

By: Bernal

H.B. No. 816

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a school district assigning a mentor teacher to a new classroom teacher.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 21.458, Education Code, is amended by adding Subsections (a-1), (b-1), (f), and (g) and amending Subsections (b) and (d) to read as follows:

(a-1) To be assigned as a mentor, a teacher must agree to serve as a mentor teacher for at least two school years. The assignment must begin on the first day of employment of the classroom teacher to whom the mentor teacher is assigned.

(b) The commissioner shall adopt rules necessary to administer this section, including rules concerning the duties and qualifications of a teacher who serves as a mentor, and the number of classroom teachers that may be assigned to a mentor. The rules concerning qualifications must require that to serve as a mentor a teacher must:

(1) complete a research-based mentor and induction training program approved by the commissioner;

(2) complete a mentor training program provided by the district; ~~and~~

(3) have at least three complete years of teaching experience with a superior record of assisting students, as a whole, in achieving improvement in student performance; and

1 (4) demonstrate interpersonal skills, instructional
2 effectiveness, and leadership skills.

3 (b-1) A school district must provide training to mentor
4 teachers and any appropriate district and campus employees who work
5 with the classroom teacher or supervise the classroom teacher. The
6 training must be completed by the mentor teacher and the district
7 and campus employees before the beginning of the school year. The
8 district shall also provide supplemental training to mentor
9 teachers and employees during the school year. The training must
10 include content related to best mentorship practices.

11 (d) In adopting rules under this section [~~Subsection (c)~~],
12 the commissioner shall rely on research-based mentoring programs
13 that, through external evaluation, have demonstrated success.

14 (f) A mentor teacher must meet with each classroom teacher
15 assigned to the mentor at least once a week for an individual
16 mentoring session lasting at least 45 minutes, with not less than 12
17 hours of meeting time each semester. The mentoring sessions must
18 address the following topics:

19 (1) orientation to the context, policies, and
20 practices of the school district;

21 (2) data-driven instructional practices;

22 (3) specific instructional coaching cycles, including
23 coaching regarding conferences between parents and the classroom
24 teacher;

25 (4) professional development; and

26 (5) professional expectations.

27 (g) A school district must:

1 (1) designate a specific time during the school day
2 for meetings between mentor teachers and classroom teachers
3 assigned to a mentor; and

4 (2) schedule release time or a reduced teaching load
5 for mentor teachers and classroom teachers under this section to
6 facilitate mentoring activities, including classroom observations
7 or participation in supportive coaching.

8 SECTION 2. Subchapter C, Chapter 42, Education Code, is
9 amended by adding Section 42.161 to read as follows:

10 Sec. 42.161. MENTOR PROGRAM ALLOTMENT. (a) A school
11 district that has implemented a mentoring program for classroom
12 teachers who have less than two years of teaching experience under
13 Section 21.458 is entitled to an allotment as determined under
14 Subsection (b) to fund the mentoring program and to provide
15 stipends for mentor teachers.

16 (b) The commissioner shall adopt a formula to determine the
17 amount that each district described by Subsection (a) is entitled
18 to.

19 (c) Funding provided to districts under this section may be
20 used only for providing:

21 (1) mentor teacher stipends;

22 (2) scheduled release time for mentor teachers and the
23 classroom teachers to whom they are assigned for meeting and
24 engaging in mentoring activities; and

25 (3) mentoring support through providers of mentor
26 training.

27 SECTION 3. Section 21.458(c), Education Code, is repealed.

1 SECTION 4. This Act applies beginning with the 2017-2018
2 school year.

3 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
4 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
5 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
6 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
7 Act takes effect September 1, 2017.