

BUDDY PROGRAM

**What EVERY BUDDY
needs to know...**

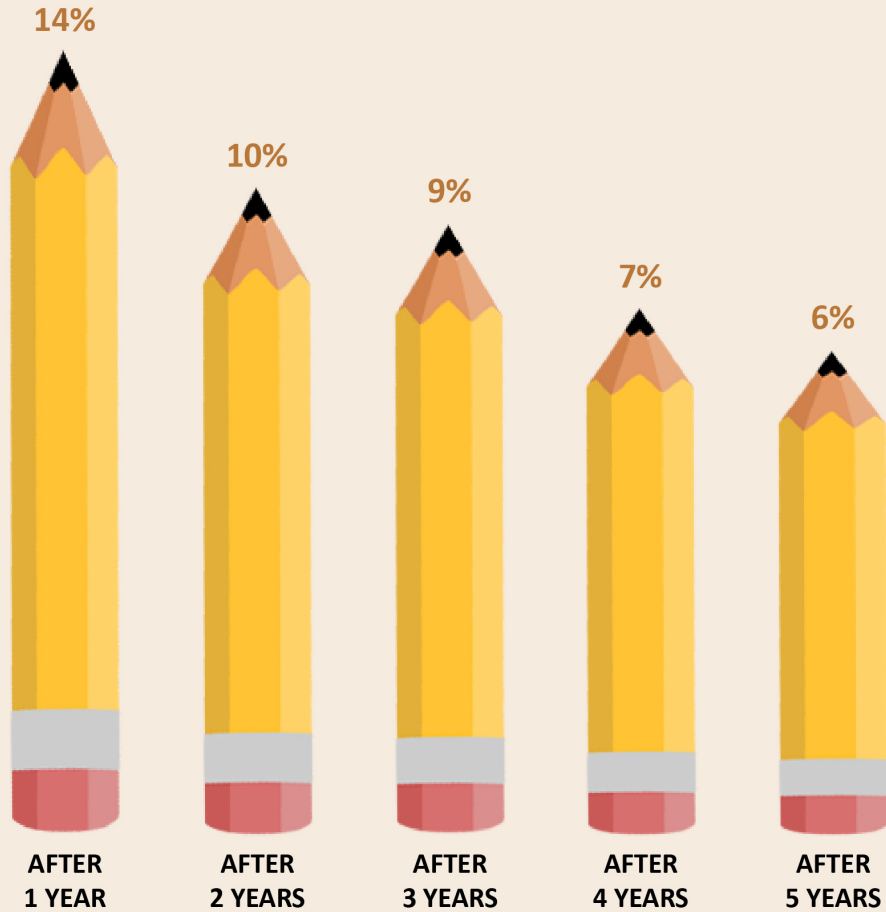
Membership engagement for new members



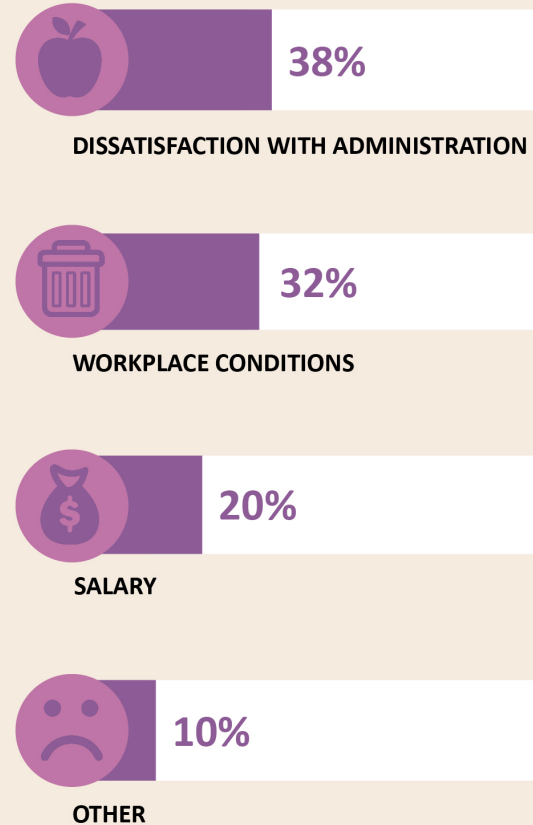
A COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT WORKSHOP
CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

THE FIRST YEARS ARE THE HARDEST.

Percentage of teachers who leave their profession:



REASONS TEACHERS LEAVE:



WHY A BUDDY PROGRAM?

Many **NEW HIRES** report that the first month of work is stressful, lonely and exhausting.

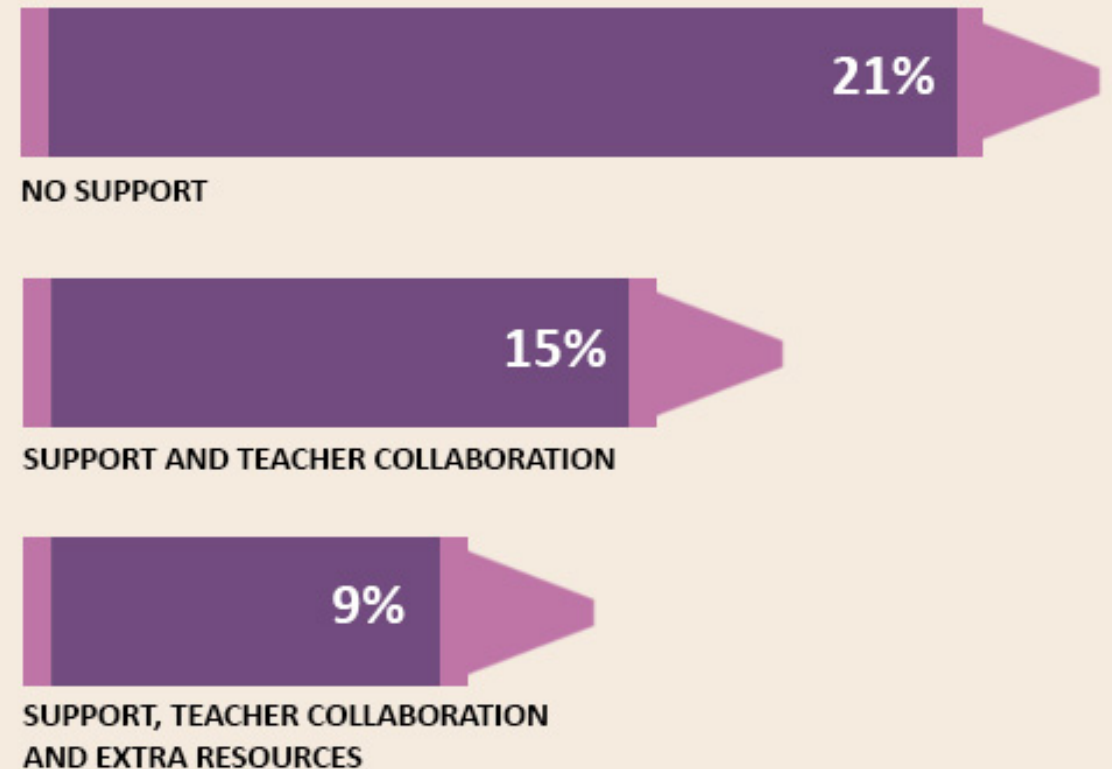
Buddies can help new members move from “...surviving” to “thriving!”

DOES IT WORK?

Statistics show attrition is cut **dramatically** when collaborative support systems are in place...

HOW DOES NEW TEACHER ATTRITION DECREASE WITH VARIOUS SUPPORT PROGRAMS?

Turnover rates of first-year teachers according to support programs:



RELEVANCE and AUTHENTICITY

It is the local's burden to define itself to its membership.

Our new hires are required by law to serve two years of at-will employment- they are our most vulnerable members.

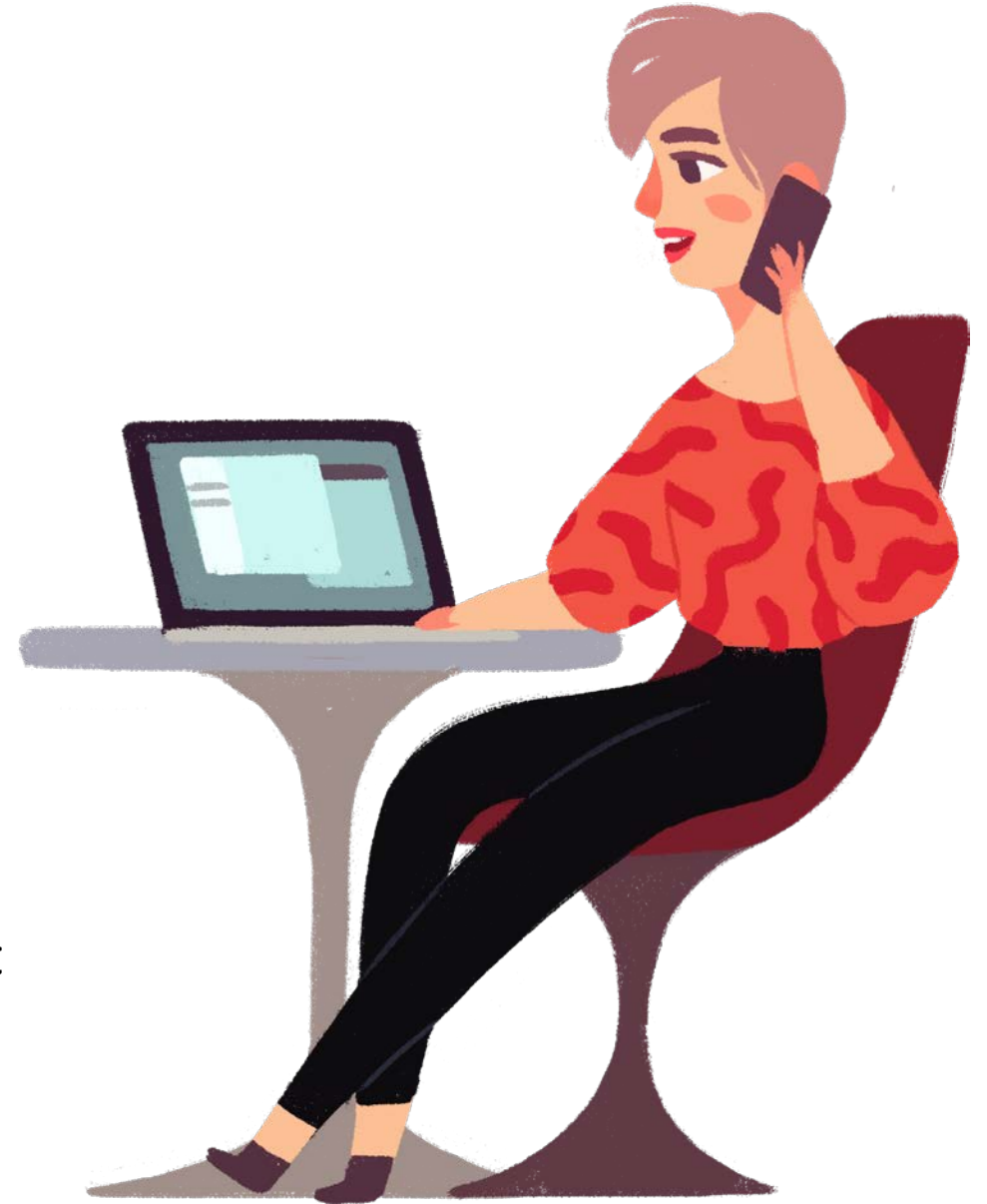
A chapter-sponsored Buddy System creates a meaningful relationship between the new member and the local.

Buddies provide a safe sounding board and advice to new members throughout their probationary period.



WHAT ARE “BUDDY” RESPONSIBILITIES?

- Mentor the new member
- Be an advisor, advocate, friend, sounding board, resource
- Helps new employee to learn how the association works
- Make sure new members understand the local chapter is concerned about their well-being as educators
- Does NOT take the place of any peer assistance programs that may be part of an association/district joint project



BUDDY TO-DO LIST

- Review budgetary guidelines with program chair.
- Work with program chair to receive your “Buddy” list with contact information. Have new members had prior contact with the local?
- Establish initial contact with a greeting card and phone call to request a short time to meet.
- Invite your new member(s) to a meeting at a mutually agreeable time and place.
- Share contact information and parameters for how you can be contacted.



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SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK

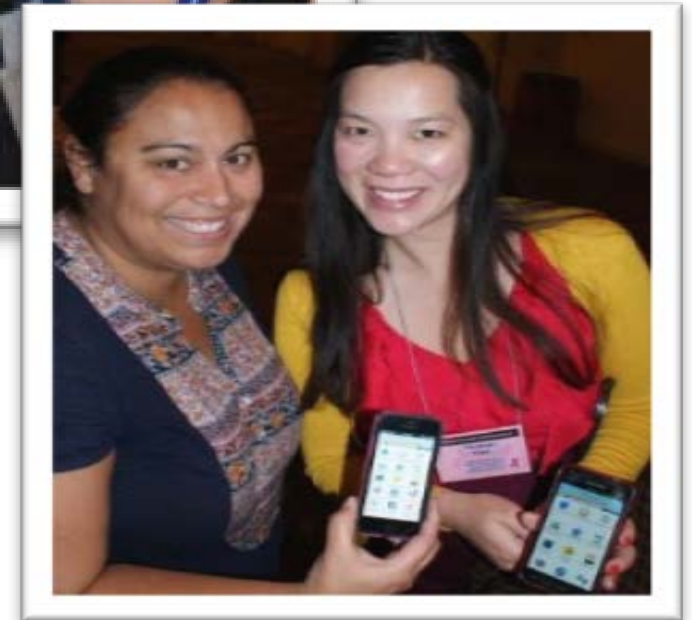
- What is your position?
- How many years do you have in the system? (Some new hires will be from other districts and have some long-term experience.)
- What do you like about teaching or (for classified) doing what you do?
- What do you like about what you've seen so far in this District?
- What things prevent you from doing your job the way you like to do it?
- How do you want to leave your mark on public education?
- What would make it possible for you to provide the best teaching and learning for your students?
- What was the most positive experience and the most negative experience that you had when you were a student, and how has that experience impacted what you want from your students?



BE PURPOSEFUL

Showing a new member that we are interested in them as a colleague and new professional as well as a member is key to their future engagement in the association.

And **when we provide them with information and assistance** that helps them get acclimated to their new work situation, **they remember who gave it to them.**





BUILDING YOUR ASSOCIATION BUDDY PROGRAM

The “Buddy” program provides support to new hires by more veteran association members, which helps build immediate personal connection between the new unit member and the Association. The Buddy plays an important role in helping the new educator become connected to members at their site, in the district, and in the association. The Buddy is someone who genuinely believes in the cause of building a stronger local association through interpersonal, supportive, relational organizing with our newest educators.

WHAT IS A BUDDY AND WHAT IS THE JOB DESCRIPTION?

The Buddy’s major job is to make sure the prospective member (or new member if he or she has already signed up) has a positive, relevant connection to the Association. It is the part of the program that won’t allow someone to feel alone in a room crowded with people.

The Buddy is assigned to one or two new unit members. The Buddy takes time to get to know the potential member and learn what makes the potential member click. The Buddy is there as an advisor, an advocate, a friend, a sounding board, and a resource.

BUDDY PROGRAM RESOURCES

www.cta.org/LeaderResources

BUDDY PROGRAM CHECKLIST

Leadership follows local by-laws and standing rules to create a Buddy Program and select a Chair
Budget is officially allocated for “Coffee cards” to enable Buddy mentors to take their Buddies out for coffee, etc.
System is put in place to receive receipts and allocate new cards as needed
Buddy Mentors are invited to sign up to serve in May, June, and early August
Local chapter requests data in June on new district hires to estimate number of needed Buddy mentors
Chapter uses PowerPoint and other Toolkit materials to train local Buddy mentors
Chapter has a plan in place in case Mentor and Buddy are not a good fit
Chapter gets final list of new hires and pairs mentors up with their new Buddies
Chapter holds Kick-off Gathering for Mentors and Buddies, giving time for exchange of contact information and relationship building
Chapter considers a “99 Contract Days Left” gathering for a second check-up on Mentors and Buddies
Chapter schedules an end of year Mentor/Buddy gathering as a culminating event, where Mentors and Buddies determine steps for year two.
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BUDDY PROGRAM SAMPLE INTRODUCTION LETTER

Use Your Association Letterhead and Personalize

Dear (First Name),

Welcome to (School District). My name is (name) and I am a (how many years) member of the (Local Association). As a member, I have volunteered to be a part of our Association Buddy Program.

I’m pleased that I have been selected to work with you as you move through two years of probationary status.

As your Association Buddy, I am offering my personal assistance to you. I will answer questions you might have regarding your employment with the (School District), help you navigate your way around your school site and/or help you with anything you might need during your employment with the (School District). And as your Association Buddy, I am here to answer any questions/concerns you have about the (Association).

I would like to meet with you and discuss any concerns or answer any questions you might have regarding your employment with (School District), or just to sit down and have a cup of coffee (or drink), and get to know each other.

Please contact me so we can schedule a meeting time that is mutually convenient for us to spend a few minutes together.

My contact information is:

Name: _____
Cell Phone Number: _____
Personal Email Address: _____
School Site: _____

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Name

**REMEMBER THAT
ENGAGED, COMMITTED
MEMBERSHIP GIVES
YOUR CHAPTER
POWER!**

BE A BUDDY



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