

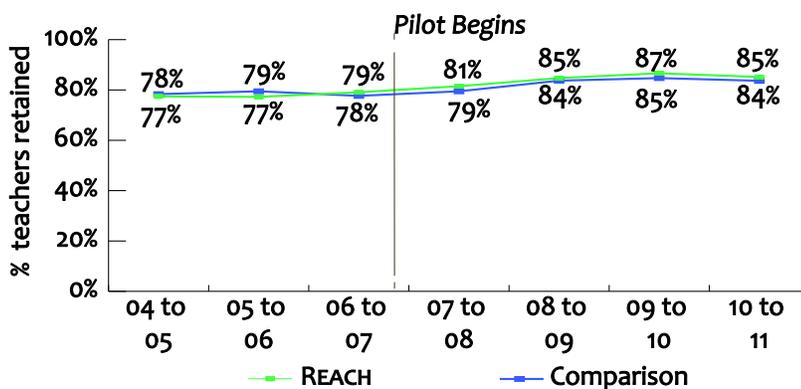
# AISD REACH Program Update

## Results for Teacher Retention, Fall 2011

### AISD REACH Retention Overview

One of the primary aims of the AISD REACH program is to improve student achievement through increased campus staff stability. Staff stability may be accomplished in three ways. First, educators are awarded \$500 or \$1,500 stipends for coming to or returning to a REACH campus in the fall (for 1 to 3 or 4+ years at the campus, respectively), and a second stipend of the same amount is awarded the following summer for remaining on the campus the entire school year. Second, both stipends educators earn for demonstrating student growth and the mentoring novice teachers receive should bolster school climate and improve job satisfaction, ultimately improving retention. Third, the professional development and mentoring that teachers receive through the program should increase self-efficacy and effectiveness, thus increasing the likelihood teachers will stay on their campus.

**Figure 1. Teacher Retention Rates, 2005 through 2011, Reach and Comparison Schools**



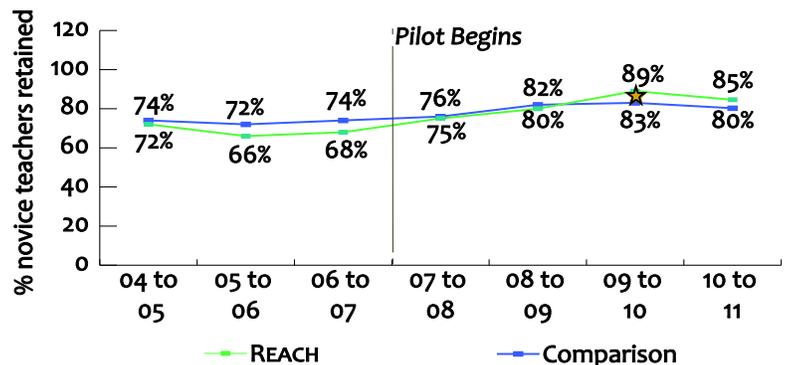
Source: AISD HR Records; rates are October to October

Two factors affected retention rate computations for 2010-11 teachers: (a) the district declared a Reduction In Force (RIF) in January 2011, and (b) two AISD REACH schools no longer served 6th grade students in 2011-12, and all 6th grade teachers were transferred to other schools. These teachers were excluded from the computations. Although rates are improving, the data (Figure 1) suggest that the teacher retention for REACH campuses is not yet significantly higher than that of demographically similar comparison schools.

### Novice Teacher Retention

Intensive mentoring support is provided to teachers at REACH schools who are in their first 3 years of service. Highly-trained, full-time mentor teachers are assigned to groups of no more than ten novice teachers. In 2010, novice teacher retention rates at schools with REACH mentors surpassed retention rates at similar comparison schools in the district. As indicated by the star in Figure 2, novice teacher retention at all of the high needs schools was on a positive trajectory.

**Figure 2. Novice Teacher Retention Rates, 2005 through 2011, Reach and Comparison Schools**



★ Significant difference

Source: AISD HR Records; rates are October to October



The 2007-2008 cohort, due perhaps in part to the delayed implementation of the pilot mentoring program, does not reflect the same positive results found for the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 cohorts, who received the more complete mentoring program. The 2007-2008 cohort seems to be rebounding a bit, while differences between REACH and comparison schools appear to be diminishing over time for the 2008-2009 cohort. One surprising finding was the return of some teachers in the 2007-08 cohort in 2011 to campuses that they had left. Statistically meaningful differences are indicated by a gold star.

## Conclusion

Although retention rates are improving, data suggest that the overall teacher retention rate for REACH campuses is not yet significantly higher than that of similar comparison schools. In Fall 2010, the rate of improvement in retention rates was significantly greater for REACH novice teachers than for teachers at comparison schools. However, teacher retention at both REACH and comparison schools dipped in Fall 2011. Examining data separately by mentoring cohort reveals some important patterns. Novice teachers in the 2009-2010 cohort showed significantly greater retention than their comparison peers in both Fall 2010 and Fall 2011, and novice teachers in the 2010-2011 mentoring cohort showed a trend toward significantly greater retention in Fall 2011 than their peers who did not receive the intensive REACH mentoring. This suggests that the program's impact may be increasing as the mentoring program evolves.

**About this report.** This is the third report in a series of research briefs containing results for REACH in 2010-2011. Previous reports included implementation survey results and Student Learning Objective (SLO) results. Subsequent reports address such topics as results for Professional Development Units (PDUs), a summary of themes from end-of-year focus groups, program cost-effectiveness and school-wide growth. For more AISD REACH program evaluation reports, please visit: <http://www.austinisd.org/inside/accountability/evaluation/reports.phtml>

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