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Teacher Retention through Building Professional Learning Communities. Preliminary report.

The shortage of credentialed mathematics teachers is compounded by the problem of teacher turnover including both the teachers who move and those who leave the teaching profession altogether. In Fall 2006, California Mathematics Project Supporting Teachers to Increase Retention (CMP STIR) was funded by the California Postsecondary Education Commission under the Improving Teacher Quality Grants to address both dimensions of teacher retention across California. The goal of the project was to reduce attrition, increase leadership roles/educational advancement and increase content and pedagogical content knowledge through comprehensive and coherent professional development, including the development of collegial and supportive professional learning communities. Specifically, the project focused on teachers from schools and/or districts eligible under the NCLB guidelines who were in their first five years of teaching or teachers in hard-to-staff schools.

The report of this study of support and sustainability of mathematics teachers is complex, diverse, and builds on a network established across more than 25 years and will share initial visions, the background research, and a year of work with more than 200 teachers across 10 different models of professional development and support. (Received September 19, 2007)