

Best Practices for Supporting New CTE Teachers

These best practices are drawn from the Illinois CTE Connect design and can be implemented by administrators to support new CTE teachers even if they are not enrolled in the formal ISBE mentorship program.

Provide Structured Onboarding

Clear guidance and resources during the first month help new teachers acclimate.

- Have teachers think through their first 30 days: including unit and lesson planning, classroom management tips, and lab safety protocols.
- Provide a list of helpful contacts within the school and district.
- Offer orientation sessions or asynchronous onboarding resources.

Offer Consistent Professional Learning

Opportunities for ongoing learning and skill development support teachers to continuously reflect and create spaces for them to ask questions and learn from peers.

- Encourage participation in conferences and webinars
- Offer scheduling flexibility for professional development and networking events.
- Share recordings and materials for those unable to attend live.

Encourage Networking and Peer Support

New teachers benefit the most by connecting with peers and experienced educators.

- Organize informal networking sessions or virtual office hours.
- Create a local discussion board or shared resource folder.
- Pair new teachers with informal peer buddies for quick support.

Goal-Setting and Reflection

New CTE teachers, especially those straight from industry, will benefit from reflecting on progress and setting achievable goals.

- Encourage monthly reflections on challenges and successes with department heads or instructional coaches.
- Conduct mid-year and end-of-year check-ins.
- Provide templates for goal-setting and progress tracking.

Strong mentorship combined with **intentional administrative support** leads to more **confident teachers, stronger instruction, and sustainable CTE programs!**

CTE Connect is a statewide Career and Technical Education (CTE) Teacher Mentoring Program proposed by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to support new CTE educators to strengthen teacher retention, elevate instructional quality, and expand access to resources. The program establishes structured mentor-mentee relationships, a robust professional learning calendar, and an online platform to ensure every new CTE teacher can access high-quality materials, webinars, and access to ISBE support.



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CTE Connect

Developing Educators for a Workforce-Ready Illinois