

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.S.B. 1290
By: Van de Putte
Public Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Statistics suggest that more than one-half of teachers leave the profession within the first five years of teaching. 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 beginning teachers in Texas to be assigned a mentor and implemented a pilot mentoring program, the Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS). Evaluations of TxBESS and a number of other studies have shown a significant increase in the retention rates of teachers participating in a mentoring program.

As demand increases 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. A school district should be encouraged to offer mentoring opportunities for a teacher who may not necessarily be new to the profession but who is new to a particular subject or grade level.

C.S.S.B. 1290 authorizes each school district to assign a mentor to a teacher who has less than two years of teaching experience in a subject or grade level and makes the requirement that a teacher assigned as a mentor teach in the same school to the extent practical.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

C.S.S.B. 1290 amends the Education Code to specify that the teaching experience threshold of less than two years that qualifies a classroom teacher to be assigned a mentor teacher is teaching experience of less than two years in the subject or grade level to which the classroom teacher is assigned. The bill makes the requirement that a teacher assigned as a mentor teacher teach in the same school applicable only to the extent practicable.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the act does not receive the necessary vote, the act takes effect September 1, 2009.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

C.S.S.B. 1290 adds a provision not in the original making the requirement that a teacher assigned as a mentor teacher teach in the same school as the teacher assigned the mentor applicable only to the extent practicable.