



Alaska Statewide Mentor Project

Helping to Retain Alaska's Early Career Teachers Since 2004

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March 23, 2022

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Today's Presentation

- ASMP —> How it Operates and Who it Serves
- How ASMP is funded and recent grant support
- Comment on SB 225, Teacher Retention and ASMP

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Alaska Statewide Mentor Project: What is it?

- External (non-district) mentoring of early career teachers. Research finds that mentoring early career teachers has a positive effect on retention₁
- ASMP: started in 2004, established partnerships with districts and DEED
- ASMP mentors Early Career Teachers: teachers in their first or second year of practice (ASMP has supported more than 5,000 ECTs and 60,000 students since 2004)
- Model uses full-time release mentors
- ASMP has supported ECTs in all 52 districts
- The mentors are trained in a nationally recognized teacher-mentoring model developed by the New Teacher Center₂ and modified by ASMP to meet the unique needs of Alaska's teachers and students
- Research finds that ASMP makes a positive difference with student outcomes, teacher retention and quality of instruction₃
- Coordination of Project is housed at UAF's K-12 Outreach Office

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Who are the Mentors?

- Highly qualified, experienced Alaskan teachers (multi-step selection process)
- Must complete rigorous, on-going training (experienced teacher may not mean good mentor)
- Located in different areas of the state
- Hybrid (virtual and in-person) mentoring service

"Classroom management has been my greatest challenge this year and without my State Mentor I would have been lost." -ASMP ECT

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ASMP Supporting Some of Alaska's Early Career Teachers

Number of ECT's Served by ASMP

Year	Number of Early Career Teachers served	Number of Mentors	Number of Districts served by ASMP
2014-15	521	38	42
2015-16*	327	31	22
2016-17	318	31	25
2017-18	175	17	27
2018-19	151	15	25
2019-20	140	15	29
2020-21	123	13	23
2021-22	117	11	21

*first year without state fiscal support

ASMP, Serving less than 20% of Alaska's ECTs

Year	ECTs Served	Total ECTs in AK	Percent Served
2015-16*	327	1020	24
2016-17	318	991	24
2017-18	175	752	19
2018-19	151	790	16
2019-20	140	693	17
2020-21	123	707	15
2021-22	117	TBD	TBD

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How is ASMP Funded?

- University of Alaska (general funds)
- Districts (fee for service)
 - 16 Districts are cost-sharing for mentoring service in FY22
- Grants
 - Recent federal grant (Supporting Teachers Across Rural/Remote Regions) will support more mentors in August 2022
 - The focus of the grant is to compare the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of two delivery methods (in-person and virtual) and to expand the benefits of ASMP to additional high-need rural/remote schools and those serving largely Alaska Native communities which experience persistent teacher quality and retention challenges.



ASMP Making a Difference

- In 2016, a randomized control study of mentors and ECTs in Alaska's urban districts found that students of ASMP mentored teachers had a better performance on the state's required annual assessment than did those students in ECT classrooms without said mentoring support₃
- Between 2008 and 2013 82.2% of the mentored teachers were retained in the teaching profession compared to 68% of teachers who did not receive an ASMP mentor₃
- Mentors play a key role in helping the new teachers adjust to what is often a new cultural setting. The weekly mentor support is usually a combination of in-person school visits and remote communication



SB 225 and Teacher Retention

- The need for state to help districts recruit and retain teachers is urgent
- SB 225 proposes to help with recruitment of new teachers (increases/eases the pathways to teaching). Note that UA-prepared teachers stay in the teaching profession in Alaska longer than those prepared out-of-state
- The proposed changes will have a long-term impact, but this will not be immediate
- Supporting teacher retention efforts is a more immediate way to address the teacher shortage and slow the churn of teachers. ASMP is a successful strategy to help with teacher retention.



Increasing Teacher Retention, A Two-Pronged Approach

1. Provide Extrinsic Motivation to Remain in Teaching Profession

Examples: salary, working conditions, retirement, longevity bonus, housing (subsidized cost, Internet connection)

2. Increase a Teacher's Intrinsic Motivation to Remain in the Profession

- Teachers must feel that they: make a difference (student success), have respect, society values them- without this it is easy to walk away
- Positive student outcomes motivate teachers to stay₄
 - ASMP supports instruction- helps teachers avoid the early career decision of this is not for me
 - ASMP supports teacher's adjustment to the Alaska context- helps teachers avoid cultural and physical alienation



A Solution is to have ASMP Support Teacher Retention

- Create a retention support fund at ASMP that supports ECTs in districts with a 15% or greater teacher turnover rate
- Accountability through evidence annually provided by ASMP including:
 - retention rate of served ECTs
 - standards covered with ECTs
 - Summary of annual partner surveys with DEED, superintendents, principals, ECTs and mentors

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Questions or Comments

"I'm glad the mentors exist. I had one as a new teacher that helped me navigate my village, and retain my sanity, and now I am a principal. Mentors help."

-Former ASMP ECT, principal

Contact Us

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References

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