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TEACHER RETENTION THROUGH MENTORSHIP

High quality teacher retention is essential. In Texas, after five years in the profession, 28.8% of beginning teachers leave the teaching force (TEA, 2014). The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB; 2014) identifies four key components to retaining effective teachers, including, the development of mentorship programs to support beginning teachers and principal and administration leadership.

Although current Texas statute, TEC §21.458(a), does not require school districts to provide mentors to beginning teachers, rigorous scholarship in the field of teacher retention (DeAngelis, Wall & Che, 2013; Ingersoll, 2012; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Johnson, 2006; Smith, T. M. & Ingersoll, R.M., 2004) recognizes the positive impact teacher retention has on student learning. For example, prior research on the state's Novice Teacher Induction Program (NTIP), launched in 2002, concludes that participating cohorts of teachers stayed in their profession at higher rates than teachers from across the state and within the same regions of the state than did those who did not participate in the mentoring program. The study, conducted by Huling, Resta, and Yeargain (2012), included three cohorts of new teachers (N=954) who were evaluated in their first five years of teaching. It found that the cohort of teachers who entered in 2004-5 (N=321) and participated in mentoring had an 80 percent retention rate compared to the regional average of 66 percent and the state average of 68 percent.

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