



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools
Superintendents of Unified School Districts
Directors of Public Charter Schools
Executive Directors of Regional Educational Service Centers
Directors of Approved Private Special Education Programs
TEAM Program District Facilitators

FROM: Christopher M. Todd, Bureau Chief *Chh - ttd*

DATE: February 27, 2020

SUBJECT: Update - Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) Allocations and Training

Over the course of several decades, Connecticut has built a reputation for leading the nation in the support and induction of early career educators. Since replacing the Beginning Educator & Support Teacher (BEST) program in 2009, the TEAM program has been continuously recognized as a national model for induction, support, and retention. As such, the TEAM program has been a contributing factor in Connecticut's ability to surpass national and regional averages for teacher retention helping teachers successfully transition from preparation to the role of professional educators.

With the loss of TEAM funding in 2017, districts were required to assume the full cost of implementation. In 2018, with the restoration of partial funding, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) was able to provide districts with an allocation to assist in off-setting the cost of implementation. However, the CSDE recognizes the challenges created by the loss of funding and the additional burdens that have been placed on district leaders, district TEAM facilitators, and TEAM mentors to ensure the equitable implementation of TEAM for all participants.

In collaboration with TEAM stakeholders and the Regional Educational Service Center (RESC) Alliance, the CSDE has carefully reviewed the costs associated with implementing TEAM. As a result, we have agreed upon a budget that will restore several of the previously provided services for which districts must now pay. We will phase in the services over two years. Beginning in February 2020, each RESC will offer, at no cost, Initial Support Teacher training for mentor/cooperating teachers and Initial Reviewer training. In 2020-2021, the TEAM dashboard will be provided to every district at no cost.

In order for us to accomplish this, we need to redistribute a portion of the \$1.5 million that has been designated for TEAM. While this will result in a reduction to the allocation per beginning teacher, the majority of TEAM funding will continue to be reserved for districts. Additionally, this partnership with the RESC Alliance will increase the amount of discretionary funds available to the district for the implementation of TEAM.

We believe this distribution of funding helps establish the following objectives:

- Ensures equitable access for all participants, mentors, and districts to training, materials and technological resources;

- Provides all districts access to the tools and resources necessary for monitoring the effective implementation of TEAM;
- Creates opportunities to improve and expand the TEAM program to meet the increasing needs of early career educators and districts; and
- Provides the CSDE with the ability to monitor fidelity of implementation across all aspects of TEAM consistent with [section 10-145o of the Connecticut General Statutes](#).

It is important to note that while this re-established partnership will restore some of the coherence and fidelity of implementation for the TEAM program across the state, it will not remove the options for module completion nor train-the-trainer mentor models that have been established as a result of the loss of funding in 2017. The Talent Office will be working closely with District TEAM facilitators, TEAM stakeholder groups, and RESC leadership to determine which structures best serve the needs of districts, mentors, and TEAM participants.

If you or your staff have additional questions, please contact Claudine Primack at 860-713-6826 or Claudine.Primack@ct.gov.

CMT:cp

cc: Ms. Fran Rabinowitz, Executive Director, CAPSS
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