

**Early Career Professional Mentoring Program**

***Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)***

**Q1 What is Arkansas’ early career professional teacher mentoring process?**

Arkansas annotated law A.C.A § 6-17-2806 (d)(1-3) ; ACT 295 of 2017; and the [Rules Governing Educator Support and Development](http://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/public/userfiles/rules/Current/2017/Educator_Support_Rules_FINAL.pdf) provide the state required guidelines.

**Q2 What is the definition of an early career professional?**

Any teacher with less than three (3) years of classroom teaching experience who has a provisional license, standard license, or technical permit. Individuals teaching under a licensure exception may receive mentoring, but they are not considered early career professionals until they enter the Arkansas teacher pipeline as a licensed teacher.

**Q3 What support will early career professionals receive during their first three years?**

Early career professionals will receive mentoring support for the first three (3) years of employment. A coordinated partnership between the Arkansas Department of Education’s Office of Educator Effectiveness and the state's Education Service Cooperatives (ESCs) will provide school districts and ESCs greater flexibility to personalize the support structures around the individual needs of early career professionals. Teachers who are in an alternative educator preparation program (formerly “non-traditional”) will receive mentoring support for their first three years or longer until the completion of their program.

**Q4 If a district hires a teacher who has a license from another state, must**

**he/she be mentored?**

Schools and ESCs provide mentoring for all early career professionals during their first three years of employment. Experienced educators new to Arkansas or returning to the profession might benefit from attending informational meetings on the Teacher Excellence and Support System (TESS) and EdReflect.

**Q5 What are the qualifications for an educator who mentors early career**

**professionals?**

Mentor teachers are required to have three years of classroom teaching experience and an effective or highly effective teacher evaluation rating. DESE recommends that teachers with Lead Professional or Master Professional designations be given priority when selecting mentors for early career professionals. If a teacher is mentoring an early career professional who teaches in a different content area other than the mentor teacher’s area, the mentor and administrator will find additional content support for the early career professional through the district or ESC as needed.

**Q6 Can a mentor be assigned more than one early career professional?**

Building administrators and ESC specialists should work collaboratively to determine a reasonable mentor/mentee ratio based on the level of support each early career professional needs. Mentoring responsibilities should never interfere with the mentor teachers’ responsibilities to effectively teach their own students.

**Q7 Does a mentor need to stay with the same early career professional for the entire 3 years?**

The mentor is not required to stay with the same early career professional for three years. If several well-qualified teachers are available to mentor, early career professionals may benefit from exposure to different teaching methods. However, if the mentor teacher and early career professional have established a collegial mentoring relationship that too should be taken into consideration before assigning a new mentor.

**Q8 If I have additional questions regarding teacher mentoring, who should I**

**ask?**

To get answers to any mentoring questions, please contact your building administrator, your local [Educational Service Cooperative](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1nRCbnfm7a1D1baMVpntdC8yVbjZY9gK-jEEe4OjR5FY/edit?usp=sharing), or the Office of Educator Effectiveness with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.