



COMPREHENSIVE INDUCTION PROGRAM FOR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

INTRODUCTION

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Goals:

Delaware provides a three (3) year comprehensive induction process for its teachers and certificated personnel new to the profession. School Psychologists are included in that professional group. For the purposes of this document, only school psychologists will be discussed. The program is designed to meet the following goals:

- Provide the new school psychologist with a Mentor for the initial phase of the program and for Cycles One and Two. The Mentor helps the new staff member become familiar with the school, district, and state resources, procedures, and policies.
- Assure a seamless alignment between the components of the Delaware Professional Appraisal System II (DPAS II) and the induction process.
- Build reflective practitioners who are able to review their present level of professional performance and use that data to set goals for future professional development.

Scientific Research Base:

The Delaware Mentoring Program for School Psychologists is aligned with the following:

- *Enhancing Professional Development: A Framework for Teaching, 2nd Edition* by Charlotte Danielson
- *Best Practices in School Psychology V* – Alex Thomas and Jeff Grimes, Editors

The purpose of the program is to provide the new school psychologist with support that is shaped by their needs. *The following is a description of the process as outlined by the Department of Education. For the purpose of licensure, the requirements to move forward are those stated in the outline below. The format is to be consistent throughout the state.*

- **The Orientation Checklist is to guide the Mentor and new school psychologist through a “need to know” process.**
- **School psychologist regulations are reviewed.**
- **New school psychologists and Mentors explore school, district, and state resources such as standards, Delaware State Testing Program, and specialist’s services for students, staff and families.**

CYCLE ONE:

In **Cycle One**, new school psychologists focus on **Component Two: Professional Practice and Delivery of Service**. They are to be observed by their Mentor and review their performance together. Mentors are encouraged to video the observation, if appropriate. After joint review of the evidence the new school psychologist selects an area of needed growth. The new school psychologist and Mentor develop effective strategies and consider what might be implemented to improve their practice. The new school psychologist uses two to three weeks refining the area of focus and then invites the Mentor to observe the progress made. An observation is conducted for thirty minutes, followed by a second meeting to discuss the evidence. At the end of this session, the new school psychologist reflects on the challenges and gains made. Then the new school psychologist and Mentor determine whether the new school psychologist feels that he/she is ready to move forward. During this cycle, discussions about communicating and consulting with parents, students, teachers and other staff members are included.

CYCLE TWO:

Cycle Two consists of **Components One and Three: Planning and Preparation and Consultation and Collaboration**. Cycle Two is divided into segments that include engaging the client, planning, work samples and analysis of work. These segments of practice often occur simultaneously. School psychology services for this cycle have been divided into three areas: assessment, consultation and intervention. The Mentor will discuss these areas and observe the school psychologist during work samples. Strengths and challenges/needs will be noted on the appropriate forms. Evidence of the application of skills/strategies to the school psychologist’s practice will be a realistic goal.

CYCLE THREE:

Cycle Three requires the new school psychologist to be part of a **learning team**. The team may consist of other educators and/or experienced school psychologists from within one or more school districts meeting for study sessions. Literature will be selected based on the need of the new school psychologist or current issues deemed relevant by the team. The new school psychologist will lead one of the sessions.

CYCLE FOUR:

Cycle Four - Professional Development Analysis and Planning

This final cycle is designed to develop the new school psychologist's ability to analyze his/her professional growth over time. During the first part of this cycle, the new school psychologist reviews his/her professional growth process. After conducting this review, the new school psychologist sets goals for professional growth. The professional development options are open and approval is granted by the district/charter school. New school psychologists may elect to take classes, join a learning team, conduct book studies, do on-line action research or take online professional development. At the end of this cycle, the new school psychologist considers his/her goals for the next five years and puts together a formal professional growth plan which is reviewed with a Lead Mentor. A new school psychologist may consider completing requirements for national certification. If already a National Certified School Psychologist, (NCSP) the new school psychologist may want to continue with work to meet continuing certification requirements specified by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). Most work completed for NASP certification will also be acceptable for the clock hours needed to meet Delaware guidelines. The plan should guide their professional development selections for their first 90 clock hours to renew their continuing license.

Flexibility of the Process:

The program is deliberately constructed in cycles, rather than in years. This flexibility allows:

- new school psychologists to move through the cycles at their own pace.
- a new school psychologist to remain in a cycle until he/she has developed the skills and knowledge needed to be successful.
- a new school psychologist hired after the beginning of the school year to start the process immediately and still be on target for completing all required work within the three years of the initial license/
- a new school psychologist to work with a mentor for additional time when it is deemed necessary (and approved).
- a district to request an extension for a new school psychologist's license for one year so the school psychologist can complete the program and grow professionally.

Structure of the Program:

The Teacher Leader & Effectiveness Unit at the Delaware Department of Education houses the Education Associate responsible for the Comprehensive and Induction Program. The responsibilities of this person include:

- ✓ Allocating funds to the districts for support of the State program
- ✓ Training Lead Mentors in the process
- ✓ Supporting District/charter schools as requested
- ✓ Monitoring the progress of new teachers in certification and throughout the mentoring and induction program
- ✓ Working with specialist groups to attain a quality level of mentoring and induction
- ✓ Working with higher education institutes to seek and provide assistance for special education teachers, Alternate Routes to Certification candidates, and Teach for America candidates to identify their unique needs related to the mentoring and induction process.
- ✓ Meeting with representatives from all districts and charter schools related to the program and needs
- ✓ Conducting annual surveys related to the program
- ✓ Working with other interested parties to explain the process of the program

District Lead Mentors:

Delaware has a cadre of trained Lead Mentors who serve the districts and charter schools. These educators are responsible for the program and training at the district level. They are required to be trained in Danielson's *Framework for Teaching and Assessment for Learning* and her *Enhancing Professional Practice 2nd Edition*. They train individual district level mentors and assure that mentors are delivering and new school psychologists are receiving the services required. They come together in June of each year to develop new skills, refine practices, and provide feedback on the successes and challenges of the previous year.

District Lead Mentors for School Psychologists:

These Delaware experienced school psychologists are selected in each district. Primarily school psychologist liaisons, these experienced school psychologists must be trained in Danielson's *Framework for Teaching and Enhancing Professional Practice 2nd Edition* and the formal mentor training to develop their skills and knowledge in the roles of mentoring and coaching. Delaware's program has a strong model of coaching and collaboration. In addition, the Mentors gain insight into the differences between simply mentoring a new school psychologist and inducting them into the profession. Mentors go through a series of events to develop their skills in observing professional practice and providing descriptive feedback. Mentors are paid by the state for their work with new school psychologists.

Electronic Monitoring in Deeds

In order for a new school psychologist to transition from an initial license to a continuing license he/she must:

- ✓ Complete Cycles 1-4 of the Delaware Comprehensive Induction Program for School Psychologists
- ✓ Have a Delaware School Psychologist certificate on record
- ✓ Have two out of three successful DPAS summative evaluations on record

These steps are reflected in the educators'/specialists' profile on DEEDS. At the completion of a cycle and, after review of the documents the Lead Mentor for school psychologists will forward the information to the district/charter school's Site Coordinators who will record that cycle as completed in the DEEDS Mentor Center.