

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1290
By: Van de Putte, West
Education
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

There are alarming statistics that suggest that more than 50 percent of teachers leave the profession within their first five years of teaching, and Texas' attrition rate is even higher than the national average. States and school districts are forced to devote attention, time, and financial resources to initiatives designed to attract additional candidates to replace teachers who leave the profession. Teacher turnover also has a negative impact on student achievement.

In 1996, the State Board for Educator Certification required that beginning teachers in Texas be assigned a mentor and implemented a pilot mentoring program, the Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS). Evaluations of TxBESS have shown a significant increase in the retention rates of participating teachers. A number of other studies also indicate that mentoring improves teacher retention rates.

As demand rises for existing teachers to move into new fields, with or without full certification, the state must find cost-effective ways to provide those teachers with the necessary support to help them and their students succeed. School districts should be encouraged to offer mentoring opportunities for teachers who are not necessarily new to the profession, but are new to a particular subject or grade level.

S.B. 1290 amends current law relating to authorization for school districts to provide mentors for teachers assigned to a new subject or grade level.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 21.458(a), Education Code, to authorize each school district to assign a mentor teacher to each classroom teacher who has less than two years of teaching experience in the subject or grade level to which the teacher is assigned. Requires a teacher assigned as a mentor, to the extent practicable, to teach in the same school.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.