

# MICROFILM DIVIDER

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HB 1094

2001 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. HB1094

House Education Committee

Conference Committee

Hearing Date 01/15/01

Tape Number	Side A	Side B	Meter #
#1		X	4 to 5445
Committee Clerk Signature <i>Lisa Albertson</i>			

Minutes:

Chairman R. Kelsch, Vice-Chair T. Brusegaard, Rep. Bellew, Rep. Grumbo, Rep. Haas, Rep. Hanson, Rep. Hawken, Rep. Hunskor, Rep. Johnson, Rep. Meier, Rep. Mueller, Rep. Nelson, Rep. Nottestad, Rep. Solberg, Rep. Thoreson

Chairman Kelsch: We will open the hearing for HB1094

Deb Jensen: (Asst. Director of ESPB) Please refer to the attached testimony.

Rep. Hunskor: Are we talking about teacher who are choosing to move out of the state?

Jensen: We're talking about both. In this survey, we didn't ask teachers, specifically where they were intending to go, but in a previous survey we did, where we worked with Job Service, we felt that some of them were leaving the state and some of them were staying in the state, but choosing other professions.

Rep. Nelson: What's the biggest obstacle to retain our teachers?

Jenson: Undoubtedly our survey shows that salary is the biggest factor. Measuring and professional development assistance were the secondary factor to that, but that it was also a very important factor.

Rep. Nelson: So, would that money be better spent in the bill that would mandate the governor's proposal to give a \$3500 increase to teachers. Would that, in itself, help enough, that maybe, if we couldn't institute all of these policies in one biennium, but that would be more important than this mentoring program. Would you agree?

Jenson: I would have to say, while that is the foremost issue, I think that the mentoring issue is also a very important one, because we have such a very high drop out rate for teachers, and this is not just a state drop out rate, this is a national drop out rate, even in states where salaries are higher, they're finding that mentoring programs help them retain teachers.

Rep. Haas: Can you provide us with a detailed breakdown of how you would spend that \$375,000 over the biennium.

Jenson: Yes, I don't have that with me, but I can certainly get that for you.

Rep. Nottestad: On the school districts that do some mentoring programs, in your survey that you put out, did you find that there was any increase or decrease in the dropout rate?

Jenson: I'm not sure I can accurately answer that question, because when we got the survey results back, we did try to segregate by regions of the state, so that we could pinpoint where the mentoring programs are going on and where the answers are coming from, but because we didn't get large returns from some regions, it was difficult to do that, but we did find, when we segregated by grade level, in areas where mentoring was a major focus, like in the middle school level, that they were twice as likely to have mentors as the high school teachers were, and those

people were also more satisfied and more likely to come back than the high school people were, so there were some correlations.

Rep. Thoreson: How confident are you that this could leverage some other money of other kinds besides the other experience that you had.

Jenson: The grant that I referred to was a Title 2 Grant from the Federal Government, that was for teacher quality enhancement, and it was a very significant grant, and the comments that we got back from that one were that they like the design of the program, and how we implemented it, and the importance of what we were doing, but again, they were not sure we could continue it after the funding ended. There are resources for funding. The accrediting agency that we work with is very much pushing the induction program, both as a quality issue and a retention issue, so there is a lot of interest, and there are some money sources we could pursue.

Rep. Johnson: Is this mentoring program something that other states are doing to?

Jenson: Yes, there are other states that are, in fact, mandating mentoring programs in a variety of different forms, depending on what their own issues are.

Rep. Hunsakor: Could you briefly tell me who chooses the mentors?

Jenson: The model that we're going to be using is going to be coming up in a moment with Project Launch, and from other programs we've looked at. It does use a mentor teacher that would be in the school with them. There are a few areas that we've talked about where that may not be possible, for instance, in areas in Tech. Ed. that may not have another teacher. We've been looking at some options, where there would be an experienced person working with them in their own school, but then they could have another person that is also mentoring that is actually a Tech Ed. person from another district.

Rep. Hunsaker: Are those people paid?

Jenson: In the Project Launch model they were not paid, but their expenses were reimbursed when they would get together for meetings. Their budget did not have enough in it.

Rep. Thoreson: Could it be used for teachers who have some sort of an adjustment problem, they've been there a couple years, and administration feels like they're not doing the job, could this program be helpful to them?

Jenson: There are a number of different models out there. The one we're proposing would be primarily for working with new teachers. There are some programs that go on for two or three years and can take care of those other issues as well.

Linda Edwards: (Director of Professional Development for the NDEA) Please refer to attached testimony.

Rep. Mueller: What has your group done in terms of a mentoring effort and talk to us about what you have done and what you see yourself doing and the contributions you could bring to a mentor program.

Edwards: We've done a lot state wide, but it hasn't been systematic or organized. We've worked with individual school buildings and individual school districts, but the need to retain teachers statewide has been a priority. NDEA has an IPD commission that has mentoring as its top priority. From the last year and a half, we've spent researching what kind of programs are out there, where there's a weakness, and what we can do as an association to train the mentors. Currently, we're bringing in a training the first week of June, that's a week long intensive training. It's a systematic approach. That's the difference between what we're talking about today and other mentoring programs. When we interviewed mentors and mentees that have been

through a program, the #1 concern they have is that there isn't a specific time to meet with a mentor or a mentee so they're meeting after school. That's not specific time to look at how one teaches. We also have teachers that are switching content areas, and so they're almost starting their teaching careers over, so they also need some encouragement and support.

Rep. Grumbo: The question that I have, and I think it was brought out in regard to teacher centers as playing a part in getting this off the ground as well, and whether or not that should be in the whole heart of the program that we would like to see here.

Edwards: We certainly have talked at length about that in our design. In our original proposal to the federal grant, we looked at having two corridors, and using the teacher centers as a base within those corridors. The one thing we don't want to do is do this so large that we can't control it, so that it doesn't become another program. We want it to be well organized and systematic. We have to start with a strong training core and then the next phase would be to train those trainers, and then from then on it just keeps escalating so it will be statewide.

Rep. Grumbo: Technology as far as schools, and we're talking here of quality in education, and here a quality education commission set up, and does this scare a lot of young people coming out of the colleges and universities into teaching the 'how do you incorporate the technology into the curriculum'?

Edwards: When we surveyed our students, 60% of our graduating students in education are not looking at teaching in ND. One of the topics they talked about is technology. Most of our students have lap tops right in their dorms, so they're using technology a lot. Unfortunately, they're using it a lot more to surf the net and use e-mail. What we want to do is expand that so that they are having professors who are using technology to teach with.

Rep. Nelson: Some of the problems that we're having nationally in education are probably different in some of the rural states (e.g. Increased class size). Because of that, there are some possibilities in schools that the mentoring has been taking place in different forms, probably without the title, but I guess I'm concerned about the rural states are doing. Is there a state funded mentoring program in MT, SD MN, for example. What rural states are leaders in the mentoring program?

Edwards: We've researched, and mentoring is the number one priority in the legislature this year for MN, for the education committee. MT has a similar system, where it's district led, but it's not statewide. When we got the survey results back, rural teachers were leaving our small communities, because there was not a support system for them. This is also a critical point in helping our rural communities, almost more than we need to in the urban areas.

Rep. Thoreson: In your perception, are these teachers that are coming out of college, are they prepared to go into the classroom? They have student teaching, and they people who are monitoring them during this process, and have teacher advisors. I would hope those teachers would be half way up the mountain before they even get to the classroom, as opposed to down at the bottom, so how serious is the problem?

Edwards: I have a daughter who is student teaching in high school, and a daughter-in-law who just finished student teaching in elementary school. The difference is day and night between the two. The elementary student has been in classrooms a lot, she's assigned a mentor for her school. My daughter has no mentors, no support, and has been in the classroom three hours. They are knowledge-based, and it was confirmed in our survey, our graduates know their content.

What's hard to explain to a new teacher, is how you deal with 25 students on different levels.



classroom management, different learning styles. It's all the details that you're not prepared for in a teacher ed. program.

Rep. Hunsakor: You have addressed, you've used words like, 'new teacher' and 'teachers who change content', but I have a concern about teachers who may have been there five years, and suddenly they get a classroom that is difficult to manage, and then the mentoring is necessary even after several years. Is the intent of this that administrators would have the right to mentor someone who had been there as they saw the need right. Is that part of the program?

Edwards: We're talking about really looking at teachers who have displaced and new teachers. The system that would help in the situation you brought up would be peer coaching, which is a different system than the mentoring system. Our program is geared more toward helping our new teachers feel really strong these first three years to get their base job, and then peer mentoring would help the teachers who have more experience in an open, non-threatening, conversational way.

Rep. Hunsakor: Is there anything in place for peer coaching now?

Edwards: Yes, NDEA does a lot of training through different districts in peer coaching.

Rep. Nottestad: Going back to a little bit of background on some of this, on teachers that are being commenced to the program, I think a mentoring program would help these people, but I'm not so sure that at that point a mentoring program should be totally responsible. It sounds to me like an individual going into a secondary program is not getting what they need from the college and university level and I think the stone needs to be thrown there, if that be the case. The mentoring program should not be the replacement for the responsibility that they already had.

Edwards: You're correct, and that certainly needs to be addressed at the teacher prep level. I think universities are interrupting that in the middle and secondary level. Mentoring certainly won't cure that, but mentoring would at least be a safeguard, it would be a backup system to help someone, but not in lieu of.

Chairman Kelsch: Walk me through what a student teacher does these days.

Edwards: Student teachers now are teaching a higher percentage of the time. Usually there's a week or two of observation time, and then they slowly start taking over content areas. Each university has a different time length, so it could be anywhere from 2 to 15 weeks that they might be in the classroom. They're not sitting in the back of the room observing. The classroom teacher now doesn't exit the room. Hopefully, they're in the classroom with the student teacher, almost in a mentor capacity.

Chairman Kelsch: What's the teacher's responsibility to that student teacher? If that student teacher reacts in a way that the teacher doesn't feel is appropriate; are they able to give constructive criticism, is that one of their roles?

Edwards: The supervising teacher has responsibility to help that student teacher in all content areas and teaching strategy. If the teacher sees a lesson design that hasn't gone well, then it's a responsibility of that teacher to work with the student on lesson design, so the teacher isn't just an observer, but it's on a limited time basis.

Chairman Kelsch: Some of the things I've heard lead me to believe that one thing that may possibly be missing is that there's no job description for teachers in the classroom.

Edwards: Actually, I think the job description has expanded so much over the years, that now you do everything. Classroom is not only an educator, they are a coach, they're a coach, sometimes we're the parents.

Chairman Kelseh: I understand that things change, because that's in everybody's job, but really is there a basic job description, 'there are the things that you need to do, these are the daily activities that you do in your class room'.

Edwards: I guess I can't answer that question for every specific district.

Rep. Thoreson: When you talk about these student teachers going into the classrooms, and into the schools, is there a compensation for those teachers and/or the school? Do they get paid to have those student teachers coming into the classroom?

Edwards: Yes they do, \$180 for the semester

Rep. Meier: For this mentoring program, how many hours in a week would a mentor be in the classroom with that teacher?

Edwards: We're hoping to leave that open enough so that a district and a school can structure it around their schedule. That will all be part of the training. If we make it real specific, I'm afraid we will not have it open for the school districts to be creative. What we want to do is provide some flexibility in this schedule.

Rep. Meier: Do you have an estimate from the past experience?

Edwards: Again, in the survey we had anywhere from 15 minutes to 2 hours, based on the two interactions between two people.

Rep. Mueller: How do we know if we're getting the job done? How are we going to determine if this effort does pass?

