

# Great Ideas for Great Public Schools

## VIRGINIA

### Induction and mentoring program raises teacher retention rate

To address the challenges of recruiting and retaining teachers, in 2001 Hampton City Schools and the Hampton Education Association collaborated to create a **comprehensive induction and mentoring program for beginning teachers**. Special funding from the state supports the program, which draws from the expertise and knowledge of experienced and retired teachers, instructional leaders, higher education faculty, and the business community. Partners include the Virginia Education Association, the National Education Association, NEA-Retired, and several area colleges. Hampton City Schools received the 2008 NEA-Saturn/UAW Partnership Award for Teacher Induction Programs.

#### Background

- Each new teacher has at least 25 hours of contact time with a retired teacher and mentor during the first semester of teaching.
- The district also offers new teachers the support of a teacher specialist—a coach for new teachers during their first five years in the classroom.
- Teacher specialists visit new teachers in their classrooms, observe and provide feedback, facilitate discussion groups, model lessons, and present workshops.
- Focus groups and surveys found that teachers who participated felt they were growing professionally and were more confident about their new teaching responsibilities. The program eases participants' anxieties about teaching.
- Principals report that by the second and third benchmark testing periods each year, student achievement is equivalent in new and veteran teachers' classrooms.

#### Positive results, especially in hard-to-staff schools

- The district's teacher retention rate has risen from 68 percent before implementation of the program to 90 percent in 2010.
- In 2007, hard-to-staff schools had a 96 percent teacher retention rate (2010 data for hard-to-staff schools is not available).

#### Impact on the profession of teaching

- The district is attracting excellent teaching candidates.
- The program is improving the retention rate for effective first-year educators and easing their entry into the profession.

#### For more information:

Su Lively, teacher specialist, Hampton City Schools, 757-344-7826, [slively@sbo.hampton.k12.va.us](mailto:slively@sbo.hampton.k12.va.us)



*Great Public Schools for Every Student*