



2019-20 Program Frequently Asked Questions

Beginning Educators Support Team (BEST) Program

What is the purpose of the BEST grant?

BEST includes first-year and second-year, as defined below. The grant's purpose is to provide support and encouragement for early career teachers in order to strengthen their instructional skills and to retain competent teachers in the profession. Many teachers leave the profession after seven years, most citing lack of support as a primary reason.

What professional development is available through the grant for mentees?

New teachers can participate in a series of professional development events. Professional development opportunities will include training on instructional frameworks, classroom management, engagement strategies, assessment, and the Common Core State Standards. There will be a combination of online and face-to-face learning opportunities. Clock hours will be offered and most courses will be free to active participants.

What professional development is available through the grant for mentors?

Mentors are required to participate in an OSPI Mentor Academy 101 as a first-year mentor and will have access to Mentor Academy 201 as a returning mentor. Mentors are required to attend regional mentor roundtables and are paid to attend three roundtables for a total of 6 hours at curriculum rate or attend ongoing, in-district mentor development. There will be a combination of online and face-to-face learning opportunities. Clock hours will be offered and most courses beyond mentor roundtables will be free to actively participating mentors.

What are the definitions of a first-year and second-year teacher?

First-Year Teacher: a new teacher with 179 days or fewer in a continuous, certificated teaching assignment in public or private schools anywhere in the United States. Teachers who have more than 179 days of substitute teacher experience are eligible for funding as a first-year teacher provided that this experience did not include a single, continuous assignment as a certificated teacher for more than 179 days.

Second-Year Teacher: an individual with 180 days to 359 days of experience in a continuous, certificated teaching assignment as a certificated teacher in public or private schools anywhere in the United States.

What is the definition of a released mentor?

Released Mentor: experienced teachers who are released from teaching or other responsibilities to allow dedicated time for mentoring. Maximum ratio for released mentors *with no other responsibilities* is 20 new teachers per one mentor. Released mentors are expected to observe each new teacher at least 8 times per year. Instructional coaches and TOSAs may be considered released mentors *if* their position designates sufficient time to prioritize work with new teachers, and mentoring is considered part of their assignment. EXAMPLE: a coach assigned 4 beginning teachers should have 1 day per week allotted for mentoring work.

What is the definition of a colleague mentor?

Colleague Mentor: experienced teachers who mentor *in addition* to their teaching responsibilities. Maximum ration is two new teachers per one colleague mentor. Colleague mentors are expected to observe their new teacher(s) quarterly at a minimum.

What is the definition of a conditionally licensed teacher?

A new teacher holding a *conditional teaching certificate* with 179 days or fewer in a continuous, certificated teaching assignment in public or private schools anywhere in the United States. Teachers who have more than 179 days of substitute teacher experience are eligible for funding as a first-year teacher provided that this experience did not include a single continuous assignment as a certificated teacher for more than 179 days.

Can a part-time teacher participate?

Yes, a part-time teacher may participate fully as either a first-year or second-year teacher.

What is the compensation structure?

First-year teachers receive support from the ESD/district to participate in PD opportunities funded by the grant and will have access to courses for a reduced fee. Y1 teachers will receive a \$400.00 stipend for participation in the grant. Districts may select to have this compensation added to their contract and pay first-year teachers directly for learning time supported by mentoring outside the contract day.

Second-year teachers receive support from the ESD/district to participate in PD opportunities funded by the grant and will have access to courses for a reduced fee. Y2 teachers will receive extended contract pay for \$200 for workshop/book studies or online courses matched to their professional growth goals. Districts will have the option of receiving funding to directly support Y2 teachers to facilitate in-house book studies or classes. Those districts that don't submit a request will have Y2 teachers supported by the ESD 112.

Mentors receive pay for mentor time through district allocations and will be paid by their district or ESD 112 for mentoring time. Participating districts will plan for mentoring time and coordinate with ESD 112 to plan for compensation to mentors. Mentors will be paid by ESD 112 or the district for up to 6 hours at a curriculum rate to attend mentor roundtables, or this funding will be allocated to districts to support in-house roundtables.

What are the grant requirements for mentees?

Y1 mentees must sign an assurance they met with their mentor at least 1-2 hours per week and with support from their mentor, developed a professional growth plan, either in a district session or as organized by regional support. If substitutes can be secured for colleague mentors, mentees should be observed by their mentor 4 times during the year. Released mentors should observe mentees 8 times during the year.

Y1 mentees must complete a professional growth goal plan, submit end-of-year reflection, and complete up to two online surveys during the 2018-19 school year.

Y2 mentees must submit end-of-year reflection on professional growth and complete up to two online surveys during the 2019-20 school year.

What are the grant requirements for mentors?

New mentors are required to attend Mentor Academy 101. Registration and offerings can be found on [OSPI's BEST website](#).

Returning mentors can attend a Mentor Academy 201. Registration and offerings can be found on [OSPI's BEST website](#).

Mentors shall attend a minimum of three mentor roundtables hosted at ESD 112 or by their district. Compensation will be provided for up to 6 hours at curriculum rate from ESD 112 paid by ESD 112 or the district. Mentors paid by ESD 112 will be required to submit a mentor log summarizing support for their mentee(s).

Who do I contact if I have more questions?

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