

Teacher Retention Ideas

1. A successful teacher retention and development programs provides teachers with training, materials, paid their tuition for getting their Master's degree. Developing the educational level of aides so that they would become certified teachers helps. Since the aides are an integral part of the community, the retention rate increases after they are certified.
2. Cultivate Collaboration. Even in a classroom full of students, teachers can still feel very much alone. And according to several studies, isolation can push teachers to leave the profession altogether.
3. Provide teachers a priority stipend. Let the stipend increase for additional years of retention.
4. The initial teaching assignment a teacher new to a campus is given will do more to keep them or drive them away than just about anything. Giving a new teacher the most difficult assignments is tailor made to drive them away from the school. Administrations have the nasty habit of assigning new teachers the most difficult classes to teach with the least intellectual challenge. You have to "pay your dues" to get to move up the ladder. Thus, often the principals believe they have the "best teachers" teaching the "best students." If those teaching the Calculus and pre-calculus classes really are the best teachers, why aren't they teaching some of the MOST NEEDY students as well? If you want to help districts and schools improve their teacher retention, get them to change their assignment practices.
5. Pay a hiring and retention bonus to the critical area teachers and will also pay a performance bonus for improved student achievement.
6. Use a teacher mentoring model from, "The Induction of New Teachers"; Ryan Kevin, Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation # 237. 1986. The relationships developed and the success experienced by the new teachers keeps them in our schools.
7. Two effective teacher retention strategies used by one district are:
A childcare center for the staff. It is a good recruiting and retaining tool. Even as a paid program, The teachers can pay 1/3 less than they would have in public childcare and the program offered by the district can be excellent. It was there during summer school, staff development days as well as during the regular school calendar. Teachers loved it and refused to be lured away to teach in nearby districts that paid more.

The second initiative involved a superior teacher training and mentoring program for all teachers new to the district. They received five days of in-service before beginning to work in the district. They had monthly meetings with a mentor, attended monthly staff development and group support sessions. A mentor visited their classroom and watched them teach several times each year and provided support of every type. The new teacher support system culminated at the end of their second year in the district. Each teacher who successfully completed all the required training received a supplemental check of \$2,000 in August when they returned to school as a third year teacher in the district. The master teacher/staff developer who ran the program was great. Teachers loved the non-threatening support provided by the coach/mentor.

Mentoring/coaching programs for new teachers generally have a reputation for helping teaching learn the strategies that just cannot be fully learned or put into a new teacher's tool box by via the student teaching program at most universities.