# Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee

## Impact of Flexible Use of Mentor Funds

# Colleagues From the Field

- **Judy Lewis, ILT Coordinator with the Buncombe County Schools, will share with you about their beginning teacher support program**

- **Ms. Agnes Bernasconi, a 2nd year Elementary School Teacher at Rashkis Elementary School, will share with you her thoughts on her support program. She is from the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City School system.**

- **Ms. Helenita Harper, a 3rd year Spanish teacher at Durant Road Elementary School, will share with you her experiences in going through the beginning teacher program here in the Wake County Public School System.**

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# Mentor Program:

- Orientation which includes state, district, and school expectations
- Assignment within the area of licensure
- Limited lesson preps
- Peer coaching
- Reflective thinking
- Mutual coaching
- Optimum teaching load
- Limited non-instructional duties
- Working condition considerations
- Mentor teacher training program
- Criteria for selection of excellent, experienced, and qualified teachers to be participants in the mentor teacher training program.

# Funding Changes

- The 2008 Budget Bill contains a special provision that requires the State Board of Education to allot funds for mentoring services to local school administrative units based on the highest number of employees in the preceding three school years who
- (i) are paid with State, federal, or local funds and
- (ii) are either teachers paid on the first or second steps of the teacher salary schedule or instructional support personnel paid on the first step of the instructional support personnel salary schedule.
- LEAs are to use these funds to provide mentoring support to eligible employees in accordance with a plan approved by the State Board of Education. The plan shall include information on how all mentors in the LEAs will be trained to provide mentoring support.

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# House Bill 2360

New legislation, HB 2360, allows a local board of education to assign to serve as full-time mentors the greater of five or five percent of the number of National Board Professional Teaching Standards teachers it has who meet certain eligibility requirements. These teachers shall continue to receive the 12% salary differential.

# 2008-2009 Transition Plan for Mentors

At their August meeting the State Board of Education approved the following mentor transition plan:

*During the 2008-2009 School Year, LEAs may continue to use their*

*mentor funds in the following ways to support new teachers:*

1. *Implementation of full-time mentor plans previously approved by the State Board;*

2. *employment of full-time mentors;*

3. *contracted services of full-time or part-time mentors; or*

4. *monthly supplements for practicing classroom teachers who serve as mentors.*

*LEAs may use federal Title II funds, low wealth and small county funds, DSSF funds (if part of the LEA DSSF plan) and other appropriate funding sources to employ mentors.*

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# Relevant Data

- **The retention of lateral entry teachers has improved since 1995; however, nearly half of our lateral entry teachers leave the profession after the third year.**

- **The 2006-2007 retention rate of beginning teachers with no experience was 83.5% after the first year. The rate dips down to 73.6% after two years and down to 56.4% after four years.**

**Nationwide, it is reported that approximately 50% of teachers leave the profession after five years. In North Carolina, for the most recent five-year cohorts the rates are:**

- **Beginning teachers with no experience credit      56.0%**
- **Beginning teachers with experience credit      51.4%**
- **Lateral entry teachers      48.3%**

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# Data on Mentoring from the 2008 Teacher Working Conditions Survey

**Needs of New Teachers**

- New teachers are more likely to report needing professional development to be effective than veteran teachers.

**Mentoring**

- Even though both State Statue and State Board of Education policy require assigned mentors for new teachers their first year and/or their first and second year, only nine out of ten report this happening.

- Of those teachers reporting that they receive mentoring, many report that their mentor provided effective support in many areas.

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# Principal Mentoring

**Survey Questions:**

- **Describe the Mentoring Program your LEA has in place for principals.**

- **How many principals were served by this program during 2007-2008?**

- **How many principals will be served by this program during 2008-2009?**

- **Please provide information that relates to the effectiveness of your program in the retention of principals.**

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# Principal Mentoring

**Common Themes**

**-Program Implementation:**

- The use of respected and successful retired principals
- Mentors provide ongoing communications with those being mentored
- New principals are provided a mentor for two years
- Orientation sessions for beginning principals are very effective
- Current full-time principals serve as peer mentors
- Additional on-site visits by the mentor in the schools of those principals being mentored
- Special professional development opportunities are provided for the crucial daily functions of a principal (i.e. budgeting, hiring, decision making, resource management, data analysis, etc.)
- Principal Academy
- Mentors work through on-site visits, emails, phone calls, and meetings
- There are additional contacts with the Superintendent

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# Principal Mentoring

## Program Effectiveness:

- Generally, mentoring of principals is extremely effective.
- Trust is best established when the mentor has no evaluative function.
- New principals feel more supported with the various mentoring programs being utilized.
- Many LEAs report 100% retention of principals since implementing a principal mentoring program.
- Veteran principals serving as mentors are already very busy and it's a struggle for them to provide assistance as needed with the mentoring tasks.

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