



# Handbook for Teacher and Special Service Provider Induction Program

2016 - 2017

## **Introduction**

The Colorado Digital BOCES (CDBOCES) vision, as shared with our partnerships between Falcon School District 49, Pikes Peak Community College, and other institutions of higher education, is to authorize or operate multi-district online blended learning schools and other online-based models that combine the latest in 21<sup>st</sup> century technology and best practices along with data-driven, online and blended proven methods for increased student academic success. This model of learning is the future of education and our students' future academic success depends on different modalities of learning. The CDBOCES pursues innovative approaches that transform the way public online blended contract schools have been supported in the past to have a positive impact on online blended learning schools and programs.

The goal of the CDBOCES induction program is to support educators new to teaching in an online and blended learning environment through embedded professional development, coursework, mentorship, observation, models and support. Since many districts offer only one or few online and blended schools/programs, they lack the capacity to support educators new to the profession and those experienced educators who are new to an online or blended learning teaching environment. The CDBOCES wishes to fill the need to support teachers where experts in the field of online education may not be readily available.

## **Induction Program Leadership Team**

The CDBOCES partners with District 49 as a key stakeholder in governance and operational leadership. District 49 provides an exceptional level of support to new teachers through its induction program. Because of this, their induction coordinator, Amber Whetstine, was asked to provide leadership and facilitation of the induction application process at CDBOCES. Although District 49 offers a robust induction program, which has proved to reduce teacher attrition rates over time, a great need exists to provide support for teachers with expertise from like-content area and teaching structures. The CDBOCES employs a staff with expertise and passion for ensuring high expectations for student learning in online and blended environments and the belief that all teachers can be successful when provided the right professional development, mentoring and support.

## **CDBOCES Leadership**

Kim McClelland, founder and Executive Director of the CDBOCES, serves as an expert in online learning. Her previous experiences include work as a brick and mortar elementary school teacher, online teacher, online principal and iConnect Zone Superintendent.

Kindra Whitmyre, CDBOCES Education and Operations Director, provides leadership in the areas of accreditation, school improvement and special

education. Her experience as a teacher, principal, school authorizer and educational consultant provide a diverse perspective to the CDBOCES Induction Planning Committee.

Phil Williams has numerous years of experience with serving pre-K through twelfth grade and also has experience with assessments and analyzing data as an assessment coordinator. He serves the CDBOCES as Assessment and Data Coordinator.

In addition to the CDBOCES leadership team, Rochelle Kolhouse, iConnect Zone TEAM Coach served on the Induction Program Planning Committee as advisors on best practices in blended and online learning and necessary supports for new to teachers to these instructional models.

## **Program Overview**

The CDBOCES differentiates program requirements and support for teachers based on the following criteria:

- 1) Length of time and demonstrated effectiveness in the teaching profession
- 2) Length of time and demonstrated effectiveness teaching in Colorado
- 3) Length of time and effectiveness teaching in an online blended learning environment

Teachers and special service providers within their first two years of teaching or with an initial Colorado teaching license will be required to complete a minimum of two years of induction. Teachers and special service providers who request or are determined to need additional support based on evaluator, mentor or mentee recommendation may complete a third year of induction.

Teachers and special service providers who hold a Colorado Professional License, and have demonstrated at least three successful years teaching may complete a one-year induction program aimed to orient experienced educators with online blended teaching.

Course work and levels of support are determined through evaluation of each individual's previous experiences and professional growth plans.

## **Mentorship**

Mentors are identified and assigned to inductees participating in the CDBOCES Induction Program in the following ways:

- 1) Identify a mentor consultant with experience in an online/blended learning environment from outside the inductee's organization. This option is intended for schools and districts without the capacity or resources to provide experienced online/blended educators as mentors.
- 2) Provide qualification criteria and agreement contract for mentors within an

- inductee's organization.
- 3) Provide relevant training for mentors. This training will include coaching and mentoring models, strategies for difficult conversations and induction criteria / requirements.

A minimum of 30 mentoring contact hours are required of inductees and mentors in the first year of induction, and 15 hours each in the second and third years. Inductees are required to log all mentoring contact time. Mentoring will occur through a combination of virtual and face-to-face interactions throughout the year.

## **Expectations of Mentors**

Mentors are required to provide supportive mentorship to each inductee they are assigned. Mentors will meet with the inductee a minimum of 30 hours in the first year of induction and 15 hours each in the second and third years as applicable. In addition, mentors and inductees are required to meet with the induction coordinator twice annually to ensure inductees are on-track to meet requirements for program completion.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Inductee Responsibilities**

- Develop professional goals and an individualized professional development plan with support from assigned mentor.
- Keep track of all professional development activities on professional development plan and all certificates of completion.
- Track mentor hours on mentor logs.
- Meet with mentor and induction coordinator as scheduled.
- Communicate personal learning needs to mentor and induction coordinator as applicable.

### **Mentor Responsibilities**

- Provide continuous and on-going support to assigned inductee.
- Develop, review and revise professional goals and professional development plan with inductee.
- Communicate with induction coordinator regarding inductee progress and concerns.
- Maintain records of meetings with inductee throughout the program.
- Complete observations with inductee.
- Suggest professional development opportunities and offerings to inductee.
- Communicate all induction requirements to inductee and provide continuous check-ins to ensure inductee is on track for program completion.

### **Induction Coordinator Responsibilities**

- Provide oversight of induction program training and requirements.
- Assign all inductees to program with an appropriate mentor.
- Ensure that all mentors have completed training. (Provide mentor and coaching training, coordinate training as required.)
- Provide on-going mentoring to mentors.
- Act as a liaison between each principal / supervisor, mentor and inductee.
- Lead meetings with mentors and inductees (at least twice annually) to review progress of mentees toward completing induction within a two-year period.
- Keep track / maintain all induction paperwork for CDBOCES.
- Communicate with mentors and principals / supervisors regarding inductee progress and additional recommended support.
- Provide communication to inductees and mentors regarding professional development opportunities related to online and blended learning.
- Maintain program evaluation data and submit reports to CDE as applicable.

## **Observations**

Inductees are required to complete instructional observations with mentor support throughout the induction program. In the first year, four observations are required (two per semester). Observations may include virtual or face-to-face observations of whole group, small group instruction or one-on-one tutoring and intervention. Observations will include a combination of the inductee observing the mentor, the inductee observing another instructor with mentor support, and the inductee being observed by the mentor or other instructor with feedback. An additional two observations each year are required (one per semester) in years two and three.

## **Professional Development Plans**

Each year, the mentor, principal/supervisor, and induction coordinator will develop an individualized professional learning plan for the inductee. Professional development requirements include completion of a minimum of 30 targeted professional development contact hours in year one and 15 targeted professional development contact hours in years two and three.

Each inductee's professional development plan will be developed based on area of licensure, experience and identified needs.

Inductees are required to track professional development completion on the Induction Contract and keep track of all professional development certificates of completion.

## **Goal Setting**

Mentors and inductees will meet quarterly to set and review individualized goals. These goal-setting meetings may occur as part of the mentor and inductee regular meetings, which are tracked on the mentor log. Goals set between the inductee and mentor will align with the Colorado Teacher Quality Standards and iNacol Standards for online and blended teaching.

## **Program Completion**

Upon completion, each inductee and mentor will meet with the induction coordinator to review and verify completion requirements.

Each inductee will submit the following:

- Completed Induction Contracts for years one, two and three (if applicable)
- Completed professional development plan and all certificates of completion
- Mentor logs for years one, two and three (if applicable)
- Submission of Induction Program Evaluation
- Submission of Educator Effectiveness Ratings (from supervisor)

## **Needs Assessment**

Each inductee will be asked to complete a needs assessment upon entry into the CDBOCES Induction program. This needs assessment provides valuable information for the induction coordinator to properly assign mentors, and for assigned mentors to ensure quality targeted and individualized support to each inductee.

The needs assessment will include questions aimed to identify each inductees individual needs including:

- Total number of years working as a teacher or special service provider
- Total number of years working as a teacher or special service provider in an online / blended teaching environment
- Total number of years working as a teacher or special service provider in Colorado
- Total number of years working as a teacher or special service provider in another state
- Grade levels taught
- Content areas / subjects taught
- Current type of educator licensure
- Areas identified as strengths as an educator or special service provider
- Areas identified for growth as an online / blended educator or special service provider
- Areas identified for needed mentorship

## **Evaluation**

Upon completion of each year of induction, inductees will be required to complete a program evaluation survey to gauge program effectiveness and make continuous improvements to the program design.

Supervisors of inductees will be asked to submit educator effectiveness ratings of each inductee participating in the CDBOCES Induction program at the end of each year of participation. These rating will be kept confidential among the Induction Coordinator, inductee and evaluator, but will be used to track overall change in effectiveness ratings overtime for all Induction Program participants combined.

### **Evaluation survey questions will include:**

- Describe the level of quality mentorship you were provided in year one, two, three (as applicable)?
- In what areas do you feel you demonstrated the most growth as an inductee in year one, two, three (as applicable)?
- How did the professional development activities you participated in meet your needs as an online / blended educator or special service provider?
- Which induction requirements were most beneficial to your growth as an educator?
- Which induction requirements were least beneficial to your growth as an educator?
- In what ways could the CDBOCES Induction Program be improved to better meet your needs?

### **Addendum: Forms and Resources**

- Mentor Logs
- Induction Contracts
- Induction Checklists
- Completion Checklist