



Teacher Induction Policy

The Governing Board of The Cottonwood School (the “Charter School”) committed to providing a high-quality educational program is dependent upon the employment of certificated staff who are adequately prepared and have demonstrated proficiency in basic skills and in the subject matter to be taught.

The purpose of the The Cottonwood School Governing Board approving this Teacher Induction Policy is to accomplish the following:

1. Outline the California Credentialing System
2. Outline the Induction Program
3. Establish the Individual Learning Plan of a Participating Teacher
4. Establish an Early Completion Option
5. Outline the Qualifications, Selection and Training of Coaches
6. Outline the Selection of Participating Teachers
7. Outline Participating Teacher Competence for the Clear Credential Recommendation

1. California Credentialing System: California has a two-tiered credentialing system for teachers. Preliminary programs prepare candidates to obtain an initial teaching credential through successful completion of required coursework, fieldwork, and a performance demonstration of their knowledge, skills, and abilities. The second tier of preparation is a two-year job-embedded individualized induction program that is focused on extensive support and mentoring to new teachers in their first and second year of teaching. The Cottonwood School’s induction program is designed to provide a two-year, individualized, job-embedded system of mentoring, support and professional learning that begins in the teacher’s first year of teaching.

2. Induction Program Generally: The The Cottonwood School’s Induction program is a two-year program that is free of charge to participating teachers. Within the first 30 days of the participant’s enrollment in the The Cottonwood School’s Induction program, the The Cottonwood School shall identify and assign an Induction coach to each participating teacher. The coach and participating teacher match is made according to the credentials held, grade level and/or subject area, as appropriate to the participating teacher’s employment.

Each participating teacher shall receive an average of not less than one hour per week of individualized support and mentoring coordinated and/or provided by the coach.

3. Individual Learning Plan: Within the first 60 days of the participating teacher’s enrollment in the induction program, goals for each participating teacher must be developed within the context of the Individual Learning Plan (“ILP”). The ILP shall be designed and implemented only for the professional growth and development of the participating teacher and not for

evaluation for employment purposes.

The ILP is developed based on needs determined by the teacher and program provider, in consultation with the site administrator and guided by the Preliminary Program Transition Plan. The ILP must address identified candidate competencies that support the recommendation for the credential. Coaching support for participating teachers must include both “just in time” and longer term analysis of teaching practice to help candidates develop enduring professional skills. The program’s design shall serve to strengthen the participating teacher’s professional practice and contribute to the participating teacher’s retention in the profession.

The ILP must address the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession* and provide the road map for the participating teachers’ induction work during their time in the program along with guidance for the coach in providing support. The ILP must be collaboratively developed at the beginning of the Induction by the participating teacher and coach, with input from the The Cottonwood School regarding the participating teacher’s job assignment, and guidance from the program staff.

The ILP It must include the following:

- Candidate professional growth goals
- A description of how the participating teacher will meet those goals
- Defined and measurable outcomes for the participating teacher
- Planned opportunities to reflect on progress and modify the ILP as needed

4. Early Completion Option: The The Cottonwood School shall make available and advise participants of an early completion option for “experienced and exceptional” candidates who meet the program’s established criteria. In order to qualify for the early completion option, participating teachers must be in year one of the Induction program, have five years of verified superior teaching experience, and have a letter of recommendation from their Regional Coordinator, Program Specialist or Senior Director.

5. Qualifications, Selection and Training of Coaches: The Induction program assigns qualified coaches and provides guidance and clear expectations for the coaching experience based on the program’s design. Qualifications for coaches shall include the following:

- Knowledge of the context and content area of the participating teacher’s assignment
- Demonstrated commitment to professional learning and collaboration
- Possession of a Clear Teaching Credential
- Ability, willingness, and flexibility to meet candidate needs for support
- Minimum of three years of effective teaching experience

Coaches are required to provide “just in time” support for candidates, in accordance with the ILP, along with longer-term guidance to promote enduring professional skills. Coaches facilitate participating teacher growth and development through modeling, guided reflection on practice and feedback on classroom instruction. The coaches connect participating teachers with available resources to support their professional growth and accomplishment of the ILP.

Coaches will be provided ongoing training and support that includes two required trainings with Center for Teacher Innovation (Coach Preview and Induction Orientation), coaching and mentoring, goal setting, use of appropriate mentoring instruments, best practices in adult learning, support for individual coaching challenges, reflection on coaching practice and opportunities to engage with coaching peers in professional learning networks, and program processes designed to support participating teacher growth and effectiveness.

Coaches may carry up to 2 participating teachers per year and must have a credential that matches that of the participating teacher(s). Coaches will receive One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) per year paid out in equal amounts (less required deductions) over a ten (10) month period. If a coach leaves the employ of The Cottonwood School before the end of the ten (10) month period, the coach is not entitled to any unpaid amounts if the coach has not completed his/her coaching obligations.

6. **Selection of Participating Teachers:** Each candidate is reviewed in the Commission on Teacher Credentialing database for credential verification and reviewed for early completion option eligibility.
7. **Participating Teacher Competence for the Clear Credential Recommendation:** The Induction program shall assess the participating teacher's progress towards mastery of the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession* to support the recommendation for the clear credential. The documentation of participating teacher progress must reflect the learning and professional growth goals indicated within the ILP and evidence of the participating teacher's successful completion of the activities outlined in the ILP.

Prior to recommending a candidate for a Clear Credential, the The Cottonwood School must verify that the participating teacher has satisfactorily completed all program activities and requirements, and that the program has documented the basis on which the recommendation for the clear credential is made. The The Cottonwood School's verification is based on a review of observed and documented evidence, collaboratively assembled by the participating teacher, the coach and/or other colleagues, according to the program's design.

As part of the Induction program's recommendation verification process also includes a systematic process of reviewing documentation. If a participating teacher is not recommended for a Clear Credential, the participating teacher may rewrite or expand the reflection, revisit the context and illustrate a better understanding of the context and/or next steps. Alternatively, the participating teacher may complete a written appeal form available from [insert title of person] providing additional evidence, as that participating teacher feels is appropriate. In the discretion of the Induction Program, a participating teacher may repeat portions of the program.