



Osseo Area
Schools

Mentorship & Retention Update

Yvonne Shorts Lind - Executive Director of Human Resources

Lisa Bostic - HR Personnel Director

Nilceia Anderson - Recruitment and Retention Coordinator

August 18, 2026 School Board Work Session



Presentation Outcomes

School Board members will:

- Learn about Osseo Area Schools mentorship and recruitment programs underway
- Analyze the results of current strategies
- Understand key challenges and how we are addressing them

Why Mentorship Matters

Fulfilling Our Mission Requires Supported Staff

“ Our mission is to inspire and prepare each and every scholar with the confidence, courage, and competence to achieve their dreams... **”**



Mentorship creates the strong foundation that helps new teachers and staff feel welcomed, supported, and ready to make that mission a reality.

Our Mentorship Ecosystem



SpEd Teacher Mentor

Funding: MDE
TMRG Grant

Focus: Intensive role specific coaching for new Special Education teachers



Teachers of Color (TOC)

Funding: TMRG &
A&I Grant

Focus: Support educators of color thrive, remain in the profession, and grow as leaders



ESP On-Site Mentorship

Funding: A&I Grant

Focus: Everyday, in-building support



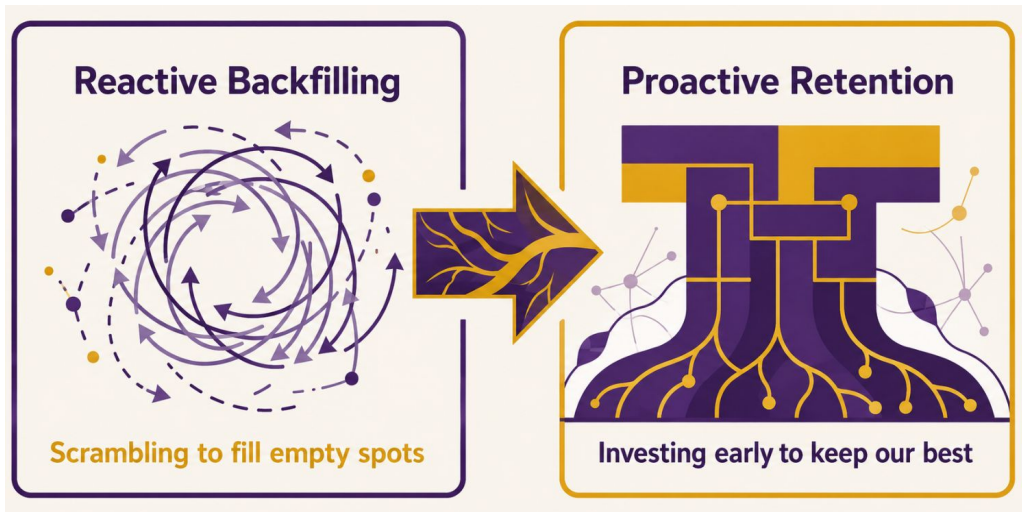
Grow Your Own (GYO)

Funding: MDE GYO
Grant

Focus: clear pathways for students and staff to become licensed educators

A Shift in Mindset: Proactive Retention

We cannot just hire our way out of shortage. Invest to keep our great teachers & staff is the priority. The purpose of mentorship is to create support, build belonging, and learn through shared experiences so we can retain licensed and non-licensed educators.



Our Diversity Gap

Our district proudly serves a diverse student population, **yet** our licensed workforce does not fully reflect the scholars in our classrooms.

By intentionally building pathways to recruit, develop, and retain BIPOC educators, we can create a workforce that better represents and supports our students.



Aligned with our A&I goal

Diversifying Our Workforce

- Overall: Staff of color 21% (90% retention)
- Vision: For our **licensed workforce** to be more reflective of the students and families the district serves.
- **Licensed staff of color**
 - Current reality: 10.98%
 - Short-term goals
 - 1-year goal: 12.48%
 - 3-year goal: 15.48%
 - Strategies
 - Summarize (e.g., GYO, Teacher Apprenticeship program, University pipelines/pathways, enhanced outreach at student teaching programs w/ diverse study body, contractual and statutory concerns, observation calibrations)

Teachers of Color Mentorship Program

One-on-one mentoring with experienced educators of color



Safe Spaces

Provides identity-affirming support where every educator feels seen, valued, and respected.



Connection

Creates dedicated time for educators to share experiences, build relationships, and hold space for one another.



Belonging

Fosters a deep sense of belonging so educators choose to stay, grow, and thrive in our district.

"Teachers stay where they feel valued, supported, and connected to meaningful work."

Inspired by Frederick Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory

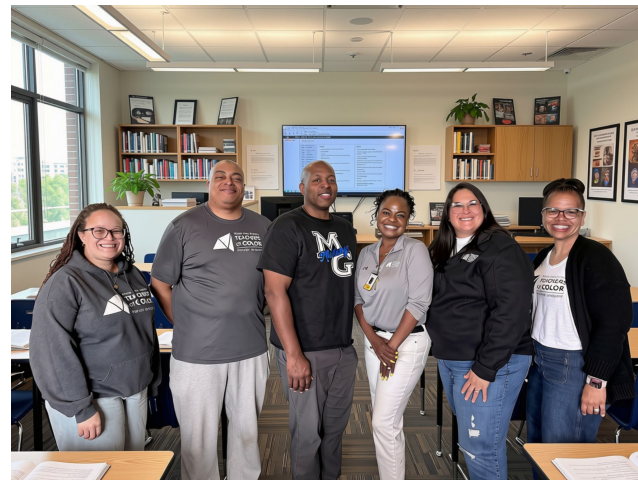
TOC Mentorship Impact

Program Reach and Professional Learning

- **35 Teachers of Color mentees**
- **10 professional learning sessions** focused on:
 - Building Community and Belonging
 - Navigating School Systems
 - Instructional Strategies and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy
 - Data, Growth, and Reflection
 - Building Trust and Identity in Education
 - Wellness and Sustainability

Results

- **100% of participants eligible for continuing contract status successfully advanced.**
- **15 participants will return to the district and continue in TOC mentorship.**
- 4 participants will continue teaching in the district but have chosen not to continue in TOC mentorship.
- 8.6% of participants left the district
- 31 of 35 participants are confirmed to be returning, representing an 88.6% confirmed district retention rate.



Keeping our Special Education Teachers

Our Special Education student population has grown by 650 scholars in just five years. Retaining new special education teachers is a challenge, particularly in our most demanding center-based classrooms.



Our students with the highest needs require stability and experienced educators. When teachers leave their roles, it directly impacts our vulnerable students who thrive on consistency.

Supporting New Special Education Teachers

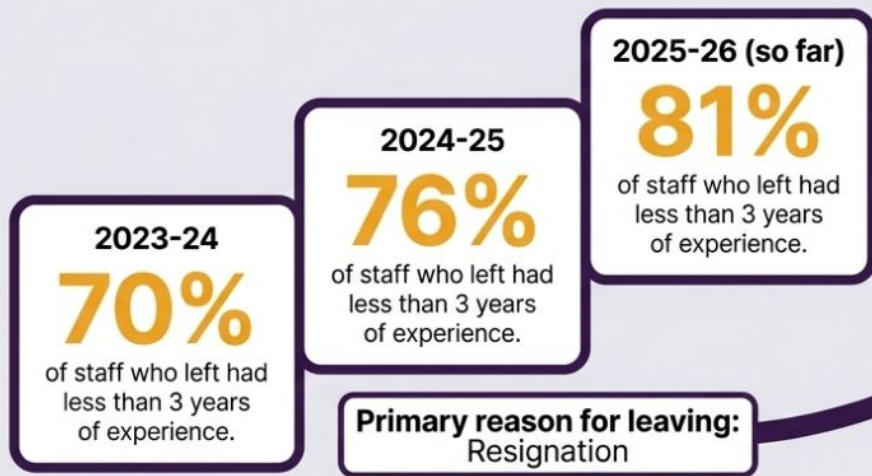
Adding our first full-time mentor dedicated to New Special Education Teacher. MDE (Teacher Mentorship Retention Grant)



Supporting out Educational Support Professionals (ESPs) - Why the first 3 years matter the most

Most of our support staff who leave the district do so during their first three years. We want to help them feel like they belong so they stay with us.

The Data Reality



The Solution

ESP On-Site Mentorship Pilot

Giving new staff a friendly face and support right where they work.

On-Site Guidance for Education Support Professionals (ESPs)



Identify

- Identify experienced, high-performing ESPs in each school
- Provide mentor training
- Match mentors with new employees



Support

- Daily guidance
- Problem-solving
- Resource sharing



Thrive

- Greater confidence
- Stronger belonging
- Improved performance
- Increased retention

Grow Your Own Mentorship

Adult & SpEd Pathway

Current staff paired with experienced mentors who meet monthly to navigate teacher preparation programs and licensure hurdles.

Secondary Students Pathway

Students complete paid summer internships (Camp ROCKS/Kidstop) supported by two mentors, gaining hands-on exposure to teaching roles before college.



Testimonial(s)

Pause & Reflect

What stood out to you as the strongest evidence of impact from today's presentation?

What additional data, outcomes, opportunities, or priorities would help us better assess the success of these initiatives and continue moving toward becoming the “Best Place to Work”?

Thank You.