

Administrator Training

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NTI Program Information for Administrators

“We want to develop teachers who are devoted to their Savior and continuously pursue excellence by reflecting on their practice, who are committed and passionate Lutheran teachers for their students.” -Prof. Jon Schaefer

The statement above expresses the goals of the WELS Teaching Standards and WELS New Teacher Induction. Administrators are an important part of that work, and we want to ensure that you feel well-prepared to fulfill your role. Administrators with first-year teachers AND who have yet to review this information previously can go through the following linked pages for answers.

Each page answers specific questions that administrators have asked. Click on each question to enter the appropriate page.

- [Question 1: What is needed to complete this training?](#)
- [Question 2: What do I need to know about WELS New Teacher Induction \(NTI\) and what are my responsibilities?](#)
- [Question 3: Why is mentoring important?](#)
- [Question 4: How do I recommend the best mentor for new teachers?](#)
- [Question 5: What can and should I do to support new teachers in my building?](#)

Please review the information as there is a need, then answer for yourself the items in this Overview section.

Welcome!

Administrators, principals and directors, are an essential part of teacher induction and we want to make sure that you feel well-prepared to fulfill your role.

All administrators who have new teachers being mentored through WELS New Teacher Induction (NTI) are to be knowledgeable about new teacher induction before the start of the new school year If you have yet to work through this information, it should take only 1-2 hours to read everything. As a former principal and director, I know how busy you are! You may stop and start as often as needed and use what is most helpful.

Please feel free to contact me anytime with any other questions, concerns, or ideas about this program or how you can help new teachers and/or mentors.

Professor Jon Schaefer - WELS NTI Coordinator - (507) 766-9674

Question 1

- **What is needed to prepare for participating in WELS New Teacher Induction?**

This is a resource administrators can work through to prepare to participate in WELS New Teacher Induction (NTI).

After working through this knowledge base (wiki), an administrator will be able to answer the following questions:

1. How closely do you work with the mentor for the new teacher in your building? Describe what communication looks like?
2. Does your building presently have a culture that supports new teachers? What are the characteristics that make it so?
3. What are your personal plans for supporting the new teacher in your building? How does this align with supportive induction?

Please feel free to review the information and reflectively answer the questions.

* [Question 2: What do I need to know about WELS New Teacher Induction \(NTI\) and what are my responsibilities?](#)

Question 2

- **What do I need to know about WELS New Teacher Induction (NTI) and what are my responsibilities?**

Introduction

The following is a list of major players in WELS New Teacher Induction - mentoring program and their titles:

- **WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools Director:** Jim Rademan
jim.rademan@wels.net (262) 224-1961
- **WELS NTI Coordinator:** Jon Schaefer schaejfjm@mlc-wels.edu (507) 766-9674
- **NTI Administrative Assistant:** Lisa Fenske nti@mlc-wels.edu (507) 354-8221
- **NTI Data & Online Sibme Tools:** Terry Graf TerrenceAGraf@gmail.com (507) 354-8821 ext.352
- **Building Administrator:** Usually the principal or director of the building where the new teacher works. Sometimes, it may be the pastor or an interim principal/director.
- **District Lead Mentors:** These persons have years of mentoring experience and complete a mentor & coaching credential. They will work directly with the mentors and district leaders to facilitate induction within the district.
- **Mentor Teacher:** This person must apply/be accepted as a WELS mentor, complete NTI-approved training, and will work directly with the new teacher to provide support and to help improve instructional skills as a Lutheran educator.
- **New Teacher:** As you are undoubtedly already aware, WELS teachers who are in their first two years of teaching are mentored through this program.

[You can also read an overview of everyone's responsibilities \[PDF\].](#)

As the building administrator, **you have a significant role** to play in WELS New Teacher Induction. Your responsibilities include:

- Participation in this one-time training
- Responsible for supporting the work of the new teacher in your building and their mentor. This means providing them with the resources necessary for their success, including the time to work together! Please see the section below on “What can and should I do to support new teachers in my building?”

- Communicating and provide feedback to the mentor so that their work aligns with the needs and goals of your school or center. You are responsible for meeting with the mentor and new teacher in two triad meetings (often held during the first and third quarter)

Tools and Documentation

All Tools necessary for WELS New Teacher Induction are made available online at the Martin Luther College website at <https://mlc-wels.edu/nti/>. Please bookmark that page for future reference.

Each semester administrators guide and verify the mentorship work via the NTI Teacher Growth Reflection Tool. The tool is completed semi-annually between administrator, mentor, and teacher in order to share relevant data and collaboratively celebrating progress along the continuum of teacher development toward identified goals. The Teacher Growth Reflection Tool synthesizes evidence of practice to recognize the best in the teacher, to affirm teacher's past and present successes toward their goals, and to increase teacher's value - growing and developing their God give talents.

General Timeline for NTI Teacher Growth Reflection Tool

- *October - Administrators of 1-year assignments finalize Fall Teacher Growth Reflection Tool*
- *November - Administrators of permanently and multi-year assigned beginning teachers finalize Fall Teacher Growth Reflection Tool*
- *January/February - Administrators of 1-year assignments finalize Spring Teacher Growth Reflection Tool*
- *March - Administrators of permanently and multi-year assigned beginning teachers finalize Spring Teacher Growth Reflection Tool*

Your regular classroom visits are important to the completion of this semi-annual assessment.

Please review and look over the [Teacher Growth Reflection Tool](#) so you are familiar with them as they are a tool used throughout the induction years.

[Teacher Growth Reflection Tool Philosophy & Purpose](#) [Teacher Growth Reflection Tool](#)

One-on-One First-year Teacher/Mentor Conferencing Expectation

The heart of the induction program is the conferencing time for mentors and new teachers to meet and work together. Please take a look at the Collaborative Assessment Log ([link below](#)) that outlines discussion during these meetings.

The meetings will follow a protocol that will take the teachers through a cycle that includes: Reflection, Focus, Possibilities, and Planning to be followed by Implementation during the time before the next meeting. The teachers will also identify the professional competencies they are working on, using the WELS Teaching Standards of good Lutheran teaching which your WELS district is using for teacher supervision. The intention is that this protocol will allow teachers to make the best use of their time together and to make sure their meetings are productive in improving the competence of the new teacher. Mentors will be trained in the use of this protocol during their mentor training.

You will not have access to see these completed Collaborative Assessment Logs, as will be explained in “The very important firewall” section below.

These one-on-one conferences are to be in addition to what you are already paying teachers to do. For example, if your school provides PLC time or grade level meeting time, those hours would not count toward the one-on-one conference expectation since that time is what your school is already providing for all teachers.

[You can download and view a blank Collaborative Assessment Log to see what will be filled out.](#)

Requirements for Release Time for Mentors and Mentees

In registering to be part of WELS New Teacher Induction (NTI), **Martin Luther College agreed to provide two days of release time each semester for the mentor and one day per year for the new teacher to observe** each other and/or another teacher. The college has agreed to pay for the substitutes for these required activities with WELS New Teacher Induction reimbursing the substitute teacher and the mentor training & travel costs. A beginning teacher is reimbursed for their travel cost when he/she exceeds 90 miles of travel.

Mentors should observe mentees teaching 4 times per year, once a quarter. *Please note that due to distance some or all observations might be conducted using video technology in which case needed technological equipment is provided.*

- First-year teachers are generally observed or record themselves teaching and discuss this with their mentors in September, October/November, January/February, and March/April.
- First-year and second-year teachers should observe a typical school day each year of another teacher (possibly including the mentor).

Beginning Teacher Seminars

WELS New Teacher Induction holds webinars for mentors/new teachers online throughout the year and in the fall and spring in conjunction with some teachers' conferences. You will be expected to encourage mentors' and new teachers' attendance at these seminars. Mentors will also participate in online training & forums throughout the year. The seminar, forum, and training dates are available on the NTI webpage and are shared at the District's New Teacher Seminar at the end of July/beginning of August.

Substitute Coverage

We do understand the difficulty of taking teachers out of their classrooms to do this work. Initial mentor trainings will be offered in the summer and online. Outside of the mentor training, the maximum amount of substitute coverage you can expect for mentor observations is four days and for first-year teacher observations is one day of coverage for observations (four for the mentor, one for the new teacher). As stated earlier, the school can be reimbursed by WELS NTI for substitute costs.

When Partners Meet

Mentors will receive an honorarium and free training for meeting all of the requirements of the WELS NTI program and new teachers will have the opportunity to earn up to 120 clock hours for their participation (20 hours each year plus additional hours for each of the 8 webinars they attend). These are offered to compensate for the time that will be needed for either the mentoring activities themselves or to make up for the class planning and preparation time that was missed during the school day because of mentoring activities.

Triad Meetings (New Teacher/Mentor/Administrator)

Early on, **it will be important to meet with the mentor and the new teacher** so you all have the chance to discuss, ask questions and make sure everyone has the same understanding of the goals and requirements of the work they will be doing in the program. It is important for both the mentor and the new teacher to feel your support for their work. Time will be given at your district's new teacher seminar to set up meetings and mentors will have a protocol to use for these meetings. One triad meeting should be arranged during the first quarter and another during the third quarter. You are responsible for calling these meetings together during the year and will have an opportunity to put them on the mentor and new teacher's calendar at the District's New Teacher Seminar. The Teacher Growth Reflection Tool is an integral part of these meetings.

You will have a separate follow-up meeting at the year's midpoint/end to touch base with each person. For the administrator and mentor, these meets during the second and fourth quarter are to touch base and coordinate support. You will arrange these meetings too. These mid-year/end-year meetings should be held with mentor-administrator and beginning teacher-administrator so you can discuss individual information and progress.

The Very Important "Firewall"

It's very important that you watch this to learn about how the firewall works in our program! It clarifies the mentor-administrator relationship!

Mentor Laurie and Professor Schaefer held a *teleconference discussion* about the roles and communication between mentor and administrator. [Please click to watch this important video \(8 min 21 sec\).](#)

If you have further questions about the firewall, please contact Professor Schaefer, schaeferjm@mlc-wels.edu. If the video does not work for you, please contact the NTI office at (507) 354-8221 or nti@mlc-wels.edu.

The Cost of Induction

Attrition costs! Most U.S. corporations expect 6% of their employees to quit yearly; many tech companies see 30% losses (Strack, 2014). This turnover is expensive because replacing workers generally costs 25% of the person's salary (Ingersoll, 2003; Jones & Jones, 2013; Norton, 1999). A 6% loss of 1,000 workers in a major corporation, making \$30,000 per year, would collectively cost \$450,000. WELS schools experienced 37% teacher attrition out of the 596 teachers who entered teaching over the past five years. Over half of that attrition was from teachers leaving by their fifth year for other occupations or personal reasons. What does that cost?

Attrition can lead to high educational costs for schools. Higher teacher turnover negatively affects student achievement. García and Weiss (2019) observed a cycle in schools where teacher attrition was higher, as the schools typically received a disproportionate number of inexperienced teachers, these newer teachers typically left at a much higher rate than other teachers. Sutchter et al. (2016) also found that many of these teachers were underprepared in times of shortages, putting them at greater risk of leaving than fully prepared teachers. This cycle undermined student achievement due to the teachers' inexperience, lack of preparation, and instability.

A lack of qualified teachers and faculty instability threatens students' ability to learn. Stewardship and the encouragement of qualified teachers in their first years of teaching are part of effective teacher induction programs. Over thirty states in the United States (U.S.) have provided induction

for their teachers during their initial years of teaching (Bullough, 2012). These induction programs' primary purposes included increased retention, accelerated teacher development, networking, and aligned school systems' objectives and teacher needs (Sutcher, 2019). Quality induction often included a mentor teacher, common teacher planning time with other teachers, and regularly scheduled teacher collaboration (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Exceptional programs include additional programmings like professional development for mentors and new teachers, mentor and teacher observations, and program orientation (Knight, 2017). Personal processes like induction focused on working relationships and associated teaching conditions.

Schools and centers are responsible for the cost of NTI. WELS New Teacher Induction's two-year program = Year 1 is \$1000 per new teacher + Year 2 is \$1000 per new teacher

Question 3

- **Why is mentoring important?**

Introduction

Research has shown over and over again that providing mentoring for your new teachers is an important part of helping them be successful in supporting the learning of the students in your school. Below is a list of what mentoring can provide (this list was provided in the Guidelines for Mentoring Teacher Programs for Beginning and Experienced Teachers from the Virginia Department of Education).

- Retaining quality teachers
- Improving beginning teachers' skills and performance
- Supporting teacher morale, communications and collegiality
- Building a sense of professionalism, positive attitude
- Facilitating a seamless transition into the first year of teaching
- Putting theory into practice
- Preventing teacher isolation
- Building self-reflection

The ACE Mentor Program at the University of Notre Dame has collected research that supports the use of mentoring. According to their research, strong mentors:

- cut new teacher attrition rates in half (Ingersoll, 2000)
- improve teacher quality - often moving the skill level of a teacher finishing the first year to that of a 4th year teacher (Villar, 2004) - **WOW!**
- improve student assessment and achievement (Claycolmb and Hawley, 2003)
- benefit veteran teachers through new leadership opportunities and time for professional reflection and development (Villar, 2004)

Teacher Retention Statistics

The number of teacher resignations in WELS during the 1980s was 287 while in the 2000s it jumped to 867 (Gurgel, 2012). That is a loss of 1000s of teachers in whom our synod has invested in preparing for ministry. The toll that these losses have on called workers, their families, and on those they serve is staggering. In the spring of 2016, a majority of administrators who used NTI

reported new teacher retention rates at or above 90% for the first five years of ministry. These numbers accounted for reported reasons as *new teacher's family plans* (marriage/ children), *accepting calls* away from their schools, or the *reassignment of tutors*.

A concern that some WELS schools and centers have is that some teachers leave the district in which they were originally called. They might want to consider this quote from Harry Wong, **“It is far better to train your new teachers and lose them, than not to train them and keep them!”**

Double Barrier to Assistance

. Novice teachers are hesitant to request assistance

DOUBLE BARRIER TO ASSISTANCE

Experienced teachers are reluctant to interfere and/or offer assistance .

As you can see from the above illustration, two things often get in the way of new teachers getting the information and support that they need. The first is that **they are hesitant to ask for what they need**; they want to appear competent and prepared, and they don't want to “bother” the more experienced teachers or their administrator. On the other side of the barrier is the experienced teacher, **who doesn't want to look like a know-it-all or appear “nosey” and interfere** with the new teacher's work. Acknowledging these natural hesitations and creating trusting relationships between the key members of our induction program (teacher, mentor, administrator) blesses all parties to break down the barrier and talk about what needs to be discussed in a Christian way.

In the end, we really have to ask ourselves **why in the world we would invest in and assign/call new teachers and then not provide them with support**. It is unreasonable to expect brand new teachers to step right in with all the skills and understanding of both teaching and of the culture of our particular schools and communities that they need in order to be successful in helping our kids learn. We must all work together to develop the kinds of teachers we want our kids to have!

Question 4

- **How do I recommend the best mentor for new teachers?**

We understand that selection of mentors has already taken place, but this information is still very important for your work in the program.

One of the most important supports for the NTI program is the mentors. As a district leader you play an important role in who you recommend to serve as an instructional mentor for new teachers in your district. At the beginning of each calendar year district leaders, District School Coordinators, principals and directors, are asked to consider recommending teachers who have the gifts for mentoring. Teachers apply to the program between January 2 to March 1 and they need to have the recommendation of their administrator. This application timeline allows for review of applications and for mentors to begin their training in the summer.

Please **read this article** by James Rowley from Educational Leadership about what makes a good mentor. [I think you'll find this article to be very insightful.](#)

A really important understanding is that the best classroom teachers sometimes DO NOT make the best mentors. Please [Review the NTI Guidelines for the Recommendation of Mentors.](#)

[Share this document with a potential mentor](#) to help them decide if they would like to serve as a mentor.

Your recommendations and encouragement are often the impetus which prompt teachers to make application to become a mentor. Mentors begin this application process by completing the NTI Mentor Application Form, <https://mlc-wels.edu/nti/become-a-mentor/application/>.

Question 5

- **What can and should I do to support new teachers in my building?**

Introduction

It's beneficial to understand **the phases that new teachers go through** in the course of their first year of teaching. Ellen Moir of the New Teacher Center in Santa Cruz, CA has created a graph of what first-year teaching often looks like. Click on the picture above to enlarge it.

Please [read this article where Ms. Moir explains the different stages](#) ... I think it will give you great insight into what's happening with your new teachers ... and it will probably bring back some memories from your own early experiences.

Now please take a few minutes to think about where the new teachers in your building are at the present time and what kinds of things you might do to support them in this phase.

YOU ARE VERY IMPORTANT!

The research on mentoring is clear about **the importance of the building administrator in both the success and the satisfaction of a new teacher**. No matter how supportive and helpful the new teacher's mentor is, new teachers still seek and need feedback and approval from their building administrators. Send them the message that "you are valued, we want you to succeed, and we want you to stay".

What You Can Do

[View the Site Orientation Checklist](#) to find a list of topics that new teachers need to know about in your school. This list was put together by a group of principals. It might be helpful for you in preparing to meet with your new teachers at the beginning of the year.

Here is another link, this one to a [calendar of suggestions from North Dakota Department of Education](#) for supporting your new teacher during each month of the school year. It contains suggestions for both building administrators and mentors. We'll be sharing this list with the mentors and your first-year teachers, also.

Finally, [another interesting article about the vital role of the principal in NTI](#). This is a volume of the New Teacher Center's *Reflections* newsletter devoted to *The Vital Role of the Principal in Teacher Induction*. Other articles include *Convergent Coaching*, *A Theory of Action for Coaching-Based Supervision*, *The Principal: A Key to Beginning Teacher Success*, and *A Culture of Collaboration*.

One of the most worthwhile things you can do for your mentor and new teacher is to **provide them with schedules that allow them time to communicate and work together**.

Two kinds of support that new teachers require are psychological and instruction-related (Gold 1996). We all know that good collaboration takes time ... and unless the mentor and new teacher have time to work together, it's unlikely that the relationship will actually be much more than a buddy system ... and we won't see the kinds of improvement in instructional skills that we would like to see. As much as possible, when you are doing planning for a new school year, try to support your first-year teachers by scheduling shared lunch hours or preparation time with their mentors.

Final Steps

The final step for you is to **send me an email** (to schaeferjm@mlc-wels.edu) with additional questions you may have. After reviewing this information, you are better able to answer these questions.

Questions

- How closely do you work with the mentor for the new teacher in your building? For you, what are the essential mentor criteria?
- Do you have any concerns about how you will meet the responsibilities of WELS New Teacher Induction?
- Does your building presently have a culture that is supportive of new teachers? If so, what are the characteristics that make it so? If not, what can you as the building leader do to make it a better place for new teachers to work?
- What are your personal plans for how you will support the new teachers in your building?
- What was the most helpful part of this training for you? (And we'll take suggestions on how to make it better, too!)

Thank you for reviewing this information in support of the new teacher(s) in your building. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you have about how we might best support your work.

[Professor Jon Schaefer](#) - WELS NTI Coordinator - mobile (507) 766-9674 - Email schaeferjm@mlc-wels.edu (Send me a text or give me a call. If it's a little longer question and you can spare a little extra time for a reply send me an Email as I end up being on the road a lot :)