

TITLE: The Formation of the Cooperating/Mentor Teacher Workgroup

The Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) approves the formation of a Cooperating/Mentor Teacher Workgroup to convene prior to and throughout the 2025–2026 school year.

The purpose of this workgroup is to develop clear, consistent criteria for use by HTSB's State Approved Teacher Education Programs (SATEPs) in selecting cooperating/mentor teachers. These criteria will help ensure that teacher candidates receive high-quality support and guidance throughout their licensure programs.

- I. The workgroup may be composed of the following representatives:
 - A representative from each HTSB approved SATEP
 - The Superintendent of the Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE), or their representative
 - The Executive Director of HIDOE's Leadership Institute, or their representative, from the Hawai'i Teacher Induction Center
 - The Executive Director of the Hawai'i State Public Charter School Commission (SPCSC), or their representative
 - A Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) representative recommended by the President of the HSTA
 - The Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL), or their representative
 - A current HIDOE Principal that has teacher candidates from one of HTSB's SATEPs
 - A current Hawai'i State Public Charter School (HSPCS) Principal/Director that has teacher candidates from one of HTSB's SATEPs
 - A licensed HIDOE cooperating/mentor teacher
 - A licensed State HSPCS cooperating/mentor teacher

- II. The workgroup will offer recommendations, which may include:
 - **Research and Review:**
 - Collect and analyze research data, policies, best practices, and models from other states regarding cooperating/mentor teacher programs.
 - **Establish Standards:**
 - Develop qualifications, professional experience, and disposition standards for cooperating/mentor teachers.
 - **Ensure Alignment:**
 - Align recommendations with national mentoring and teacher preparation standards.
 - **HTSB and SATEP Alignment:**
 - Ensure the criteria align with HTSB's standards and the expectations of State Approved Teacher Education Programs (SATEPs).
 - **Identify Gaps:**
 - Identify gaps in existing models and areas where state-specific customization may be necessary.
 - **Retention and Recognition:**

- Explore strategies for recognizing and retaining effective mentor teachers to sustain program quality.
- III. If the workgroup recommends any action, it shall also include:
- **Methods for Dissemination and Input:**
 - Recommend methods for gathering input from all relevant stakeholders, ensuring broad participation and feedback.
 - Propose strategies for effectively disseminating information to practitioners in the field.

Rationale/Background:

Cooperating/mentor teachers play a critical role in shaping the development of teacher candidates during their clinical experience. Setting clear and consistent requirements ensures that candidates are supported by experienced, skilled educators who can model effective teaching practices and provide meaningful, standards-aligned guidance.

1. **Ensures Consistent Quality of Mentorship**
Defined requirements help ensure that all teacher candidates, regardless of placement, receive equitable, high-quality mentorship from professionals who meet consistent standards.
2. **Promotes Student Learning and Teacher Readiness**
Well-prepared cooperating/mentor teachers support candidates in connecting theory to practice, fostering effective instructional strategies, and developing classroom management and assessment skills—ultimately leading to improved student learning outcomes.
3. **Aligns with National and State Standards**
Requirements help ensure alignment with HTSB standards and national benchmarks (e.g., Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, reinforcing high expectations across all licensure programs.
4. **Supports Accountability and Program Improvement**
Establishing expectations for cooperating/mentor teachers allows teacher preparation programs to better monitor clinical experiences and make data-informed decisions for continuous improvement.
5. **Encourages Professional Growth and Leadership**
Serving as a cooperating/mentor teacher is a form of teacher leadership. Clear criteria recognize and elevate the role of cooperating/mentor teachers, encouraging more educators to engage in mentorship as part of their professional growth.
6. **Reflects Best Practices Across States**
Many states have implemented cooperating/mentor teacher requirements to enhance the quality of teacher preparation. Drawing from these models helps Hawai'i remain current and competitive in developing effective educators.

Research consistently shows that high-quality mentorship positively impacts teacher retention, particularly in the early years of teaching.

- Teachers who received comprehensive mentoring during their preparation and induction years were twice as likely to remain in the profession beyond five

years compared to those who did not (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Sutchter, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016).

- The U.S. Department of Education has also emphasized that structured mentorship is a key factor in reducing early-career attrition, especially in high-need schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).
- Research involving 2,869 preservice teachers found that those paired with highly rated cooperating teachers, evaluated based on student outcomes and classroom observations, performed better and were more likely to stay in the profession. The quality of mentoring significantly impacts teacher candidates' preparedness and effectiveness in their first years of teaching. (K12 Dive, 2019).
- The quality of mentorship has a direct effect on preservice teachers' self-efficacy. Positive mentorship experiences during student teaching help develop confidence in classroom management and instructional skills, increasing the likelihood of retention (University of Florida, 2020).

Cost:

- Virtual Meetings: No cost
- In-Person Meetings:
 - \$373 per workgroup member, covering potential expenses such as:
 - Flights
 - Substitutes
 - Meals
 - Parking
 - \$237 for additional costs, including:
 - Meeting room rental
 - Car rental

Submitted by: Kristi Miyamae

Referred to: Teacher Education Committee