

MODULE 2

TEACHER NEEDS, MENTOR ROLES, & PATHS TO THE PROFESSION

SECTION 3: TEACHER VARIETY WITH TEACHERS OF TOMORROW

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to provide both information and activities that allow participants to identify specific needs of beginning teachers relative to their pathways to certification.

Objectives

Participants will:

- Identify various pathways to teacher certification and the characteristics of beginning teachers associated with each pathway
- Understand how beginning teachers' characteristics may vary or be similar depending on their individual pathways to certification
- Apply the newly learned information about the roles and responsibilities of mentors in their work with beginning teachers, regardless of the teachers' particular pathways to certification

Materials

- "Teacher Variety Description" Document from the participant handbook (pgs. 19-27)
- "Teachers of Tomorrow" Document from CERRA's Mentor Training Hub
- "Characteristics of Beginning Teachers Comparison Chart" from CERRA's Mentor Training Hub



Overview

In this section participants will learn about the different pathways to teacher certification, identify the characteristics of beginning teachers based on their entry into the profession, and determine similarities and differences between beginning teachers using the "Characteristics of Beginning Teachers Comparison Chart."



Content and Relevance

Traditionally, teachers earn teaching certification by completing a four- or five-year degree program from an accredited college or university and meeting all certification application requirements.

In an effort to recruit, hire, and retain high-quality, highly-effective teachers, South Carolina offers a number of alternative pathways to teacher certification. Most alternative routes to teacher certification allow individuals with at least bachelor's degrees to teach without going through a college's campus-based, traditional teacher education program. Through the different pathways that are offered by the Office of Educator Services, some lead to full certification while others offer a temporary opportunity to teach in South Carolina public schools. Those alternative pathways include the following: Program of Alternative Certification for Educators (PACE), Adjunct Teaching Certificate, The American Board, Teach for America (TFA), International Visiting Teachers Programs, Career and Technology Education (CATE), Montessori Certification, and Teachers of Tomorrow. Mentors may be asked to support any of these teachers.

In this section of the training, participants will learn the various pathways to teacher certification or entry into the teaching profession and descriptions of the teachers associated with each path.

Below are brief descriptions of each pathway to certification in South Carolina:

- **Traditional Preparation:** These teachers have completed a four- or five-year education program and have graduated from an accredited college or university.
- **PACE (Program of Alternative Certification for Educators):** These teachers are career-changers who have not been trained to teach through traditional educator preparation programs. In order to be eligible to participate in PACE, they must have a bachelor's degree in one of the subject areas listed by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE), pass the state required Praxis II Specialty Area/Subject content exam, and have at least two years of work experience. Then participants can receive a letter (Statement of Eligibility) and can seek employment as a PACE candidate. Prior to or during their first year of teaching, participants must successfully complete an initial 10-day pre-service institute (offered both in the summer and winter), a second 10-day summer course called PACE II, and six days of in-service training on weekends. PACE participants also must successfully complete three pre-approved college courses, the Principles of Learning and Teaching exam (PLT), and ADEPT.
- **Adjunct Teaching Certificate:** These teachers must have at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally-accredited college, as well as either a major in a current South Carolina certificate area or a passing score on the required content examination for the certificate area. They also must have had a minimum of five years of occupational work experience within the past ten years in, or related to, the content field of the certificate area. Individuals who qualify for this certificate can teach up to two credit-bearing courses in their content area over an academic year. The applicant must be assigned a mentor in the same general subject area in which he/she is receiving the Adjunct Teaching Certificate.
- **The American Board:** American Board participants must pass a series of required tests. There is no coursework, pedagogical training, or study involved. The American Board certification is

applicable only for people who wish to obtain an initial teaching certificate in one of the following middle or secondary areas: biology, chemistry, English language arts, general science, mathematics, or physics.

- **TFA (Teach for America):** Teach for America is a national program designed to recruit a diverse group of high-achieving recent college graduates to teach in high-need, low-income communities for two years. TFA participants are granted a one-year, alternative certificate which may be renewed for a second year. TFA participants also take part in ongoing coaching and professional development opportunities offered by TFA and their respective school district.
- **International Visiting Teachers Program:** In an effort to broaden cultural understanding, foster the exchange of educational ideas and techniques, and introduce teachers from other countries into the classrooms and communities in South Carolina, the SCDE is designated as a sponsor of the Exchange Visitor Program by the United States Department of State. This program recruits highly-qualified teachers and provides school communities the opportunities to work with professionals from other countries. These teachers are issued a short-term International Certificate during their time in South Carolina.
- **CATE (Career and Technology Education Work-Based Certification):** CATE is a five-year, work-based certification program that enables individuals with work experience in career and technology areas who do not meet the regular certification requirements to be eligible for employment as a secondary teacher in South Carolina public schools. Upon completion of the program requirements, participants earn a professional work-based teaching certificate. All work-based areas require a prescribed minimum amount of industry work experience in the area of certification.
- **Montessori Certification:** Montessori Certification is open to both certified teachers and other individuals who possess a bachelor's degree but not a South Carolina teaching certificate. The required training can be completed in 18-24 months. Individuals who obtain Montessori Certification are eligible to teach in grades 3K – 8th grade in a Montessori setting. Individuals who hold a current South Carolina teaching certificate and complete this certification receive an add-on endorsement. Individuals who do not hold a current South Carolina teaching certificate are not eligible to teach outside of a Montessori setting.
- **Teachers of Tomorrow:** Teachers of Tomorrow candidates must have a bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution or from an institution with teacher preparation programs approved for certification purposes by the state of South Carolina. Candidates may pursue certification in specific P-12, middle level, and secondary areas.

It is imperative for mentors to be familiar with the beginning teacher's pathway to certification as beginning teachers often bring a variety of experiences with them and will present different needs throughout the school year. Mentors must be able to recognize the characteristics of these beginning teachers and identify ways to support them during their first years of teaching.

Activity: Teacher Variety Jigsaw (30 minutes)

Note to Trainers: If you are using this version, which includes Teachers of Tomorrow, PowerPoint slide 50 must be revised to say "groups of no less than 9" and slide 51 must be changed to include "9s - Teachers of Tomorrow." The instructions for grouping participants in this activity must be followed.

This activity gives the participants an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the general characteristics of the groups of teachers they may be asked to mentor.

Ask the participants to locate the "Teacher Variety Description" document found on pages 19-27. Distribute the "Teachers of Tomorrow" document and the updated "Characteristics of Beginning Teachers Comparison Chart," both available on CERRA's Mentor Training Hub.

For the purpose of "chunking" and "chewing" the material, explain to participants that they will work in table groups to read and record information about the various categories of teachers. Instruct table groups to number off 1 through 9. Trainers should be prepared to combine tables, if necessary. It is imperative that each number, 1-9, be represented in each group. It is permissible to have two number (ex.) 1's in each group. Repeat the numbering process, until each member of the table group has a number.

Following are the reading assignments in the "Teacher Variety Description" document:

- One's: Traditionally-Prepared Teachers (pg. 20)
- Two's: PACE Teachers (pg. 21)
- Three's: Teachers with an Adjunct Teaching Certificate (pg. 22)
- Four's: American Board Teachers (pg. 23)
- Five's: Teach for America Teachers (pg. 24)
- Six's: International Visiting Teachers (pg. 25)
- Seven's: CATE Teachers (pg. 26)
- Eight's: Montessori Teachers (pg. 27)
- Nine's: Teachers of Tomorrow (CERRA's Mentor Training Hub)

Instruct each group member to read his/her assigned passage and record the unique characteristics of his/her group of teachers in the appropriate column at the top of the "Characteristics of Beginning Teachers Chart." Model an example: "Traditionally-prepared teachers have completed a four- or five-year undergraduate program, or a one- to two-year graduate program, from an accredited college or university." Explain the second step in this process before inviting the participants to begin reading their designated sections.

Encourage the groups to monitor their own time and to begin the second step in this process as soon as they are ready. Once everyone in the group has read his/her passage and recorded the facts he/she mined from the "Teacher Variety Description" and "Teachers of Tomorrow" documents, each member will share his/her specific information with the other members of the group. This will allow each individual to complete the top portion of the page. Once each person has an opportunity to share, the table group should engage in a discussion focused on the commonalities among the variety of teachers. Group members should record the commonalities at the bottom of the activity page.

Conclude the activity by summarizing the commonalities shared by the variety of teachers. They all experience some level of stress, so it is important to provide meaningful support as they begin their careers. They all have a desire to serve as educators, and they all need the support of mentors as they strive to become accomplished educators. Encourage the participants to reflect back on "The Developmental Stages of Teachers" article introduced in Module 1, Section 1. Specifically, ask them to consider how a teacher's pathway to certification can influence the stage in which he/she enters the profession and how long he/she remains in a given stage.

Before ending this activity, ask a participant to share the following excerpt from the February/March 2005 *Edutopia*:

"Not a day went by that I didn't go home and cry," remembers fourth-grade teacher Sue Manley of her first year. Manley, who graduated from Northwestern University with a master's degree in education, thought she was prepared for her first assignment.

She had completed her student teaching the previous year at a grammar school in the same neighborhood school and had spent four months volunteering as a classroom aide at another urban elementary school. Working with experienced teachers while she was a graduate student and a volunteer had made teaching look easy to Manley. "Academically I was prepared. Socially, professionally, and emotionally, I was not."

Debrief

To debrief this activity, review the idea that teachers can enter the profession through a variety of different pathways. Each beginning teacher comes with his/her own experiences and background knowledge. It is important to ascertain the beginning teacher's current level of development, background, and pre-service training and differentiate your mentoring strategies to best meet his/her needs. Remind participants that effective mentoring is differentiated to meet the current needs of the beginning teacher, regardless of the path he/she chose to get into the classroom.

Transition

In this section participants have had an opportunity to identify characteristics of beginning teachers specific to their pathways into the profession. Module 3, Section 1 will provide the participants with an introduction to the mentoring cycle.