

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #12 (2004-2005)

August 2, 2004

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: DISTRICT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PROJECT
EVALUATION REPORT FOR THE 2003-2004 SCHOOL YEAR

PERTINENT FACTS:

During the 2003-2004 school year, the Training and Professional Development Department oversaw the federally funded and state administered Recruitment and Retention Grant. Kay Bennett was the Contract Coordinator for this grant. The attached report and attachment were submitted to the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED). The grant had specific areas of permitted focus and the report format was largely dictated by DEED. The Anchorage School District focused their grant participation in the following areas:

- Teacher Mentor Program - New teachers who participated in the ASD mentoring program were matched with 82 current and retired mentors.
- Mentor Training - More than 100 members of post-service (first year+) were trained through TPD, in addition to the collaborative training sessions conducted with the University of Alaska/Alaska Partnership for Teacher Enhancement pre-service mentor program. An additional cohort of 13 principals received training.
- Retention Incentives - New teachers received two survival-oriented texts, addenda were paid to mentors for their services, and stipends were provided to those teachers who participated in mentor trainings.
- Principal Mentor Program - Forty-six mentors and first-year principals participated in the fourth year of the ASD/APA/UAA Principal Mentoring Program.

Evaluation processes and findings for the 2003-2004 focused areas are included in the attached report, which was submitted to the DEED in late July of 2004. It

appears from those evaluations the most successful areas of the grant were teacher mentoring, mentor training, and the principal mentoring.

With the end of the recruitment and retention grant, continued funding for both the teacher and principal mentoring programs has been incorporated into the Title II and General Operating Budget for the 2004-2005 school year. Both programs are highlighted and focused activities in the Training and Professional Development Six-Year Instructional Plan.

CC/JC/RB/KB/CS

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Approved by: Jan Christensen, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction



TPD

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Report prepared by:

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July 21, 2004

District Recruitment and Retention Project Evaluation for DEED - 2003-2004 School Year

1. Rural Practicum - ASD did not participate.

2. Mentor Program

The Mentor Program utilizes current and retired ASD teachers as mentors for new educators. This program was developed as a non-evaluative mentoring relationship and is designed to provide new educators with support and the confidence to be effective. There were 82 matches with first year educators and approximately 2800 hours of mentoring during the 03/04 school year.

How many mentors participated from your district?

- There were eighty-two mentors of first year educators. All mentors were from inside the ASD and included both retired and current educators.

How many mentors came from out of the district? None

How were the mentors chosen?

- To be eligible to become a mentor ASD requires that an exemplary educator have at least 5 years of successful teaching experience, the last three in ASD. The mentor applicant must take the ASD approved Mentor Training course and commit to follow-up training sessions throughout the school year. After the initial 15 hour training, an application must be submitted. The application includes the recommendation of a principal and an ASD colleague. Beginning Teacher Support Program staff checks the recommendations to make sure the applicant is ready to mentor.
- ASD partners with the Anchorage Education Association to finalize decisions regarding the training, recruitment of mentors, qualifications for mentors, and other areas of the program.

What was the ratio of teachers per mentor?

- There were 82 mentors who worked with 82 mentees. 1: 1

What evidence shows the impact of the mentor program?

- The **evaluation** process of the mentoring program took on a three pronged approach. Data was collected from TPD Mentor Liaison mentee face-to-face interviews, mentor surveys, and from summative reports, which document the strategies and services, that were provided to the mentee by the mentor. This information is used to help us plan professional development opportunities for mentors.
- Data was needed to assess how the **mentees** felt about the learning they gained with their mentor and the support they received from the program. This was accomplished by face-to-face interviews with 70 mentees (85%). Generally, we wanted to know what went well, what did not work out, and any suggestions for improving the way services are provided.

Mentee Findings:

- Location was the most significant variable in the mentor match. Secondly, Mentors and Mentees reported greatest satisfaction with the program when they were matched with grade level and content mentors.
- *Mentors* completed an electronic survey to provide data on whether the program was meeting their needs and what suggestions they have for refining the program next year.

Mentor Findings:

- Answers to the rated questions were very positive overall.
- Mentors felt well trained.
- Concerns included a need for more hands-on curricular training.
- Sub release time with their mentee was most helpful
- The Fall Mentor Meeting was very informative
- Mentor Communication Skills was valuable
- Mentors reported that the on-going mentor discussion groups were very beneficial.
- Observing an exemplary teacher together was effective
- Time to meet, time to talk, time to work together are challenges
- Using the Collaborative log and summative Report consistently was also a challenge.
(Attached is the Mentor Survey of the Program - Appendix B)

Mentors turned in a *summative log* for payment of hours spent with the mentee. The log provided the program with valuable data showing what topics and strategies the mentor and mentee used to help deepen the mentee learning.

Strategies reported most often in the logs:

- Classroom management strategies
- Technology
- Problem solving with the mentee
- Using reflective practice with the mentee
- Providing the mentee with resources.
- Providing non-judgmental feedback.
- Unit planning and lesson planning
- Connecting and focusing classroom work to the mentee's professional goals.
- Observing each other or observing a demo classroom as
- How to work effectively with parents
- Assessment Organizational skills
- Open house
- End of the year preparation

Describe the community involvement

- There are two groups that provide the program with an important perspective and valuable insights.
- The AEA Education Excellence Joint Committee was created in 1996 to collaborate with the ASD on developing the mentoring training and program. Members include a NEA representative, the president of the Association and current teachers and other District employees.
- UAA/APTE represents a specific constituency. The focus with this collaboration is mentor training and providing services for teachers during their internship.

Mentor Training

- **What was the duration in hours of mentor training?**

- 15-hour Mentor Communication Skills is the foundation training that all mentors take to fulfill the requirements of the program.

- ***What university credit did mentors receive?***
 - University of Alaska, Anchorage, one graded graduate level credit
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- ***What activities fostered effective leadership development?***
 - Each year a Fall Kick-off district-wide meeting is provided for all mentors.
 - Fostering Effective Partnerships 3 hour workshop required for mentors and mentees to take together
 - Professional Practices workshops and book study groups
- ***What activity was tied to learning research based best practice?***
 - Modeling a mentoring session
 - Roleplays where one person is a struggling first year teacher and the other person is the mentor.
 - Observation and feedback
- ***What plans does your district have for continued support for new teachers?***
 - The Anchorage School District School Board has seen fit to fund the ASD Mentoring Program by providing \$200,000 in addenda funds to meet past objectives of the program and meet contractual obligations inherent in the AEA negotiated agreement.
 - The ASD has submitted a NCLB application calling for three mentor liaisons to support the future program. The Board has approved that application and it has received strong support from the Superintendent.

- The ASD will continue to work closely with preservice teacher preparation programs to help create a seamless mentoring situation for our new teachers. We will be providing foundation training for mentors who will serve both preservice and teachers requesting mentors.
- Also: (See attached DRAFT redesign – Appendix A)

4. Mentor/Mentee

What was the rate of retention of mentee?

The retention rate for first year ASD teachers is unknown at this time. According to data for the past two years, ASD has a high retention rate in the first two years of a new educators career. By the 3rd to 5th year, ASD falls within the national attrition rate. ASD loses about 36% of the new-hires by the 5th year of employment.

Was there evidence that the mentor relationship had a positive impact on the mentees' effectiveness, particularly in improving student achievement?

Mentees indicated that the partnership provided a smooth transition into the classroom, helped with management, lesson planning, etc. The question of whether this can be shown to link with student achievement is difficult to answer based on a successful mentoring partnership that was funded for 25 hours.

5. Mentor Support

Give an example of support by district for the program.

- Mentor/Mentee training supplies and sub release time.
- Videos and materials are available to the mentors to use in their work with the mentees.
- Beginning Teacher Support Program New Teacher News
- Induction Liaisons and an induction effort to acclimate and orient new educators to the ASD.

- Two elementary positions and one secondary position as Mentor Liaisons.
- Professional Development incentives for attendance at mandated curricular and state and federal inservice programs when a Saturday option was taken.

Was there community support (outreach)?

- The University of Alaska, Anchorage, APTE program has collaborated with ASD in the training of mentors. Not only did UAA award the credit but Janet Steinhauser, Mentoring Coordinator for APTE attended weekly meetings with the TPD team to further efforts at providing a seamless mentoring program from pre-service to first year teaching.
- As mentioned earlier, the Anchorage Education Association was supportive of the program. The Educational Excellence Joint Committee (EEJC) met with the Beginning Teacher Support Program staff to discuss training and budget issues. Their dedication to the mentoring efforts of the district go back to 1996 when the AEA and ASD negotiated a mentoring option for all AEA educators.

6. Retention Incentives

What incentives were paid for with these grant funds?

- R&R disallowed ASD to provide the New Teacher Training Fair this year. This key training has been the catalyst in the past for mentor/mentee matching. The NTTF was also a time when we would have given incentives to new teachers to receive curricular and state and federal mandated training prior to school starting which was a key component of the Induction and Mentoring Program.
- New teachers received two new books each to help them with a smooth beginning to their career. *Survival Skills for New*

Teachers, by the University Press, and The First Days of School by Harry Wong.

- Addenda funds were used as incentives for Mentors to mentor and to help defray costs associated with attending training.

7. **Principal Mentoring Program 03-04**

The Principal Mentor Program matched first year and new to ASD principals, as defined by the ASD/APA negotiated agreement, with ASD mentor trained principals at the beginning of the 2003 school year. Plans were developed between the new principal and the mentor to assist the new principal in establishing learning goals and addressing the skills required by the State Performance Standards for Administrators. All communications between the mentor and the new principal were confidential and the program was separate from the evaluation of the new principal. Forty-six (46) administrators participated in the Principal Mentor Program. All Three levels (High, Middle, and Elementary) were represented.

MLP Principal Mentor/Mentee Program Survey

A survey of the Principal Mentor/Mentee Program was conducted at the end of the current school year. The survey included both quantitative and qualitative statements and questions. 43 of the 46 participants responded.

A collation of the survey results:

- **Strengths:**
- Provided self reflection
- Confidentially
- Collegiality
- Mutually beneficial
- Exquisite
- Development of strong relationship
- Great match

- Combination of structured meetings and informal conversations
- Personal/professional support
- Collaborating, sharing ideas, planning together
- Provided more extensive network

- **Suggestions for next year:**
- Set aside formal time (provide 1/2 day to meet)
- Require monthly meetings/ guideline standards
- Principal mentor to AP difficult at elementary
- Expectation upon hiring (not an option)
- Schedule group meetings
- More publicity of the positive aspects of program
- Use retired principals (more time available)
- Schedule workshops that are relevant to new administrators (simple things) Middle School
- Continue program
- Keep matches at same level

Mentor Training

A mentor credit class was offered this spring for interested principals. 13 principals participated in the class. The class will be offered again this fall.

Program Support

- Each of the mentors and mentees received a certificate of recognition at an evening gathering this May. The celebration was sponsored through the partnership of Anchorage Principal Association, UAA Alaska Partnership for Teacher Enhancement (APTE), and ASD.
- Each mentor received a stipend for their support and service to the mentees from the State R & R Grant.
- Their peers at the APA Spring Luncheon recognized all mentors and mentees.

Principal Mentoring Changes for Next Year

With the termination of the State R & R Grant for the 2004-05 school year, the Anchorage School Board voted to support the Principal Mentor/Mentee Program through the general operating budget.