

Eastford School District

2026-2029 District Plan

Section 1: District Information

Name

Eastford School District

Superintendent

Donna Leake

District Facilitators

Name	Email	Phone	Main DF?
Carole McCombe	cmccombe@eastfordct.org	860-974-1130	No

The District Facilitator must be a certified teacher or a certified administrator in the district who will lead the TEAM Coordinating Committee and function as liaison between the CSDE, the district, beginning teachers, and mentors regarding requirements of the TEAM program.

The superintendent is asked to appoint the individual (DF) who will be responsible for the facilitation of the TEAM Program in the district. A DF may continue to serve in the role for multiple years. However, when a new DF is appointed, the superintendent must notify the CSDE by sending an email to Gady Weiner at gady.weiner@ct.gov

For a full description of the role and responsibilities, please see the TEAM Program Manual.

TCC Members

Local and regional boards of education shall form a local or regional coordinating committee or committees, with representatives of the exclusive bargaining representative for certified employees chosen pursuant to section 10-153b, based on district size, to guide the activities outlined in the three-year teacher education and mentoring plan.

Carole McCombe, principal/district facilitator
Dawn Bisson, mentor/bargaining unit member
Nicholas Cody, mentor/bargaining unit member
Michelle Bibeault, bargaining unit member
Charles Kernan, teacher/administrative assistant
Megan Dill, mentor/bargaining unit member
Catherine DePercio, mentor/bargaining unit member
Anonymous: trained in-district reviewer

TCC Timeline

Describe the timeline for the TCC to meet. Include in the plan when the TCC will meet with central office personnel, principals and mentors.

The TCC meets 3 or more times per year, at least once in each of the beginning, middle, and end of the year. Given that the district includes one building serving grades PK-8, the TCC includes central office personnel (District facilitator), the principal, a member of the teacher's bargaining unit, and at least one mentor. The primary purpose of these meetings will be to monitor the District Plan; to support beginning teachers; and to plan for any activities that may be needed in the near

future. In years when there is one or more beginning teachers and mentors, the TCC shall hold an initial “kickoff” meeting early in the school year to orient the beginning teacher and mentor to the process and timelines. With experienced mentors, the DF and Principal are also available to provide the information necessary for the Beginning Teacher-Mentor team if questions arise during the process. Meetings shall be scheduled more frequently as needed in any particular year.

Section 2: Goals, Activities and Budget

Local and regional school districts shall develop a three-year teacher education and mentoring plan that incorporates the Department of Education’s goals and instructional priorities, as well as any local considerations based on community and student needs. The plan shall include a statement of three-year objectives related to the state’s goal statement for the teacher education and mentoring program.

The Mission of the TEAM Program: To promote excellence, equity and higher achievement for Connecticut students by engaging teachers in purposeful exploration of practice through guided support and personal reflection.

The goals of the TEAM Program are to: Provide all beginning teachers with the support they need to develop as effective educators; Ease the beginning teacher’s transition into the teaching profession in order to retain effective teachers; Develop teachers who are reflective practitioners, able to critically assess their practice against CT’s teaching standards, and are committed to continuous professional learning; Cultivate an understanding of the professional responsibilities of an educator; Foster collaborative learning communities for all educators; and Provide excellent teachers the opportunity to develop as educational leaders.

List your district’s three-year objectives related to the state’s mission and goal statement for the Teacher Education And Mentoring Program. (Consider: alignment to district/school initiatives related to teaching and learning; teacher retention, professional development, etc.)

Objectives

The objectives of EASTFORD’s TEAM program align with:

1. Superintendent’s Leadership goal: Provide leadership and supports to the administrative team and school staff in the selection and implementation of curriculum programs and instructional practices that support the academic, social and emotional well-being of all of our students in measurable ways.
2. Principal’s broad focus areas for school improvement, which include:
 - ? school climate, culture, and social-emotional factors for students and staff;
 - ? developing coherent systems and structures, aligned with the essential core standards to document curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices.

As such, the district objectives include those of the statewide TEAM program, with particular emphasis upon:

- ? Recruiting and developing a cadre of trained mentors and reviewers to assure continuity through time; annually review mentor/reviewer availability, training status, and anticipated staffing needs to ensure continuity of support for beginning teachers and student teachers over time. Our small staff would otherwise be susceptible when retirements or other circumstances reduce the pool of trained teachers.
- ? Building capacity to host student teachers, with the purpose of:
 - o increasing the professional development of staff
 - o improving instructional practices through the increased attention to instructional planning, delivery, and assessment that is inherent in the student teaching process as well as through the resultant increase in staffing for the duration of student teaching assignments.

Local and regional boards of education shall:

1. *Ensure substitute teacher coverage for mentors and beginning teachers to participate in the activities and modules required in the three-year teacher education and mentoring plan*
2. *Communicate regularly with beginning teachers about training opportunities, state-wide workshops and support group work*
3. *Coordinate the teacher education and mentoring program and teacher evaluation and supervision program, provided they are kept separate*
4. *Take steps to make time available, as needed, to help teachers achieve the goals of their mentoring plans*
5. *Coordinate the activities and schedules of mentors and beginning teachers to ensure faithful implementation of the district plan*
6. *Submit annual report on mentor-teacher activities to the superintendent or director for review and approval*

For each of the following requirements, check those that your LEA is currently implementing, or, in the space provided, describe your plan for how the LEA plans to implement the requirement.

LEA Implementations	Implementation Met?	Plan for Implementation
1. Substitute Teacher Coverage	Yes	Plan for and hire substitutes, when available, so that beginning teachers and mentors have the time needed to participate in the activities and modules required in the three-year plan, such as for observation.
2. BT Communication	Yes	This is accomplished through emails and face-to-face meetings and conversations from the DF and mentor to relay information received from CTTEAM and through recommendations from the mentor as opportunities arise.
3. TEAM Coordination	Yes	Coordination occurs through mentor and administrator coaching, referring to the requirements of the TEAM program and the Common Core of Teaching Standards. Deliberate use of the standardized language and reference documents will help the beginning teacher demonstrate understanding that the TEAM requirements are not distinct from the skills that are required throughout the rest of one's career, but rather form the foundation for the skills and habits of effective teaching.
4. Time for Teachers' Goals	Yes	Hire substitutes when available and/or assist in arranging a visit to another classroom where a beginning teacher can observe the implementation of strategies or lessons that will help achieve the goals of their mentoring plan.
5. Mentor + BT Meeting Coordination	Yes	This is accomplished through careful scheduling, when possible, so that the

LEA Implementations	Implementation Met?	Plan for Implementation
6. Annual Report	Yes	beginning teacher and the mentor have common planning time together. Via written communication.

Local and regional boards of education will develop an annual budget to support the activities detailed in the three-year teacher education and mentoring plan and submit such budget annually to the Department of Education to receive state assistance for such activities. The CSDE will allocate funding directly to LEAs to offset the costs of TEAM implementation based on student population in the LEA.

Identify the areas that the LEA will use the allocated TEAM funding to support beginning teacher induction:

LEA Funding Allocation	Included?	Description (Optional)
Mentor Stipends	Yes	Stipends are provided in accordance with the bargaining unit contract.
Data Systems	Yes	District will use the TEAM Dashboard system.
Mentor/Cooperating Teacher Training	Yes	District will support participation of mentors and cooperating teachers via released time as needed.
Professional Development for Beginning Teachers and Mentors	Yes	The district will support mentors and cooperating teachers in their ongoing efforts to improve skills and acquire information needed for success in their roles.

Section 3: Module Five - Professional Responsibility

Module Five Facilitated Conversations are meant to raise teachers' level of awareness about responsible, professional behavior. Districts have the opportunity to select the facilitator for the discussion of the scenarios. It is recommended that the facilitator be knowledgeable about district policies and procedures as well as the Code of Professional Responsibility for Educators within the Common Core of Teaching. Facilitators could be the District Facilitators, Human Resource Directors, Building Administrators; Central Office Administrators; or Teacher Leaders.

Who will facilitate Module Five?

Building Administrator

When will Module Five be Conducted?

Module Five will be conducted either in the first or second year of teaching, depending on if it is available through the local RESC or whether it will be held in district.

How will Module Five be structured?

Beginning teachers, mentors and experienced staff

How will teachers document the completion of Module Five?

The Beginning teacher will document completion of Module Five by entering information into the TEAM Dashboard. Experienced staff: attendance at meetings, discussion, and written information as part of the session activities.

Please note: Due to our small size, our District Facilitator may be either a central office administrator or the building principal. In most instances, the Module Five sessions are conducted at a faculty meeting or during other time allotted for professional development. Module Five may also be offered through our local RESC with beginning teachers from other districts in our region. Sessions are conducted with a team of the administrator/DF and teacher leaders, or another similar model as provided by our RESC.

Section 4: Mentors

Local and regional boards of education shall develop a three-year teacher education and mentoring plan that includes a description of the process used to select mentors and assign them to beginning teachers, based on subject areas, grade levels, and needs; and a description of the process to ensure mentors are trained and updated in best practices and essential knowledge.

Those persons eligible to serve as mentors for such programs shall hold a provisional educator certificate or a professional educator certificate pursuant to section 10-145s, and have at least three years teaching experience in Connecticut, including at least one year of experience in the district in which they are presently employed. Retired certified teachers may also serve as mentors, provided they successfully complete a mentor training program.

Describe the criteria and process used to recruit and select mentors who meet the statutory criteria (see above):

The district recruits mentors through email announcements and individual solicitation. In our small district, the entire staff is acquainted with one another. Personal conversations among the currently trained mentors are often effective in providing the information and support for a teacher to decide to undertake the training. Ongoing review of mentors' training status ensures that the district always has sufficient trained mentors to serve beginning teachers and supervise student teachers.

Assigning mentors to beginning teachers is a critical first step in providing support. Describe the criteria and process, including the timeline for assigning trained mentors to new teachers. How soon after a teacher is hired will the LEA assign a mentor?

Consider: matching beginning teachers and mentors based on subject areas, grade levels, proximity, and needs where possible when making an assignment.

Please Note: TEAM Guidelines state: A mentor must be assigned to all beginning teachers at the start of the school year or as soon as possible upon hire. It is strongly encouraged that mentors be matched and assigned to a beginning teacher within 30 days of the beginning teacher's hire date. The district is responsible for ensuring that all beginning teachers are assigned a mentor (p. 9).

Beginning teachers are assigned a mentor within 30 days of hire:

Yes

All beginning teachers are matched with a mentor according to the following criteria:

Content Area
Proximity
Needs

All mentors must be trained and updated by state approved training(s) in best practices and essential knowledge on a regular basis

Mentors are required to attend a state approved training and update training.

Describe any additional professional development opportunities provided by the LEA to mentors to address further development of best practice and essential content knowledge

The district would provide released time and substitute coverage to attend professional development sessions as determined to be appropriate by the mentor and administration. In many instances, we note that the mentors and reviewers pursue further opportunities for growth beyond the school day.

Each mentor shall provide fifty contact hours to each beginning teacher during the program, with the expectation of approximately ten contact hours per module.

Describe how your LEA will monitor the number of mentoring hours provided to each beginning teacher to ensure support hours are meeting the mandated requirements and a process for addressing possible issues during the year

Beginning teachers and mentors enter information into the TEAM dashboard. The District Facilitator and Principal check progress on an occasional basis.

Section 5: Beginning Teachers

Beginning teachers shall satisfactorily complete instructional modules (classroom environment, planning instruction, instructing, assessing and professional responsibility). Beginning teachers shall work with their mentors in developing a planned set of activities, based on the topics offered within each instructional module.

Beginning teachers shall complete two modules in their first year in the program and three modules in their second year in the program, except as otherwise provided by the Commissioner of Education.

The TEAM Guidelines require all LEAs to provide an orientation to TEAM which includes, but is not limited to the following: an overview of the TEAM Program requirements, an introduction to TEAM, a review of the district's three-year TEAM support plan, timelines for TEAM completion, including any district specific requirements, and a schedule for district-based support.

Describe how the LEA will orient all beginning teachers to the TEAM program (generally within 45 days from their first day in the classroom)

The district provides the orientation to the TEAM program primarily through the initial "kick-off" TCC meeting and through the mentor's review of all required information. The DF and/or the principal will review the District Plan and support the beginning teacher and mentor in navigating the TEAM Dashboard. This orientation will take place as close to the beginning of the school year as possible, ideally before the student school year begins.

Teachers who do not successfully complete all five modules by the end of three years in TEAM for Category I teachers, and two modules within two years for Category II teachers, and who do not receive an approved extension of time, will not be eligible for an extension of their initial educator certificate and will not be eligible to advance to the provisional certificate. In such case, in order to earn eligibility for the reissuance of the initial educator certificate, the teacher would

need to fulfill the requirements of intervening study and experience (Sec. 10-145f) as approved by the State Board of Education.

Describe how the LEA will ensure BTs know the consequences of not completing all TEAM requirements by their deadline date

The LEA assures that Beginning Teachers are invested in timely completion of the TEAM process. This is conveyed through: discussions during the orientation to the program; emails to beginning teachers such as the TEAM letters; and during the meetings with the mentors/Beginning Teachers. Should the pace fall behind, personal conversations with the building administrator and the Beginning Teacher and mentor will be held to develop a plan for the acceleration of task completion.

Describe the process for monitoring beginning teachers are on track to complete TEAM by their deadline dates

The District Facilitator performs occasional review of the process via the TEAM dashboard. The mentors would communicate with the DF and Principal should there be concerns.

Describe support for teachers who are not on track to complete TEAM by their deadline dates

Support is available for beginning teachers in the form of:
? released time to complete paper development or other activities of the modules
? coaching by other teachers, if needed, for encouragement and suggestions for module completion.

Section 6: Module Completion

Beginning teachers shall satisfactorily complete five instructional modules (based on their teaching endorsement, some teachers will complete two instructional modules);

Beginning teachers shall work with their mentors in developing a planned set of activities, based on the topics offered within each instructional module.

For each instructional module, beginning teachers shall submit a reflection paper or project, to be signed by the mentor, that summarizes, describes or analyzes what has been learned by the beginning teacher and their students throughout the module and how the learning contributed to the development of such beginning teacher.

How will teachers demonstrate completion of each instructional module?

Teachers will submit a reflection paper to demonstrate completion of each module.

Review of Modules

*For each instructional module, beginning teachers shall **apply the knowledge gained** through such activities and describe how the activity **impacted student learning**.*

PLEASE NOTE: Regardless of whether a district elects to review module completion in-district or participate in a regional review process, all reviewers must be trained prior to conducting reviews and participate in update training in subsequent years.

Review Criteria

For each instructional module, beginning teachers shall submit a reflection paper or project, to be signed by the mentor, that summarizes, describes or analyzes what has been learned by the beginning teacher and their students throughout the module and how the learning contributed to the development of such beginning teacher.

PLEASE NOTE: Regardless of whether a submits a reflection paper or a project, the review criteria is the same.

How are reviewers trained and updated?

Reviewers are required to attend a state approved training.

How will modules be reviewed for successful completion?

In-district Review

Describe the in-district or consortium review process including, but not limited to:

- *Assigning reviews of module completion*
- *Criteria for successful completion*
- *Process for module resubmission for modules that did not meet the completion standard*
- *Process for communicating results to teachers*
- *Assuring confidentiality of the results*

Describe the Review Process

Completed modules are provided to the mentor(s), who relay them to the Principal or District Facilitator, who submits them to the reviewer(s). Criteria for completion are the same as the Regional Review, as in-district reviewers maintain training and calibration. To support confidentiality in a small district setting, the TCC will attempt to maintain a pool of two to three trained in-district reviewers, allowing modules to be assigned flexibly and reviewed without identifying a single reviewer. The district will provide reviewers, whenever possible, designated time within contractual work hours to complete module reviews. Module submissions will be reviewed in a timely manner, taking into account reviewer availability and confidentiality considerations, within 10 working days (two weeks). Modules that are not initially successful are returned to the District Facilitator or Principal, who then meets with the beginning teacher and mentor to provide information regarding the criteria that were not met. The beginning teacher will then make revisions and resubmit the paper through the TEAM Dashboard to be rescored. If the Module still has not met the necessary criteria for success, the reflection paper will be scored again by another reviewer and returned to the beginning teacher and mentor with feedback and another opportunity for revisions. There is an attempt to maintain some privacy, so that the beginning teacher does not know which reviewer has done the scoring, though our school is small and there are limitations upon this. Confidentiality is maintained since no discussion of results is given to the general staff; only reviewers, mentors, Principal, and District Facilitator are involved in the feedback process.

It has been past practice for the beginning teacher to submit a paper printout to the Principal/District Facilitator for confidential relay to the reviewer. With the availability of uploading to the TEAM dashboard with the specification of "in-district" review, we will use both processes as appropriate.

Describe the process that the district will use to resolve internal disputes or appeals, including, but not limited to, disputes concerning the mentoring module process; mentor-beginning teacher relationships, - including a process to dissolve placements, if necessary; module outcomes (if reviewed in-district); and, requests for special

accommodations based on disabilities

Given the small size of our district, most concerns are handled with personal conversations. If necessary, the District Facilitator and/or Building Principal would hold discussions with each involved party and would conduct meetings at which differences are reviewed. If necessary, Beginning Teachers would be assigned an alternate mentor. If the in-district review of the Beginning Teacher's module is questioned, backup reviewers would be enlisted in the district. Should this not resolve the dispute, District Facilitator would reach out to the TEAM staff for review by another district or to have a "Chief Reviewer" review the Module reflection paper. Finally, the district will make any appropriate accommodations for individuals with disabilities, such as: scheduling meetings at optimum times; providing technology if needed to support written responses;