

ALIEN SUPERSTAR

Participant Workbook

Crafting a Plan for Resilient New Teachers
From Alternative Places

FEPLN Summer Conference 2026

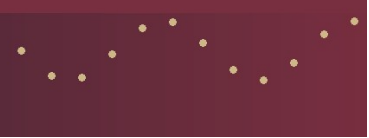
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A practical workbook for diagnosing, differentiating, and designing support for alternative pathway teachers.

Session Big Idea

Alternative pathway teachers are not exceptions to manage; they are a permanent and growing part of the educator pipeline. The work is to build systems that help them succeed and stay.



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

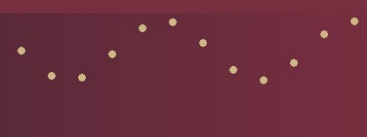
Capture ideas during the session, use the tables for small-group work, and leave with a draft action plan for your district or school system.

Listen	Diagnose	Act
Capture ideas and key language that may help you frame this work in your district.	Use the case studies to identify evidence, needs, supports, and ownership.	Translate the session into one 30-day action and one next-year implementation move.

Done	Outcome
<input type="checkbox"/>	Examine workforce realities impacting teacher recruitment and retention.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Apply differentiated induction principles.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Analyze teacher support needs using authentic cases.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Distinguish district and school-based responsibilities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop an actionable support plan.

Facilitator Note for Participants

This workbook is designed as a take-back tool. Use the language, tables, and planning prompts with induction teams, mentor coordinators, school leaders, certification/HR staff, and professional learning teams.



WORKFORCE REALITY REFLECTION

What is changing in your educator pipeline, and how is your system responding?

Workforce Signal	Why It Matters
Teacher preparation enrollment	Declined approximately 45% over the past decade.
Teacher vacancies	More than 41,900 vacancies were reported nationally in states publishing vacancy data in 2024.
Not fully certified assignments	An estimated 365,000 teachers are serving in assignments for which they are not fully certified.
Alternative certification	Approximately 18% of U.S. public school teachers entered through an alternative certification pathway.

Sources: Learning Policy Institute (2024); National Center for Education Statistics [NCES] (2022).

My District Snapshot

Pathway	Approx. % of New Hires	Notes / Implications
Traditional education program	___%	_____
Alternative certification	___%	_____
Career changer	___%	_____
Veteran or military pathway	___%	_____
Paraprofessional pathway	___%	_____
Temporary certificate	___%	_____



FROM JOHN'S STORY TO SYSTEM DESIGN

Use the story to move from sympathy to systems thinking.

Prompt

When a talented alternative pathway teacher struggles, the first question should not be, “What is wrong with this teacher?” The stronger systems question is, “What support did our system assume was unnecessary?”

Question	Notes
What failed?	_____
What should the district have done?	_____
What support structures could have changed John's experience?	_____
What does this reveal about our current induction assumptions?	_____

Possible Supports	Considerations
Induction	What should be differentiated before the first day of pre-planning?
Coaching	What would the first observation/coaching cycle focus on?
Just-in-time learning	What does John need this week, not in October?
Mentor matching	Who helps him understand both instruction and the school culture?
Emotional/practical support	How do we reduce overwhelm while preserving high expectations?



DIFFERENTIATED INDUCTION LENS

Equity in induction does not mean providing the same support. It means providing the right support.

Tier	Support	Example Teacher
Universal/Core	New Teacher Academy	All new teachers
Targeted	Coaching cycles	Emerging concerns
Intensive	Weekly/systematic coaching	Significant need

Induction Assumptions Audit

Common Traditional Assumption	Alternative Pathway Reality	Implication for PL Design
Internship experience	Limited or no internship experience	Front-load routines, management, and classroom rehearsal.
Classroom management experience	Strong professional skills, limited classroom routines	Use modeling, observation, and feedback cycles.
Lesson planning experience	Strong content knowledge, limited pedagogy	Provide content-specific planning and checks for understanding.
Knowledge of school culture	Limited understanding of acronyms, norms, and school systems	Create a culture map and structured mentor check-ins.

Reflection Prompt

What does your current induction program assume new teachers already know?



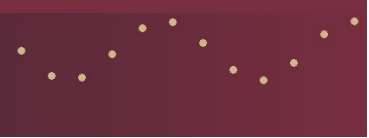
THE ALIEN SUPERSTAR FRAMEWORK

A four-part system for supporting alternative pathway teachers.

<p>CONNECT</p> <p>Mentorship & Relationships</p> <p>Mentor matching, routine check-ins, belonging, navigation of school culture.</p>	<p>LEARN</p> <p>Professional Learning</p> <p>Just-in-time learning, content pedagogy, classroom management, data literacy.</p>
<p>SUPPORT</p> <p>Emotional & Practical Support</p> <p>Starter resources, technology help, wellness supports, practical logistics.</p>	<p>GROW</p> <p>Feedback & Evaluation</p> <p>Evidence-based coaching, timely feedback, goals, progress monitoring.</p>

Notes by Framework Area

Framework Area	Notes / Ideas to Take Back
CONNECT	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
LEARN	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
SUPPORT	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
GROW	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>



INDUCTION SYSTEM SELF-ASSESSMENT

Use this as a quick diagnostic for your district or school system.

Area	Look For	1	2	3	4
Mentoring	Mentors are selected, trained, and monitored.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional learning	Learning is timed to teachers' actual needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emotional support	Teachers have psychologically safe spaces to ask questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coaching and feedback	Feedback is timely, specific, actionable, and evidence-based.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Data monitoring	Progress is reviewed using multiple indicators.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Differentiated supports	Support varies by pathway, performance, and need.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Certification progress	Certification requirements and timelines are monitored.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Biggest System Gap

Based on your ratings, what is the most urgent gap in your induction system?



CASE STUDY 1: SARAH - ELEMENTARY TEACHER

Third grade ELA/Math | Former social worker | Alternative certification | First-year teacher

Quarter 1 Indicator	Evidence
Attendance	5 absences; 2 late arrivals
FAST Reading PM1	34% proficiency; goal: 75%
District reading benchmark	42% proficiency
Observation	Strong relationships; weak pacing; limited checks for understanding
Discipline	8 classroom removals
Q1 grades	35% A/B; 20% C; 45% D/F
Teacher Reflection	
I spend hours planning but still feel like I am always behind.	

Sarah Analysis Notes

Prompt	Notes
Biggest strengths	_____
Primary needs	_____
Likely root causes	_____



SARAH: COACHING AND SUPPORT PLANNING

Use evidence, not assumptions, to determine support intensity.

Planning Prompt	Response
Suggested coaching tier	_____ _____
First 30-day action	_____ _____
District support needed	_____ _____
School-based support needed	_____ _____
Evidence to monitor	_____ _____

Quick Diagnostic Question

Is Sarah primarily struggling with effort, skill, system fit, or support design? What evidence tells you that?



CASE STUDY 2: MARCUS - SECONDARY TEACHER

Algebra I | Former engineer | Alternative certification | First-year teacher

Quarter 1 Indicator	Evidence
Attendance	Perfect
FAST Algebra PM1	29% proficiency; goal: 65%
District Algebra benchmark	31% proficiency
Observation	Strong content knowledge; low engagement; teacher-centered instruction
Discipline	Minimal referrals
Q1 grades	15% A/B; 25% C; 60% D/F

Teacher Reflection

I explain it exactly how I learned it. I do not understand why they are not getting it.

Marcus Analysis Notes

Prompt	Notes
Biggest strengths	_____
Primary needs	_____
Likely root causes	_____



MARCUS: COACHING AND SUPPORT PLANNING

Use evidence, not assumptions, to determine support intensity.

Planning Prompt	Response
Suggested coaching tier	_____ _____
First 30-day action	_____ _____
District support needed	_____ _____
School-based support needed	_____ _____
Evidence to monitor	_____ _____

Quick Diagnostic Question

How do you help Marcus translate content expertise into student-centered instruction without diminishing the expertise he brings?



THE SITUATION ROOM: CASE STUDY JIGSAW PROTOCOL

Move, analyze, return, and build the whole teacher.

Protocol Step	What to Do
1. Home Group Review	Review Sarah on page 8, Marcus on page 10, or both. Identify initial concerns.
2. Expert Group	Move to your assigned lens: CONNECT, LEARN, SUPPORT, or GROW.
3. Chart Paper Work	Record evidence, district supports, school supports, and 30-day actions.
4. Return Home	Teach your group what your lens revealed.
5. Build the Whole Teacher	Create a complete support plan.
6. Share Out	Name the biggest need, key support, owner, and immediate action.

Expert Group Planning Sheet

Assigned Lens	Notes
CONNECT: Mentorship & Relationships	_____
LEARN: Professional Learning	_____
SUPPORT: Emotional & Practical Support	_____
GROW: Feedback & Evaluation	_____



BUILD THE WHOLE TEACHER: SARAH

Use this page after returning from expert groups. Focus on the Elementary teacher profile.

Planning Item	Recommendation / Evidence
Greatest need	_____ _____
Recommended coaching tier	_____ _____
District support	_____ _____
School-based support	_____ _____
Mentor support	_____ _____
Professional learning support	_____ _____
Progress monitoring evidence	_____ _____
First 30-day action	_____ _____

Share-Out Sentence Stem

For Sarah, we believe the biggest need is _____. The district should _____. The school should _____. The first move in the next 30 days is _____.



BUILD THE WHOLE TEACHER: MARCUS

Use this page after returning from expert groups. Focus on the Secondary teacher profile.

Planning Item	Recommendation / Evidence
Greatest need	_____ _____
Recommended coaching tier	_____ _____
District support	_____ _____
School-based support	_____ _____
Mentor support	_____ _____
Professional learning support	_____ _____
Progress monitoring evidence	_____ _____
First 30-day action	_____ _____

Share-Out Sentence Stem

For Marcus, we believe the biggest need is _____. The district should _____. The school should _____. The first move in the next 30 days is _____.



DISTRICT VS. SCHOOL-BASED SUPPORTS

Clarify ownership so support is coordinated rather than accidental.

Support Need	District Supports	School-Based Supports
Classroom management	Training module; model routines; common tools	Coaching; walkthrough feedback; classroom setup support
Lesson design	PL sessions; content-specific resources	PLC support; lesson rehearsal; collaborative planning
Student engagement	Engagement strategies; resources; exemplars	Observation feedback; peer observation; routines
Emotional support	Cohort meetings; wellness and belonging structures	Mentor check-ins; principal/AP support; safe question spaces
Progress monitoring	Data tools; dashboards; tier movement review	Data conversations; evidence collection; 30-day follow-up
Certification progress	SOE/certification checkpoints; testing/route reminders	Artifact collection; local follow-up; administrator/mentor documentation

From First Days to First Year

5 Days	10 Days	First Month	First Quarter
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____



REFLECTION AND ACTION PLANNING

Convert the session into implementation next steps.

Prompt	Response
Three things we are already doing well	_____ _____
Three improvements we should consider	_____ _____
One action within 30 days	_____ _____
One action before the next school year	_____ _____

AI-Supported Induction: Prompt Starters

Using this teacher profile, create a 30-day support plan organized by CONNECT, LEARN, SUPPORT, and GROW. Include district and school-based responsibilities.

Turn these observation notes into timely, specific, actionable feedback with one next step and one follow-up question.

Create a professional growth plan summary for a first-year alternatively certified teacher using supportive, non-punitive language.

Summarize this assessment data and identify two likely instructional priorities for coaching.



TAKE BACK TO YOUR DISTRICT

What will you do before the next hiring cycle begins?

Final Reflection

If your district hired 50 alternatively certified teachers tomorrow, would they survive, thrive, or leave? What system must be built before the next hiring cycle begins?

A Note for University Partners

Talent Pipeline Possibilities

Teacher apprenticeships; residency models; microcredentials; alternative certification cohorts; grow-your-own initiatives.

Partnership Design Questions

What can districts and universities co-build? How can induction, preparation, and PL become more coherent?



ADDENDUM: FLORIDA ALTERNATIVE PATHWAY SUPPORT PLANNING MODEL

A take-back sample for aligning training, coaching, certification progress, and retention across the temporary certificate runway.

Purpose of this addendum

This model is not a certification checklist or legal guidance document. It is a planning tool for district professional learning leaders, school leaders, mentors/coaches, HR/certification staff, and alternative pathway teachers to coordinate support. Final certification decisions should be grounded in the teacher’s official Statement of Status of Eligibility, Florida Department of Education requirements, and local district/charter procedures.

TRAIN	COACH	CERTIFY & RETAIN
What the teacher needs to learn	What the teacher needs to practice with feedback	What the teacher must complete to remain eligible and progress toward professional certification
District PL, onboarding, just-in-time modules, content support, assessment/data use	Mentoring, observations, coaching cycles, PLC support, evidence-based feedback	SOE review, temporary certificate timeline, FTCE/requirements monitoring, pathway completion, retention planning
Question: What learning is needed this month?	Question: What behavior or practice should improve this month?	Question: What requirement or milestone must be monitored this month?



FLORIDA CERTIFICATION MILESTONE LANGUAGE

Use broad, practical language in support plans without turning the plan into a compliance manual.

Certification Support Checkpoint	Planning Question for the System
Review the teacher's Official Statement of Status of Eligibility (SOE).	Who reviews the SOE with the teacher and when?
Confirm temporary certificate status, subject area, and expiration timeline.	Who tracks the expiration timeline and communicates deadlines?
Identify remaining Professional Certificate requirements from the SOE.	Which requirements are complete, in progress, or not started?
Monitor subject area knowledge requirements and any required FTCE progress.	What testing support, timelines, or reminders are needed?
Monitor General Knowledge requirements, if applicable.	Is this requirement applicable to this teacher? If so, what is the plan?
Select and support an approved professional preparation/education competence pathway, such as a district/charter PLCP, EPI, approved coursework/experience route, or other eligible route.	Which route is the teacher using, and who monitors progress?
Collect and review evidence of instructional growth, professional competence, and evaluation progress.	What artifacts show growth in classroom practice?
Schedule regular certification checkpoints so the upgrade to a Professional Certificate is not left until the final year.	What quarterly checkpoint prevents last-minute certification risk?

Source note: Florida Department of Education certification pages identify the SOE, temporary/professional certificate types, steps to certification, and professional preparation/education competence pathways. Always verify current requirements with FLDOE and local certification staff.

YEAR 1 MONTHLY EXEMPLAR: MARCUS (AUGUST-DECEMBER)

Secondary Algebra I teacher; former engineer; first-year alternative certification teacher. Strong content knowledge, low engagement, teacher-centered instruction, low proficiency, high D/F distribution.

How to read the sample

The tier is not a label for the teacher. It is a support intensity decision. A teacher may move between Universal, Targeted, and Intensive support as evidence changes.

Month	Tier	Development Focus	FL Certification Milestone	District/System Role	School/Site Role	Evidence
August	Universal	Routines, procedures, pacing, lesson structure	Review SOE; confirm temporary certificate timeline; identify remaining requirements	New Teacher Academy; certification orientation; classroom management module	Mentor assigned; classroom setup; first-week walkthrough	Lesson plans, routines, walkthrough notes
September	Targeted	Student engagement; checks for understanding	Confirm testing/certification timeline; identify needed supports	Coaching cycle on engagement; active learning PL	Peer observation; PLC lesson planning; mentor check-in	Exit tickets, engagement look-fors, observation feedback
October	Targeted	Assessment, grading, and reteaching from unit data	Monitor FTCE/GK/subject-area needs, as applicable	Assessment PL; gradebook/data support	Gradebook review; unit test analysis with coach/AP	Grade distribution, unit tests, benchmark data
November	Targeted/Intensive	Reteaching, intervention groups, and scaffolding	Confirm professional preparation/education competence pathway	Data coaching; intervention planning protocol	Small-group planning support; instructional walkthrough	Benchmark trends, student work, lesson adjustments
December	Targeted	Midyear reflection and support adjustment	Quarterly certification progress check	Self-efficacy survey; coaching review; certification reminder	Growth conference; mentor documentation	Observation growth, teacher reflection, requirement status

YEAR 1 MONTHLY EXEMPLAR: MARCUS (JANUARY-JULY)

Secondary Algebra I teacher; former engineer; first-year alternative certification teacher. Strong content knowledge, low engagement, teacher-centered instruction, low proficiency, high D/F distribution.

Month	Tier	Development Focus	FL Certification Milestone	District/System Role	School/Site Role	Evidence
January	Universal/Targeted	Instructional reset; re-entry routines; engagement reset	Update certification completion plan and spring deadlines	Midyear cohort session; restart module	First-week observation and feedback; PLC reset	Student engagement, pacing, discipline/attendance trends
February	Targeted	Differentiation, questioning, and scaffolds	Support evidence toward professional competence	Content-specific PL; modeling/video examples	PLC lesson design support; peer observation	Student work samples, exit ticket trends
March	Targeted	Data use and instructional adjustment before spring assessments	Monitor testing and route completion progress	Data analysis support; coaching on reteach cycles	Data conversation with administrator/coach	Progress monitoring, assessment trends
April	Universal/Targeted	Documentation of growth; professional identity	Collect artifacts and review certification progress	Certification checkpoint; portfolio/artifact guidance	Mentor documentation and summative prep	Portfolio/artifacts, walkthroughs, evaluation notes
May	Universal/Targeted	Retention, reflection, and Year 2 readiness	Confirm remaining requirements and next steps	Retention conversation; next-year support planning	Summative growth conference; placement considerations	Evaluation, survey, retention intent, Year 2 plan
June/July	Universal	Refine support plan and summer certification progress	Update timeline; schedule next certification checkpoint	Revise induction supports; communicate summer options	Identify mentor needs and placement factors	Updated Year 2 plan, completed requirements, PD registration



BLANK MONTHLY SUPPORT PLAN TEMPLATE (AUGUST-JANUARY)

Use this to build a district-, school-, or teacher-specific plan. Duplicate the table for each teacher or cohort.

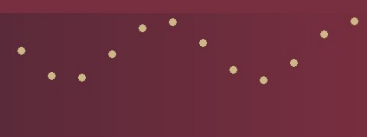
Month	Teacher Need/Focus	Tier	Certification Milestone	District Role	School Role	Evidence/Progress Check
August	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
September	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
October	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
November	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
December	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
January	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____



BLANK MONTHLY SUPPORT PLAN TEMPLATE (FEBRUARY-JULY)

Use this to build a district-, school-, or teacher-specific plan. Duplicate the table for each teacher or cohort.

Month	Teacher Need/Focus	Tier	Certification Milestone	District Role	School Role	Evidence/Progress Check
February	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
March	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
April	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
May	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
June/July	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Next Step	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____



FIVE-YEAR CERTIFICATION AND RETENTION RUNWAY

Use the five-year temporary certificate window as a planning runway, not a last-minute compliance deadline.

Year	Primary Goal	Certification Focus	Development Focus	System Responsibility	Evidence / Decision Point
Year 1	Stabilize	Review SOE; establish route; begin requirements	Routines, planning, classroom management, feedback cycles	District onboarding + school mentoring + certification checkpoint	Growth plan, support tier, certification timeline
Year 2	Strengthen	Continue testing/coursework/PLCP/EP I progress	Engagement, differentiation, assessment, data use	Targeted PL + coaching + route monitoring	Improved evaluation evidence and student data
Year 3	Demonstrate proficiency	Monitor completion of major requirements	Consistent standards-aligned instruction and professional habits	Evidence review + evaluation alignment + retention check	Proficiency evidence, artifacts, mid-runway risk review
Year 4	Sustain and lead	Close remaining certification gaps	Collaboration, PLC participation, teacher leadership habits	Advanced PL + leadership pathways + certification monitoring	Remaining requirements, leadership artifacts, retention risk
Year 5	Complete and retain	Upgrade to Professional Certificate before deadline	Long-term placement, leadership growth, mentoring potential	Certification completion + retention strategy	Professional Certificate, retention plan, next role consideration

AI PROMPT STARTER AND QUALITY CHECK

Use AI to draft the structure. Use professional judgment, district policy, certification requirements, and local data to finalize it.

Reusable AI Prompt

I am designing a yearlong induction, coaching, and certification support plan for a first-year alternatively certified teacher in Florida. The teacher is a [grade/subject] teacher. Strengths include [insert strengths]. Needs include [insert needs]. Current data include [assessment data, attendance, discipline, grade distribution, observation evidence, and teacher reflection]. Create a month-by-month Year 1 support plan from August through July. Include: development focus, coaching tier, certification milestone, district professional learning role, school-based role, mentor/coach role, teacher action steps, and evidence to monitor. Also create a 3-5 year certification and retention runway that supports movement from temporary certification toward professional certification while improving instructional practice. Keep the plan practical, supportive, and appropriate for district professional learning leaders.

Quality Check	Yes / Notes
Does the plan match the teacher's actual evidence rather than assumptions?	_____
Are district and school responsibilities clearly separated?	_____
Does the plan include certification progress checkpoints?	_____
Is the language supportive, specific, and non-punitive?	_____
Is there a clear next action within 30 days?	_____

Selected Sources

Florida Department of Education. (n.d.). Certificate types and requirements. <https://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/general-cert-requirements/>

Florida Department of Education. (n.d.). Certificate pathways & routes. <https://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/pathways-routes/>

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National Center for Education Statistics. (2022). Characteristics of public school teachers who completed alternative route to certification programs.

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