

Making the Most of Student Teaching: Aligned Placements and Effective Mentors

Research One-Pager

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IN BRIEF

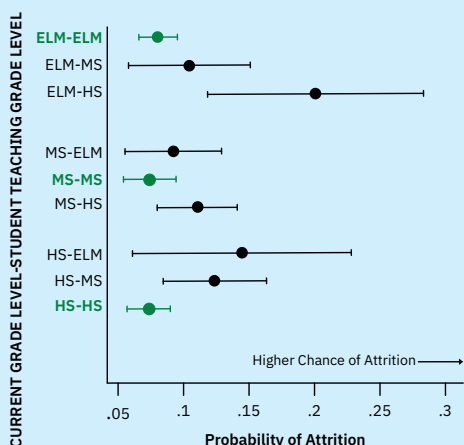
- Almost all traditional licensure pathways require student teaching to get a teacher license.
- Student teaching can offer important apprenticeship. But placements can be based on chance or tradition.
- Research evidence from CALDER suggests that aligned placements and effective mentors can benefit prospective teachers, schools, and students.

Teachers tend to stay in teaching when they student teach in a school like the one where they end up working.

Using novel data on student teaching placements and later outcomes in Washington State, we find that prospective teachers are more likely to stay in the workforce when their student teaching placements mirror the schools where they end up working (e.g., same grade span and similar student populations).

Predicted Probability of Attrition is Lower When Student Teaching Placements Match a Teacher's Current School's Grade Span.

Predictive Margins of Attrition on School Type Match



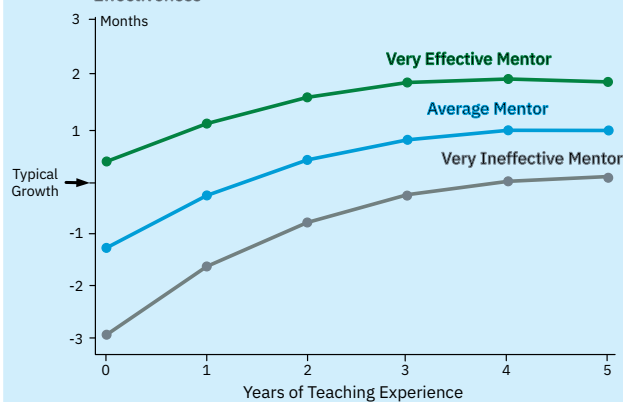
Source: Goldhaber et al. (2022)

Teachers who have more effective mentors tend to be more effective once they start teaching.

We also find that first-year teachers in WA who had more effective mentors were as effective as a third-year teacher whose mentor was just average.

Teachers Who Work With a More Effective Mentor During Their Student Teaching Experience Tend to be More Effective On the Job.

Predicted Student Achievement in Months of Student Learning by Time Since Student Teaching and Mentor Effectiveness



Source: Goldhaber et al. (2020)

The Bottom Line

Because only 3% of classrooms host a student teacher in a given year, the scope for change on this issue is huge. To get the most out of student teaching, districts and prep programs should ensure that the most effective teachers act as mentors and consider placing student teachers in schools similar to those facing the most hiring needs.

Go Deeper: www.caldercenter.org

Goldhaber, D., Krieg, J., & Theobald, R. (2020). Effective like me? Does having a more productive mentor improve the productivity of mentees? *Labour Economics*, 63, 101792.

St. John, E., Goldhaber, D., Krieg, J., & Theobald, R. (2021). How the match gets made: Exploring student teacher placements across teacher education programs, districts, and schools. *Journal of Education Human Resources*, 39(3), 261-288.

Goldhaber, D., Krieg, J., Theobald, R., & Goggins, M. (2022). Front end to back end: Teacher preparation, workforce entry, and attrition. *Journal of Teacher Education* 73(3), 253-270.