

Mentoring and Induction Data Protocol

Purpose: This protocol will guide state-level leaders and induction coordinators through the process of leading a data-driven conversation with district-level leaders about district-level mentoring and induction (M&I) systems and supports, with a specific focus on improving teacher performance and retention in high need schools. The protocol guides teams through a structured process to analyze data in order to create an action plan to drive targeted M & I program improvements. The protocol can also be used to scale the process to other schools and districts.

This protocol is part of a broader collection of tools to help facilitate data-based decisions to ensure that high-quality mentoring and induction programs are implemented with the teachers in the schools that need it the most.

Output: Use of this protocol will result in the cocreation of a measurable action plan to make targeted improvements in M&I systems and supports at the district level based on a team review of data.

Outcomes:

- Increased capacity of state-level leaders and induction coordinators to lead data-driven conversations that support district-level leaders to make data-informed decisions and prioritize and communicate the importance of targeted induction supports.
- Improved teacher mentoring and induction practices in participating districts.
- Increased capacity of all district-level staff involved in data-driven conversations to make decisions focused on mentoring and induction.
- Increased value-add in team meetings using data to frame decisions targeted toward the benefit of students and teachers.

Materials:

This protocol references both team tools and handouts that are used to guide the data-driven decision-making process and action plan development. Each of these tools and handouts are referenced within this protocol and include facilitator instructions.

- [Handout 1: Logic Model for Mentoring and Induction](#)
- [Handout 2: Data Set Guiding Questions](#)

- [Team Tool 1: Identification of Data Sources](#)
- [Team Tool 2: Summary of Key Findings](#)
- [Team Tool 3: Action Plan Template](#)

In addition, this protocol references a Data Protocol PowerPoint Shell. This shell can be customized and used for facilitation of Sections IV–VI.

- [Data Protocol PowerPoint Shell](#)

Pilot: This protocol was piloted in April 2019 in a partnership between the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center) at American Institutes for Research and the Hawaii Department of Education. Modifications were made per pilot feedback to strengthen the process.






Overview of the Process



This protocol is based on the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) [Data Use Standards Skills](#) and the GTL Center’s evidence-based technical assistance cycle (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Evidence-Based Technical Assistance Cycle



The protocol is organized into seven sections. These sections can further be categorized into three distinct groups based on who will be involved and how implementation will occur. Before facilitating each section, it is important that a notetaker be assigned to take notes of the conversation and fill out the handouts found at the end of this document.

Sections I–III should be implemented collaboratively between state- and district-level leaders.			 
I Planning:	With support from state induction leaders, district-level stakeholders will refine their existing M&I program’s mission, vision, values, and goal areas to reflect local priorities and context.		<i>1.5 hours</i>
II Selecting:	State induction leaders and district-level stakeholders will determine data sources to inform M&I program improvement.		<i>35 minutes</i>
III Collecting:	State induction leaders and district-level stakeholders will make a plan for gathering the prioritized data sources.		<i>0.5 hours</i>
Sections IV–VI should be implemented primarily by district-level leaders, with facilitation support from state-level leaders.			
Please reference the Data Protocol PowerPoint Shell for a PowerPoint template that can be used during facilitation of these sections.			
IV Analyzing:	With facilitation support from state-level leaders, district-level stakeholders will analyze data related to their M&I program, with the intent of uncovering trends that will drive M&I refinement and implementation.		<i>2.5 hours</i>
V Interpreting:	With facilitation support from state-level leaders, district-level stakeholders will identify and prioritize key M&I program findings for action in the following two areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ challenges for improvement ▪ positive areas to leverage 		<i>2 hours</i>
VI Acting:	In collaboration with state-level leaders, district-level stakeholders will develop an action plan for their M&I program.		<i>2 hours</i>
Section VII should be implemented by district-level leaders. Progress should be discussed through ongoing check-ins with state-level leaders.			 
VII Communicating:	With support from state-level leaders, district-level leaders will regularly follow up on the implementation of their action plan, while communicating actions and results to stakeholders.		<i>Ongoing</i>

Key: Steps implemented virtually  or in person .

Section I: Planning

Purpose: With support from state induction leaders, district-level stakeholders will refine their existing M&I program’s mission, vision, values, and goal areas to reflect local priorities and context.

- **Step 1: Reflect on the M&I program’s mission, vision, and values.**
 - State-level leaders will briefly share background information about the purpose and values of the state M&I program.
 - As a district-level team, discuss how the state’s core mission, vision, and values for M&I programs can be refined and adapted to reflect the context of the district.
 - Who are we serving through our M&I program? How are we addressing issues of equity and inclusivity?
 - What does a successful M&I program look like?
 - What values do we want to uphold through our M&I program?
 - Record the district’s final mission, vision, and values statements in [Team Tool 3: Action Plan Template](#).
- **Step 2: Consider stakeholder engagement.**
 - As a team, discuss the following questions about stakeholder engagement:
 - Who are the stakeholders who should participate in conversations about district-level data?
 - What is our plan to ensure that these stakeholders are invited to the district data conversations?
 - How will we communicate the purpose of these data conversations in a way that is clear and meaningful for key stakeholders? How will messaging be differentiated to address different types of stakeholders?
 - How can we increase stakeholder engagement and commitment to data-driven conversations about M&I?
- **Step 3: Identify the preliminary goals of the M&I program.**
 - State-level leaders will briefly share information about the “big goals” of the state M&I program.
 - As a team, discuss how the state’s M&I goals align with the district’s strategic goals, referencing the appropriate complex strategic plans as applicable.

- Have each team member write down several preliminary goals for the district M&I program on sticky notes. (*Note:* At this stage, general language is fine; goals do not need to be written in measurable form.) These goals should reflect the district’s mission, vision, and values for M&I, with a lens to equity—for example,
 - increasing new-teacher retention in the lowest performing schools
 - increasing overall retention of diverse teachers
 - increasing teachers’ capacity to lead culturally responsive classrooms
 - closing student performance gaps between low-performing and high-performing schools
- Review all sticky notes and group similar responses. Once responses have been grouped, record the preliminary goal statements in the first column of the Data Selection table in [Team Tool 1: Identification of Data Sources](#).
- Have the team generate questions about the current performance of the M&I program in relation to the goals. For example, how many teachers are leaving in *x*, *y*, or *z* particular categories? Why are they leaving? Remember to ask questions with a lens for equity and low-performing schools. Record the questions next to the appropriate goal in the second column of the Data Selection table in [Team Tool 1: Identification of Data Sources](#).

Section II: Selecting

Purpose: State induction leaders and district-level stakeholders will determine sources to inform M&I program improvement.

- **Step 1: Review an example logic model for M&I outcomes.**
 - Have the team review the example logic model for M&I outcomes in [Handout 1: Logic Model for Mentoring and Induction](#).
 - Discuss the distinction between process measures and outcome measures. Rich data conversations should be informed by a combination of both process data and outcome data.
 - *Process measures:* Process data—which can also be thought of as implementation data—are used to determine the extent to which activities and outputs in the logic model have occurred as planned: Are we implementing the essential components and activities of our M&I program with fidelity? How do we know? Consider alignment with state or local induction program standards (for example, the New Teacher Center’s [Teacher Induction Program Standards](#)). Examples of M&I process data include mentor logs, program inventories, program self-assessments, and professional development evaluations.
 - *Outcome measures:* These are data that can be used to determine whether the M&I program is achieving its intended goals. There are M&I data sources that speak to short- and intermediate-term outcomes (e.g., teacher satisfaction and commitment data, teacher effectiveness data) as well as long-term outcomes (e.g., teacher retention data).
 - Have the team discuss whether there is anything that should be changed or added to the logic model to reflect the context of the district.
- **Step 2: Identify data sources.**
 - Review the questions about current performance generated in the second column of the Data Selection table in [Team Tool 1: Identification of Data Sources](#). As a team, identify sources of data that can provide information about current performance. Consider data sources that are available to the state, to the district, and to individual schools. Record these data sources in the third column of the Data Selection table in [Team Tool 1: Identification of Data Sources](#).

- In the fourth column of the Data Selection table in [Team Tool 1: Identification of Data Sources](#), specify whether the data source is a *process measure* or an *outcome measure*.
- **Step 3: Reflect on the identified data sources.**
 - Are we using multiple measures when available?
 - Have we considered both qualitative and quantitative data?
 - Quantitative data tell us *what* is happening, and qualitative data can help shed light on the context of *why* the quantitative data are occurring.
 - Are some of the data of better quality or more valid than other data?
 - We know that induction survey results are a function of self-perceptions. For example, teachers and principals often respond differently to questions asked about the same induction program. Principals often report greater satisfaction with the induction program than teachers report. There are limitations within any data collection process; as a group, therefore, we need to recognize that the data paint a picture but that it's important to recognize the limitations of data in terms of validity and credibility in the field.
 - Are we looking for trends by school, by teacher grade level or subject area, or by student subgroups when appropriate?
 - Have we missed any major, readily available data sets at the state, district, or school level that can help provide more context?
 - Do we have access to achievement data, perception data, demographic data, school process data, and/or program data?
 - If there isn't a source of data that answers these questions, would it be worth it to explore creating one?
 - How, if at all, does the intention or purpose of the data collection differ from our intended use of the data?
 - We recognize that data around student achievement, for example, was collected for a specific purpose. It was generally collected to assess the learning of students, not the effectiveness of teachers or their mentors. We cannot make claims, for instance, about how student achievement relates to the quality of mentoring, because that requires a specific type of study that has not been conducted here. However, it helps us understand student achievement

because it is part of the context of these districts. It helps us understand where there is a need that might be addressed through effective teaching and mentoring.

- Further, it should be clear to districts that the data are in no way being used to punish or blame them for results. The purpose of data collection is to help inform decisions and improve the program over time.
- What are the benefits and limitations of using these data? Are there limits to the data we should be considering with districts?
 - For example, we know that surveys can be influenced by things outside of the user’s control. Sometimes limited access to the Internet is a barrier that keeps teachers from taking the survey; this issue alters how many teachers complete the survey in certain districts, which may mean the data is not representative of the teacher population.
- Are there security issues we need to address?
 - There are many regulations and policies that govern how data are used and secured. The data used here are only shared within these conversations and are not to be shared outside of these conversations, for the protection of students, teachers, mentors, and principals.
 - Please see FERPA regulations to further determine how data can be used and shared.¹

¹ 20 U.S.C. 1232g

Section III: Collecting

Purpose: State induction leaders and district-level stakeholders will make a plan for gathering the prioritized data sources.

- **Step 1: Prioritize data for district review.**
 - Which sources of data are most relevant to guide data-driven conversation within each district? Why are these the most important data sources to review?
 - List four to five data sources that will be prioritized for review with district teams.
- **Step 2: Plan for collecting the prioritized data sources.**
 - Assign team members to locate/collect the data to bring to the district team for review.
 - Assign timelines for location/collection of the data sources.
- **Step 3: Ensure that prioritized data sources are ready for presentation.**
 - Are the data sources clean?
 - Are the data sources in readily sharable format?
 - For guidance on data presentation methods, please reference the SLDS [Data Use Standards](#).
 - For an outcome data table template and example, please reference Outcome Data Table in [Team Tool 1: Identification of Data Sources](#).

Section IV: Analyzing

Purpose: With facilitation support from state induction leaders, district-level stakeholders will analyze data related to their M&I program.

Facilitator note: Please reference the [Data Protocol PowerPoint Shell](#) for a PowerPoint template that can be customized and used during facilitation of Sections IV–VI.

- **Step 1: Familiarize team members with all data sources.**
 - **Prework:** Allow adequate time for team members to familiarize themselves with each of the data sources. This may occur as prework before the data analysis meeting, or it may occur as the first step of the data analysis meeting.
 - *Facilitator note:* Have a slide or handout that lists both the outcome data sources and the process data sources. For a blank template and example, please reference Data Sources Overview in [Team Tool 1: Identification of Data Sources](#).
 - **Setup:** Set up posters around the room labeled with the preliminary goal areas identified in the first column of the Data Selection table in [Team Tool 1: Identification of Data Sources](#).
- **Step 2: Assign groups to conduct in-depth reviews of each data source.**
 - Divide the team into equal groups. Assign each group one data set to review. Each group also will be assigned a unique color of sticky note (e.g., green, pink, yellow).
 - Each group member independently reviews the data set and individually makes note of important data points.
 - Data points are objective statements of fact that can be observed in the data. Avoid conjectures, explanations, conclusions, and inferences. If you catch yourself saying things like “because” or “therefore” then you may be making an inference that is not supported by the data. Stick to identifying observable facts.
 - For instance, “The retention data show that 50% of teachers who are new to the district leave after 2 years” is a data point, as opposed to “Retention data show that 50% of teachers who are new to the district probably leave because they don’t feel supported by the administration.” The second statement makes a conjecture about the reason teachers are leaving that cannot be determined from retention data alone.

- Every finding is a fact, but not every fact is a finding. A fact becomes a finding if you assign meaning to that fact based on your own context.
- Group members share their notes for the purpose of coming to a group consensus about important data-point statements. The group records their data-point statements on their designated color of sticky note. *Each sticky note should include the page number(s) where the data points were located.*
- The group posts their sticky notes on the appropriate goal-area poster corresponding with the data point.
- After the first round of analysis, groups will repeat the process with a different data set.
- *Facilitator note:* Each data set should include a cover sheet with guiding questions for participants to consider when reviewing the data. For an example, please reference [Handout 2: Data Set Guiding Questions](#).

Section V: Interpreting

Purpose: With facilitation support from state induction leaders, district-level stakeholders will identify and prioritize key M&I program findings for action.

- **Step 1: Conduct a gallery walk to review the posters.**
 - Team members review key data points across all posters.
 - Have team members think about themes and patterns across the key data points:
 - Are there data points that can be grouped together to support a similar finding?
 - Are there data points that provide conflicting information?
 - Are there patterns in the data points within or across the goal areas on the posters?
- **Step 2: Identify key findings.**
 - Open a team discussion to identify key findings across data sources. Key findings are findings that are reinforced by multiple data points across multiple data sources. To identify key findings, the team should look for patterns or themes in the frequency or content of the data points.
 - Key findings may be challenges for improvement or positive areas to leverage as they are aligned to the district goals for M&I.
 - Facilitators may need to probe team members to promote equity of voice. The questions from the previous step may be used to guide the discussion. The following questions may also be used as prompts:
 - What confirms what we already know?
 - What challenges what we thought?
 - What do we observe at the state level? the district level? the school level?
 - Facilitators may also want to establish and review norms with the team, in order to maintain an equitable and productive discussion. The following are some examples of norms that may be used:
 - Focus on what data tell us about current practice.

- Consider all possibilities.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Listen and hear one another's perspectives.
- No judgments or blaming.
- *Facilitator note:* Participants may want to bring in personal thoughts on why challenges are occurring or discuss matters that are not reflected in the data. While this step should primarily focus on the findings found from the data, it is up to the facilitator to shape or redirect the conversation as needed.
- **Step 3: Organize and prioritize key findings.**
 - Have the team prioritize four to six key findings to support action planning.
 - Complete [Team Tool 2: Summary of Key Findings](#) to specify the data points that support the key findings and the sources of those data points.
- **Step 4: Reflect on key findings.**
 - Open a team discussion to discuss possible explanations for the key findings. This step is intended to help the team suggest possibilities for things that may be causing trends in the data. The team also will identify additional data that are needed to support or reject explanations.
 - As a team, discuss the following prompts:
 - I believe the data suggest ... because ...
 - Additional data that would help verify or confirm my explanations are ...
 - I think the following are appropriate solutions or responses that address the needs implied in the data ...
 - Additional data that would help guide implementation of the solutions or responses and determine if they're working are ...



Section VI: Acting

Purpose: In collaboration with state induction leaders, district-level stakeholders will develop an action plan for their M&I program.

- **Step 1: Refine a district M&I goal statement.**

- Based on the key findings identified in the review of data, create a district goal statement for the M&I program. It should reflect what will be accomplished through the M&I program and how it will be measured.
 - **Example:** The Ohana School District will implement a high-quality M&I program that leads to at least 80% retention of all first-year teachers over the next 3 years.
- Consider the following:
 - Does the district M&I goal statement align with district’s strategic plan?
 - Does the district M&I goal statement align with the “big goals” of the state M&I program?
 - Does the district M&I goal statement align with key findings from the data review?
- Record the final goal statement in [Team Tool 3: Action Plan Template](#).

- **Step 2: Define desired short-term and long-term outcomes.**

- Defining outcomes helps us know if we are making progress toward our goal over time.
- Outcomes can be changes in behavior, attitudes, conditions, knowledge, and systems.
 - **Examples:**
 -  *Short-term outcome:* One hundred percent of first-year teachers will report receiving excellent or good support from their mentors, as measured by the working conditions survey administered in June 2020.
 -  *Long-term outcome:* Ninety percent of teachers who began as first-year teachers in SY 2019–20 will be retained by the district for a fourth year of teaching in SY 2021–22.
- Record the long-term outcomes in [Team Tool 3: Action Plan Template](#).

- *Facilitator note:* Take time to review [Handout 1: Logic Model for Mentoring and Induction](#) with participants prior to defining and recording outputs and outcomes. Ensure that all participants are aware of the differences between outputs and outcomes.



- **Output:** The *direct product* of a program’s activities: what we *know* will happen as a result.

- *Example:* Differentiated M&I system that also meets state requirements.



- **Outcome:** The *intended changes* to occur as a result of a program’s activities: what we *would like* to happen as a result but is not guaranteed.

- *Example:* Increased retention of effective teachers.

- **Step 3: Prioritize activities to help accomplish the outcomes.**

- Activities should reflect best practices and align with findings from the data review.
- If the state has teacher induction program standards, use them as a starting point to generate potential activities.
 - **Examples:** The Ohana School District will ...
 - Create a set of rigorous mentor selection criteria to use for mentor recruitment and interviews.
 - Train mentors using state/New Teacher Center materials.
 - Publish a mentor handbook with guidelines for mentor/new teacher interactions, including the number of interactions per month and the types of support that should be provided during those interactions (e.g., observations, debriefs, co-planning, data analysis).
 - Provide schools with support to create sanctioned time for mentor-teacher interactions.
 - Create a district beginning-teacher professional learning community that meets virtually on a monthly basis.
- Record key activities in [Team Tool 3: Action Plan Template](#), adding additional columns as necessary.

- **Step 4: Plan for implementation of activities.**

- Fill out [Team Tool 3: Action Plan Template](#) for each activity, specifying action steps, timeline, responsible parties, and resources.

Section VII: Communicating

Purpose: With support from state induction leaders, district-level leaders will regularly follow up on the implementation of their action plan, while communicating actions and results to stakeholders.

- **Step 1: Communicate the action plan with key stakeholders.**
 - Guide district-level leaders as to *whom* to share data with and *how* to share data.
 - This could be the topic of one of the bimonthly professional development sessions.
 - Consider the stakeholder engagement conversation in Section IV.
- **Step 2: Monitor and adjust the action plan.**
 - Quarterly, the district will review the strategies and progress toward goals and adjust the plan as needed with the state team.
- **Step 3: Document and communicate progress and success.**
 - Regularly revisit the action plan to ensure progress on key activities and to capture successes.
 - Communicate progress and success with stakeholders.