

No. 20. An act relating to providing mentoring support for teachers, new principals, and new technical center directors.

(H.430)

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. § 245 is added to read:

§ 245. PRINCIPALS; TECHNICAL CENTER DIRECTORS; MENTORING

(a) When a school district hires a principal or a technical center director who has not been employed previously in that capacity, the superintendent serving the district, in consultation with the Vermont Principals' Association, shall work to ensure that the new principal or technical center director receives mentoring supports during at least the first two years of employment. Mentoring supports shall be consistent with best practices, research-based approaches, or other successful models, and shall be identified jointly by the Vermont Principals' Association and the Vermont Superintendents Association.

(b) When a school district hires a principal or technical center director identified in subsection (a) of this section, the district shall allocate sufficient funds annually in the first two years of employment toward the cost of providing the mentoring supports from one or more of the following sources:

(1) funds allocated by the district for professional development;

(2) grant monies obtained for the purpose of providing mentoring supports;

(3) state funds appropriated for the purpose of providing mentoring supports; or

(4) other sources.

(c) This section shall not be interpreted to prohibit or discourage a superintendent from working to ensure that any administrator other than those identified in subsection (a) of this section receives mentoring supports.

Sec. 2. INTERIM STUDY OF TEACHER INDUCTION AND
MENTORING

(a) Creation of committee. There is created a committee to study how the education profession inducts and mentors new teachers and to recommend legislative changes that would help new teachers to develop strong skills in their initial years and that would increase the retention of high-quality teachers.

(b) Membership. The committee shall be composed of two members representing the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators, two members designated by the Vermont-NEA, two members designated by the Vermont Principals' Association, one member designated by the Vermont School Boards Association, one member designated by the Vermont Superintendents Association, and two members of approved programs in educator preparation who are chosen by the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators and who have experience, expertise, or demonstrated interest in teacher mentoring.

(c) Powers and duties.

(1) The committee shall study and evaluate the induction and mentoring practices and programs currently in effect throughout Vermont and other states, including consideration of:

(A) How successful induction and mentoring programs would affect new teachers' ability to be effective educators and to remain in the profession.

(B) What components are critical to effective induction and mentoring programs that meet established standards and provide substantial support to new teachers; including

(i) What qualifications mentors should possess;

(ii) How to offer incentives for qualified veteran or retired teachers to obtain training in the mentoring of new teachers;

(iii) How mentors should be assigned;

(iv) What induction or mentoring activities have been effective;

(v) Who should set mentoring standards and how should they be defined and enforced;

(vi) What should the appropriate duration of the mentoring be; and

(C) What other issues the general assembly, the department of education, and the state board of education should consider in order to enact a high-quality induction and mentoring program for new teachers.

(2) The committee shall identify effective ways to provide mentoring support to new teachers without incurring excessive costs.

(d) Meetings. The commissioner of education shall convene the first meeting of the committee on or before August 1, 2011. The committee shall elect a chair at its first meeting.

(e) Report. On or before January 1, 2012, the committee shall submit and present a written report to the senate and house committees on education regarding its findings and any recommendations for legislative action. The report and testimony shall include estimated costs associated with all recommendations.

Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage. Sec. 1 of this act shall apply to new contracts of employment for the 2012–2013 academic year and after.

Approved: May 11, 2011