

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What legislation addresses changes to induction and continuing professional education requirements?

Both [Act 55 of 2022](#) and [Chapter 49](#) address changes/additions to both new teacher induction and continuing professional education requirements.

2. How does the recent legislation affect induction programs?

Effective the 2024-2025 school year, the length of induction programs has been extended to two years, thereby strengthening the supports available to beginning educators. Existing requirements for induction direct school entities to include long-term substitutes who are hired in a position for 45 days or more in their induction plans.

3. What is the mentoring requirement for the 2-year induction program?

The regulation does not define “mentor” for new teacher induction purposes. (For example: the regs in 22 Pa Code § 354.24 specifically require Student Teacher cooperating teachers for educator preparation to be certified in the content area). The regulation for induction plans states the following in 22 Pa. Code 49.16(d): “The induction plan shall reflect a mentor relationship between the first-year teacher, long-term substitute or educational specialist, *teacher educator and the induction team.*” The regulation does not specify that for induction purposes that the mentor must be a content teacher although it does use the phrase “teacher educator” in reference to the mentor but it is not defined. Since it also speaks in terms of requiring a mentor relationship with the induction team, the team could consist of various certified persons such as a principal involved as part of mentoring; note however that mentor support is required for the length of the induction program.

When choosing a mentor, consult your LEA’s board policy and/or collective bargaining agreement.

4. What is the LEA obligation for Structured Literacy professional development?

The continuing professional education plan of each school entity shall satisfy the continuing education requirements of 22 Pa. Code § 49.17 (relating to continuing professional education), by including the Structured Literacy training in the three-year plan effective the 2023-2024 academic year for professional employees who hold instructional certificates in early childhood, elementary-middle level, special education-PK-12, English as a second language, and reading specialist. To ensure that school personnel have the knowledge and skill to teach all students to read, including students with dyslexia and other language-based learning disabilities, training shall address, but shall not be limited to:



- Evidence-based intervention practices on structured literacy.
- Explicit and systematic instruction in phonological and phonemic awareness.
- The alphabetic principle, decoding and encoding, fluency and vocabulary.
- Reading comprehension and building content knowledge.

[Structured Literacy Program Framework Guidelines](#)

5. How is Structured Literacy defined?

Systematic, explicit instruction that provides a strong core of foundational skills in the language systems of English, integrates listening, speaking, reading, spelling, and writing and emphasizes the structure of language across the speech sound system (phonology), the writing system (orthography), the structure of sentences (syntax), the meaningful parts of words (morphology), the relationships among words (semantics), and the organization of spoken and written discourse.

6. For purposes of delivering Structured Literacy professional development, how is elementary/middle defined?

With the elementary/middle certification requirement, all those who are certified elementary and/or middle would qualify: K-6, PreK-3 (early childhood), PreK-4, 4-8, and 6-9.

7. If an educator is certified in early childhood, elementary-middle level, special education-PK-12, English as a second language, and reading specialist but not working under that certificate, what training is required?

The statute and regulations mandate that professional development must be provided for professional employees who hold the specifically listed instructional certificates; note that it makes no exclusion for those serving as principals. In keeping with the language of the statute and regulations, principals holding one of the listed certificate areas should be scheduled for the training.

8. What are the Professional Ethics requirements?

Continuing professional development programs must integrate the Professional Ethics Program Framework Guidelines into the three-year plan effective the 2023-24 academic year. Induction programs must integrate the Professional Ethics Program Framework Guidelines effective the 2024-25 academic year.

[Professional Ethics Program Framework Guidelines](#)

9. How is Professional Ethics defined?

The standards of behavior, values, and principles that inform and guide professional decision-making. These standards of behavior, values and principles include those

detailed in the Pennsylvania Model Code of Ethics for Educators, as adopted by the Professional Standards and Practices Commission.

10. What are the Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Education requirements?

Continuing professional development programs must integrate Culturally-Relevant and Sustaining Education into the three-year plan effective the 2023-24 academic year. Induction programs must integrate Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Education effective the 2024-25 academic year.

[Culturally-Relevant and Sustaining Education](#)

11. How is Culturally-Relevant and Sustaining Education defined?

Education that ensures equity for all students and seeks to eliminate systemic institutional racial and cultural barriers that inhibit the success of all students in this Commonwealth—particularly those who have been historically underrepresented. Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Education encompasses skills for educators including, but not limited to, approaches to mental wellness, trauma-informed approaches to instruction, technological and virtual engagement, cultural awareness, and emerging factors that inhibit equitable access for all students in this commonwealth.

12. What is the timeline for implementation of the program framework guidelines?

Competency Program Framework Guidelines	Ed Prep Programs	Induction Programs	Continuing Professional Development Programs
Culturally-Relevant and Sustaining Education	2024-25 Academic Year	2024-25 Academic Year	2023-24 Academic Year
Professional Ethics	2024-25 Academic Year	2024-25 Academic Year	2023-24 Academic Year
Structured Literacy	2024-25 Academic Year	Not applicable	2023-24 Academic Year

13. What if an educator completes a Program Framework Guidelines training (i.e., Structured Literacy, Professional Ethics, Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Education) prior to the 2023-2024 SY?

The continuing professional education plan of each school entity shall satisfy the continuing education requirements of 22 Pa. Code § 49.17 (relating to continuing professional education), by including the Structured Literacy, Professional Ethics, Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Education training in the three-year plan beginning in the 2023-2024 academic year for professional employees who hold instructional certificates as noted above.

To meet this requirement, teachers can certainly take the training prior to the 2023-2024 SY; however, LEAs must include planned professional development in its Act 48 Plan.

Note: The Structured Literacy training can be a refresher but should include training to include the four concepts listed above. Training then must occur within the next three years - and at a minimum of three years thereafter.

14. What supports will the Department of Education provide?

Supports include:

- The SAS PD Center offers Act 48 courses related to each of the three program framework guidelines:
 - Structured Literacy is a 10-hour Act 48 course that examines the research that supports this approach, identifies the key features and content of Structured Literacy, and examines/aligns current instructional practices.
 - Professional Ethics is a 5-hour course that explores the behaviors, values, and principles that guide professional decision-making. **COMING SOON**
 - Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Education is a 5-hour course that addresses bias, introduces culturally-relevant real-world experiences into the classroom, offers equitable and differentiated opportunities to learn and succeed, reflects on one's cultural lens, and promotes asset-based perspectives about differences. **COMING SOON**
- Structured Literacy Content Advisor
- Structured Literacy IU/PaTTAN outreach
- Structured Literacy program of professional development and applied practice for school personnel
- Questions and requests for assistance in any of the program guideline areas may be directed to RA-PDE-Evaluation@pa.gov.