize materials, and/or regulate thoughts <p>Provides students with limited or non-specific feedback in the student's mode of communication (verbal, nonverbal, or written)</p> |
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often does not deliver lessons that are coherent, containing a clear opening, review, model, and sufficient practice opportunity • Inadequately monitors student learning and progress • Provides inadequate opportunities for students to monitor their own learning through explicit modeling of strategies to solve problems, regulate attention, organize materials, and/or regulate thoughts • Provides students with little feedback or it is not in the student's mode of communication (verbal, nonverbal, or written) |

Evidence Collected

Notes

Examples of Evidence

- Lesson Plans
- IEPs
- PLC Agendas
- Assessments
- Content Enhancements
- Samples of feedback

Performance Level

- ☐ Level 4
- ☐ Level 3
- ☐ Level 2
- ☐ Level 1

DOMAIN II: STUDENT UNDERSTANDING

Standard 4: Provides multiple ways for students to make meaning of content by using explicit instructional strategies

Indicators

- 4** The teacher moves **all** students to a deeper understanding of content through:
- a variety of teacher-led, peer-assisted, self-regulated, and/or technology-supported strategies
 - flexible grouping to promote extended academic interactions and collaborative work
 - prompts, partial clues, reminders of the strategy or rule, and/or examples of the concept as needed to support students' attainment of the learning goal
 - multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement using principles of Universal Design for Learning
 - providing opportunities for students to demonstrate connections between what they are learning and how it connects to their personal and professional goals/interests
- 3** The teacher moves **almost all** students to a deeper understanding of content through:
- a variety of teacher-led, peer-assisted, self-regulated, and/or technology-supported strategies
 - flexible grouping to promote extended academic interactions and collaborative work
 - prompts, partial clues, reminders of the strategy or rule, and/or examples of the concept as needed to support students' attainment of the learning goal
 - multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement using principles of Universal Design for Learning
 - providing opportunities for students to demonstrate connections between what they are learning and how it connects to their personal and professional goals/interests
- 2** The teacher moves **most** students to a deeper understanding of content through:
- a variety of teacher-led, peer-assisted, self-regulated, and/or technology-supported strategies
 - flexible grouping to promote extended academic interactions and collaborative work
 - prompts, partial clues, reminders of the strategy or rule, and/or examples of the concept as needed to support students' attainment of the learning goal
 - multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement using principles of Universal Design for Learning
 - providing opportunities for students to demonstrate connections between what they are learning and how it connects to their personal and professional goals/interests
- 1** The teacher **moves few or does not move** students to a deeper understanding of content through:
- a variety of teacher-led, peer-assisted, self-regulated, and/or technology-supported strategies
 - flexible grouping to promote extended academic interactions and collaborative work
 - prompts, partial clues, reminders of the strategy or rule, and/or examples of the concept as needed to support students' attainment of the learning goal
 - multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement using principles of Universal Design for Learning
 - providing opportunities for students to demonstrate connections between what they are learning and how it connects to their personal and professional goals/interests

Evidence Collected

Examples of Evidence

Notes

- Assessment Data
- Student Work Samples
- Teacher Modeling
- Fading Scaffolds
- Variation in Resources
- Assistive Technology
- Small Group Instruction
- Individual Instruction

Performance Level

- ☐ Level 4
- ☐ Level 3
- ☐ Level 2
- ☐ Level 1

DOMAIN III: CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Standard 5: Manages a learning-focused classroom community and productive learning environments for students with disabilities

Indicators

- | | |
|---|--|
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates effective routines in the learning environment specific to the nature of the specialized classroom, individual need, and support services with specific expectations and opportunities for students to practice Consistently and intentionally plans to prevent misbehavior through positive behavioral interventions and supports Defines methods for ensuring individual behavioral and academic success in one-to-one, small-group, and large-group settings Designs learning environments (e.g., physical, climate, time allowance) that result in student ownership of individual and group activities Teaches social skills intentionally, including using explicit instruction strategies and specific replacement behaviors, to support student learning of skills required for students to work with others in the classroom while working toward student independence |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates effective routines in the learning environment specific to the nature of the specialized classroom, individual need, and support services with specific expectations and opportunities for students to practice Consistently and intentionally plans to prevent misbehavior through positive behavioral interventions and supports Defines methods for ensuring individual behavioral and academic success in one-to-one, small-group, and large-group settings Designs learning environments (e.g., physical, climate, time allowance) that result in all students' engagement in individual and group activities Teaches social skills intentionally, including using explicit instruction strategies, to support student learning of skills required for students to work with others in the classroom while working toward student independence Has developed some classroom routines, but routine procedures are not smoothly executed and do not appear to be developed based upon students' needs |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistently plans to prevent misbehavior through positive behavioral interventions and supports Is unable to clearly communicate intention and purpose for some rules, routines, procedures, or grouping schemes Designs learning environments (e.g., physical, climate, time allowance) that result in most students' engagement Rarely plans for and teaches social skills explicitly but sometimes attempts to teach social skills relevant to a particular situation or "teachable moment" |
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not effectively utilize classroom routines and procedures Rarely or does not plan to prevent misbehavior through positive behavioral interventions and supports Is unable to clearly communicate intention and purpose for most rules, routines, procedures, or grouping schemes Learning environments (e.g., physical, climate, time allowance) are not intentionally planned and result in some or few students' engagement Does not plan for and teach social skills explicitly or punishes misbehavior but does not teach appropriate behavior/skills to replace misbehavior |

Evidence Collected	Examples of Evidence
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Examples of Evidence

- Time on Task Counts
- Visible Rules and Routines
- Quotes Explaining Expectations
- Pictures of Learning Center/ Management System
- Assistive Technology
- Behavior Modification Charts
- Adaptations of Environment

Performance Level

- ☐ Level 4
- ☐ Level 3
- ☐ Level 2
- ☐ Level 1

DOMAIN III: CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Standard 6: The teacher manages classroom space, time, and resources (including technology, when appropriate) effectively for student learning

Indicators

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively adapts the physical environment and maximizes resources (including assistive technology and visual content displays as appropriate) to support student learning Maximizes time such students always have something meaningful to do Creates an environment where students consistently execute transitions, routines, and procedures in an orderly and efficient manner with minimal to no direction or narration from the teacher Engages students in setting classroom routines and procedures |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively adapts the physical environment and maximizes resources (including assistive technology and visual content displays as appropriate) to support student learning Maximizes time such students always have something meaningful to do Creates an environment where students consistently execute transitions, routines, and procedures in an orderly and efficient manner with direction and narration from the teacher |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequately adapts the physical environment and maximizes resources (including assistive technology and visual content displays as appropriate) to support student learning Allows brief periods of time when students do not have something meaningful to do Creates an environment where students execute transitions, routines, and procedures in an orderly and efficient manner only some of the time with direction and narration from the teacher |
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequately adapts the physical environment and maximizes resources (including assistive technology and visual content displays as appropriate) to support student learning Allows significant periods of time when students do not have something meaningful to do Creates an environment where students do not execute transitions, routines, and procedures in an orderly and efficient manner |

Evidence Collected

Examples of Evidence

- Adaptations to environment
- Visual Content Displayed
- Assistive Technology
- Learning Center/Learning Management System Organization
- Quotes-Interventions/Supports
- IEP Goals

Performance Level

- ☐ Level 4
- ☐ Level 3
- ☐ Level 2
- ☐ Level 1

DOMAIN III: CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Standard 7: Creates and maintains a classroom of respect for all students.

Indicators

4

- Communicates respectfully to all students
- Provides **ample and** effective opportunities for peer learning and/or flexible grouping
- Demonstrates a strong positive relationship with all students and uses effective techniques to deescalate student behavior whenever appropriate
- Promote and model** age-appropriate and culturally responsive teaching practices to foster student engagement across learning environments

3

- Communicates respectfully to **all** students
- Provides **effective** opportunities for peer learning and/or flexible grouping
- Demonstrates a strong positive relationship with **all** students **and** uses **effective** techniques to deescalate student behavior whenever appropriate
- Effectively** employs age-appropriate and culturally responsive teaching practices to foster student engagement across learning environments

2

- Communicates respectfully to students **with rare exceptions**
- Provides **adequate** opportunities for peer learning and/or flexible grouping
- Demonstrates a strong positive relationship with **some** students **and/or** uses **ineffective** techniques to deescalate students' behavior
- Adequately** employs age-appropriate and culturally responsive teaching practices to foster student engagement across learning environments

1

- Often communicates disrespectfully** with students
- Rarely or never** uses peer support and flexible grouping strategies
- Does not** demonstrate a strong positive relationship with students and/or **does not** use techniques to deescalate students' behavior
- Inadequately or does not** employ age-appropriate and culturally responsive teaching practices to foster student engagement across learning environments

Evidence Collected

Notes

Examples of Evidence

- Teacher Quotes-Positive Behavior Interventions
- Teacher and Student Quotes-Praise
- Teacher Uses "Tell-Show-Practice", Crisis Prevention, or Other Explicit Techniques
- Time Tally for Teacher-Directed Learning Versus Peer-Learning or Flexible Grouping
- Behavior Modification Charts and/or Plans

Performance Level

- ☐ Level 4
- ☐ Level 3
- ☐ Level 2
- ☐ Level 1

DOMAIN IV: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Standard 8: Engages in professional learning and complies with reporting requirements

Indicators	
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively seeks out, participates in, and shares professional learning to improve practice based on observer feedback Fully integrates into professional practice the knowledge gained in professional learning communities, collaboration with peers and leadership, and focused professional development Promotes and adheres to standards of professional practice regarding IEP compliance, including IEP meeting organization, individual goal development, and paperwork completion Maintains confidentiality of information except when information is released under specific conditions of written consent and statutory confidentiality requirements Promotes understanding of federal, state, and local policies/mandates regarding identifying and educating students with disabilities among students, families, and professionals
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively seeks out and participates in professional learning to improve practice based on observer feedback Fully integrates into professional practice the knowledge gained in professional learning communities, collaboration with peers and leadership, and focused professional development Adheres to standards of professional practice regarding IEP compliance, including IEP meeting organization, individual goal development, and paperwork completion Maintains confidentiality of information except when information is released under specific conditions of written consent and statutory confidentiality requirements Demonstrates understanding of federal, state, and local policies/mandates regarding identifying and educating students with disabilities
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participates in required professional learning and applies some observer feedback to improve practice Applies knowledge gained from professional learning but does not fully integrate the new information Adheres to standards of professional practice regarding IEP compliance, including IEP meeting organization, individual goal development, and paperwork completion with oversight Maintains confidentiality of information except when information is released under specific conditions of written consent and statutory confidentiality requirements Demonstrates limited understanding of federal, state, and local policies/mandates regarding identifying and educating students with disabilities
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participates in required professional learning, but applies little or no observer feedback to improve practice Does not apply knowledge gained from professional learning Occasionally does not adhere to standards of professional practice regarding IEP compliance including IEP meeting organization, individual goal development, and paperwork completion Violates confidentiality of information Does not demonstrate understanding of federal, state, and local policies/mandates
Evidence Collected	Examples of Evidence
<u>Notes</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Learning Agendas Session Registrations PLC Meeting Agendas Past PGS Observation Feedback and Evidence of Implementation Email or Communication Logs
Performance Level	
<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1	

DOMAIN IV: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Standard 9: Collaborates with families/guardians and professionals

Indicators	
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively initiates and collaborates with administrators, general educators, related service providers, paraprofessionals, families, and community agencies using a variety of methods Partners with families or guardians to coordinate learning between home and school Organizes and facilitates effective meetings with professionals and families to establish mutual expectations for students' instructional and/or behavioral outcomes Includes students in meetings (as appropriate) to develop IEP goals, including behavior goals, and encourages families/student to self-advocate
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborates with administrators, general educators, related service providers, paraprofessionals, and families using a variety of methods Partners with families or guardians to coordinate learning between home and school Organizes and facilitates effective meetings with professionals and families to establish mutual expectations for students' instructional and/or behavioral outcomes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborates with administrators, general educators, related service providers, paraprofessionals, and families only when required Communicates with families/guardians reactively concerning student academic progress and development, and outreach is mostly for intervention or corrective reasons Organizes and facilitates required meetings with professionals and families
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimally or does not collaborate with administrators, general educators, related service providers, and paraprofessionals as required Rarely or never communicates with families/guardians
Evidence Collected	
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IEP Sign-In Sheets Learning Management System or Secure Apps Communication Documentation PLC Agendas Leadership Team Meeting Agendas Newsletters
Performance Level	
<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1	

Appendix G: Sample Mentor Log

Mentor: _____ **Mentee:** _____ **Date:** _____

Type of Contact: ____ In-person ____ Phone ____ Virtual **Start time:** _____ **End time:** _____

Scheduled: ☐ Yes ☐ No **Type of Support:** ☐ Instructional ☐ Procedural ☐ Content ☐ Emotional ☐ School Culture/Climate

Support Structure: ☐ Observation ☐ Meeting/Debrief ☐ Professional Development ☐ Other: _____

<p>Topic(s):</p> <div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="width: 33%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Scaffolding strategies <input type="checkbox"/> IEP development <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration with general educators <input type="checkbox"/> Leading IEP meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Accommodations and modifications <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ </div> <div style="width: 33%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Feedback to students <input type="checkbox"/> Behavior management <input type="checkbox"/> Progress monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Goal writing for IEPs <input type="checkbox"/> Student engagement strategies </div> <div style="width: 33%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Parent engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom setup <input type="checkbox"/> Explicit Instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Parent communication </div> </div>	<p style="text-align: center;">PGS Special Education Teacher Observation Rubric Standard Alignment:</p> <div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="width: 50%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Standard 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Standard 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Standard 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Standard 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Standard 5 </div> <div style="width: 50%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Standard 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Standard 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Standard 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Standard 9 </div> </div>
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What is Working:	Concerns/Challenges/Resources Needed:
Next Steps for New Special Educator:	Next Steps for Mentor:
Notes:	

Appendix H: NMEC Travel Reimbursement Form

[illegible]

Appendix I: Principal Update

Your [audience] recently attended a professional learning opportunity.

Professional Learning Information	Topic: Objectives: Key Points:
Resources Shared	
Next Steps	
Suggestions for Follow-up	