

Executive Summary – Educator Reassignment

Teacher and administrator transfer, reassignment, or mobility have long been used as a vehicle for supporting increased opportunity for educators to utilize skill sets to the advantage of school districts. Educator reassignment often provides greater communication and understanding of curriculum and program throughout the grade levels, and can serve as a stimulus for educator growth and renewal.

Studies examining educator transfer indicate that key factors must be in place for transfers to be successful for both the educator and the school. These factors include the following:

- Early communication with educators regarding the transfer and a clear sharing of the planned supports.
- A sense of purpose regarding the new assignment. More specifically, will the educator’s skill set be of value and make a positive difference to the school.
- Supportive setting – transfers often include learning a new school culture and curriculum. Supports for the educator should include mentoring, pre-transfer visits, and opportunities to work with new colleagues to prepare for the transfer, and planning time to adjust to new setting demands.
- A willingness to engage in professional learning. Most successful transfers indicate that the educator reported the change was positive when they themselves determined that this was a new learning experience.

Additionally, educators reporting that they were experiencing success with new assignments were also categorized as “reflective” (Hannay and Chism, 1988). These educators (both principals and teachers) were assigned to new schools or classrooms as part of a plan to renew schools in the district.

Positive outcomes of educator transfers include increased job satisfaction, use of new techniques or strategies, improved student outcomes, increased professional collaboration, and improved school and district outcomes.

Negative outcomes of educator transfers include educator perception, practical issues related to the new assignment (such as planning time needed to teach new curriculum), parent perceptions, and emotional stress related to the new assignment.

Educator transfer is utilized widely throughout the field, specifically as a component of reform efforts. Strategic staffing as this is now called has been a factor in successful school reform efforts in districts (Donegan, 2008). Both pros and cons are discussed throughout the literature for strategic staffing (Vann, 1992). In each instance, supports in place and a willingness to try a different assignment were key factors in the success of the staffing changes.

Educator transfers included documented increased professional growth, and overall positive impact in instruction over time (Hannay, 1988; Vann, 1992; and Donegan, 2008).

<http://eric.ed.gov/?q=Hannay+and+Chism&id=EJ363406>

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/oct92/vol50/num02/-Changing-Assignments%E2%80%94Pros-and-Cons.aspx>

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/may08/vol65/num08/The-Linchpin-Year.aspx>