Transparency & Voice

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Stakeholders in Student Teacher Placements

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Today's Plan

- **Study Overview: Celebration and Diversity**

  We recognize the hard work of diverse stakeholder groups contributing to student teacher placements and clinical experiences within and across contexts.

- **Our Findings: Accountability**

  Current practices, legacy systems, and organizational culture do not always live up to our commitments to diversity, equity, and access.

- **Recommendations: Advocacy and Support**

  Give stakeholders channels for self-advocacy so that they can represent their needs directly rather than by proxy.

Study Overview: Celebration and Diversity

9.7.23 AASPA Webinar

Context

- 2016 -2017
- District with almost 80 schools
- 23 IHEs (deep partnerships with 7)
- Over 350 student teachers placed annually in the district
- Multiple processes representing many common models

Original Objective

In order to support the creation of a more intentional talent pipeline, we sought to develop a better understanding of two primary questions:

1) what factors were being used to drive placements universally for all candidates and
2) what factors were considered important for individual fit

Research Activities

- Literature Review
- District Landscape Analysis
- Theory of Action
- Ongoing presentations and feedback loops
- Online Student Teacher Preference Survey
- Online Student Teacher Exit Survey
- Online survey of IHE Program Coordinators
- Focus groups and interviews

This Study Celebrates

- Support from:
  - Our district partner
  - A local foundation
  - My organization's staff
  - Other informal advisors
- Feedback, perspective and expertise from:
  - Student teachers
  - Cooperating teachers
  - Licensure preparation partners
  - District administrative staff

Diversity of Needs, Stakes & Motivations

- **Variety of Institutions**
  - Districts and other LEAs
  - Institutes of Higher Education and other Education Prep Partners
  - State Departments of Education and Policy Organizations
  - External funders, foundations and research organizations
- **Different Contexts**
  - Rural/urban/geographic density etc.
  - Relative historical power within a market or region
  - Institutional size and resources
- **Different roles**
  - Policy makers
  - Professors and placement coordinators
  - District administrators, school leaders, site liaisons, mentor teachers
  - Student teachers
- **Individual or Personal Characteristics**
  - Teaching and learning styles
  - Short- and long-term career objectives
  - Thrive in different environments
  - Come from different backgrounds
  - Face challenges with different strengths

Initial Findings

Despite stated commitments making successful matches driven by “fit,” most placements were made based on minimal matching criteria like licensure area and grade bands, and the first available match was taken.

Revised Objective

In order to support the creation of a more intentional talent pipeline, we sought to develop a better understanding of three new questions:

1) Why, despite good intentions were matches being made mostly on a first-come-first-served basis using mostly minimal criteria?
2) What factors would stakeholders like to have informing matches?
3) What could be done to create a system that aligns to current research and better reflects diverse stakeholder needs?

Our Findings: Accountability

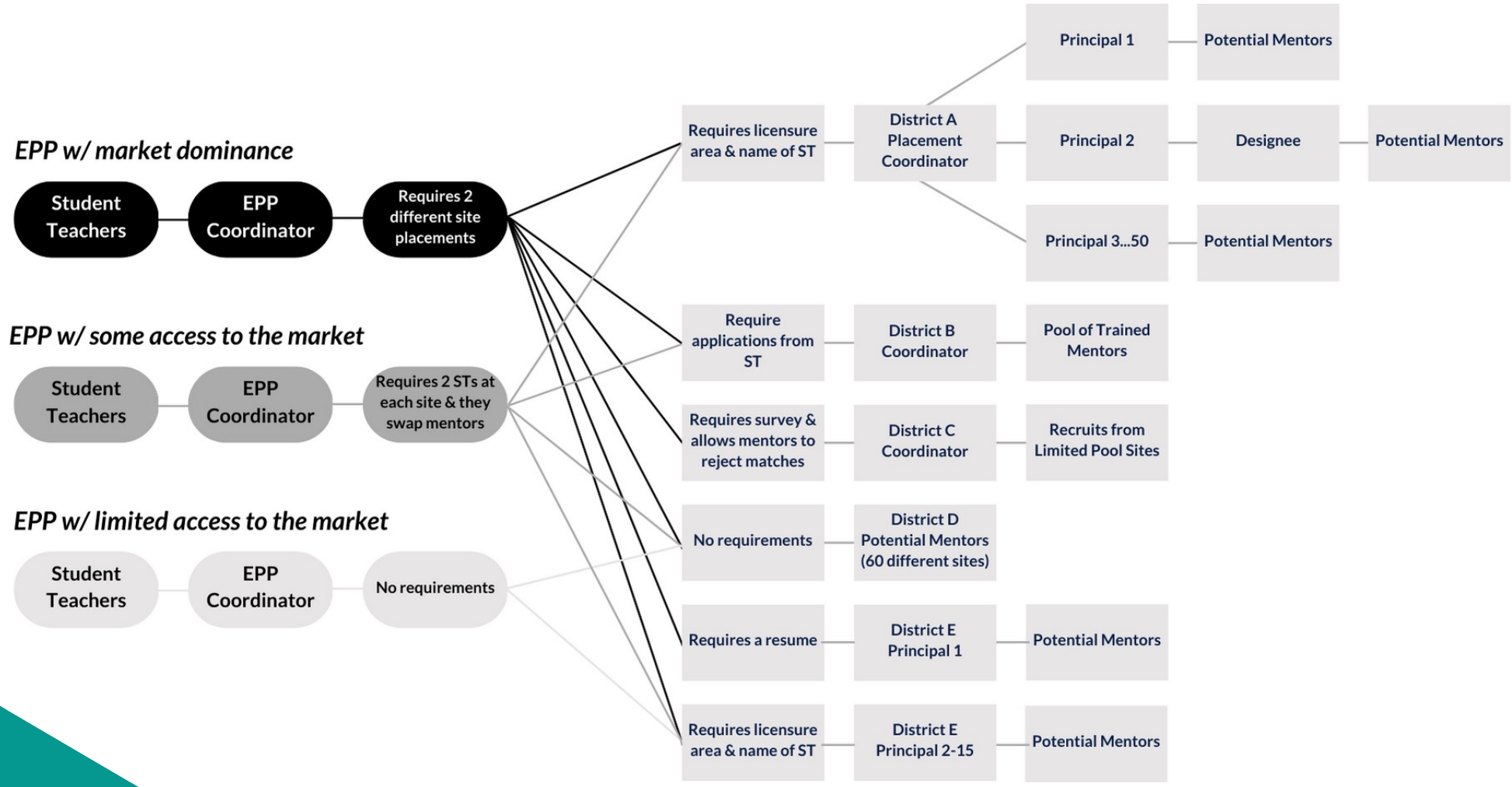
Quick Facts

- 30% of IHE coordinators reported not knowing most of the students they were placing well
- 50% of the district placement coordinators or liaisons reported not knowing their mentor teachers well
- 350 student teachers were placed in the district
- 160 student teachers wanted to be placed in the district but weren't because suitable placements couldn't be identified

Drivers of Minimal Match

- Logistical complexity reduces the richness of information available
  - Participants' interests were represented second or third-hand by coordinators who didn't know all candidates or mentors equally or even at all.
  - The voices, preferences, and needs of stakeholders were rarely heard or reflected directly in the process.
- Restricted and uneven flow of communications negates intentionality
  - Fragmented system with slow response times results in rarely having more than one option at a time
  - Short supply of cooperating teachers in a fragmented market and long response time creates uncertainty so most match makers take the first available match

Complex Logistics Restrict Information



Recommendations: Advocacy and Support

Quick Facts

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To remedy lack of information:
Give stakeholders more of a direct voice in the system

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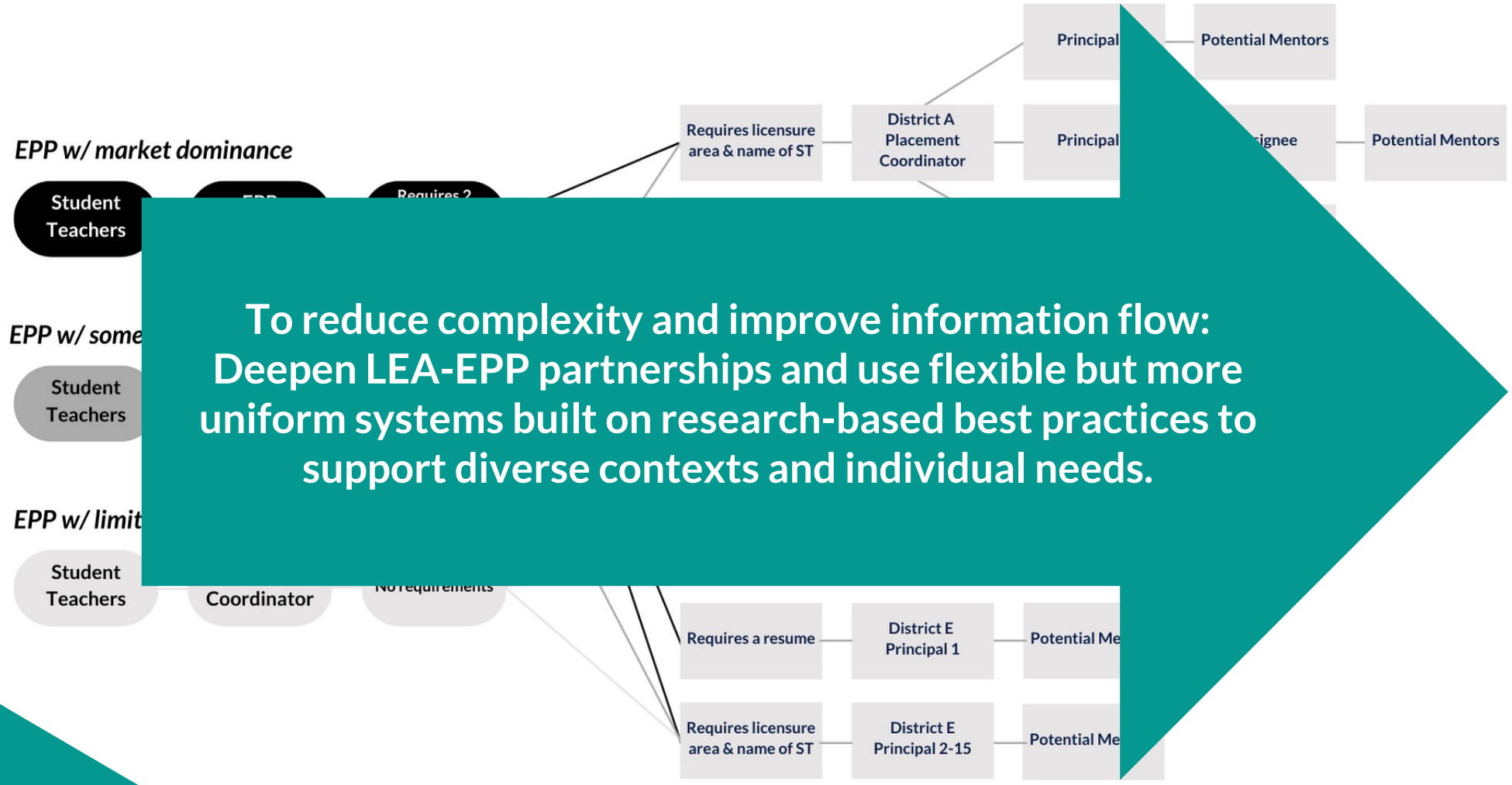
To remedy mismatches:
Create a more transparent and fair process to optimize placements and track outcomes

Complex Logistics Restrict Information



To reduce complexity and improve information flow: Deepen LEA-EPP partnerships and use flexible but more uniform systems built on research-based best practices to support diverse contexts and individual needs.

Match Quality Maters!

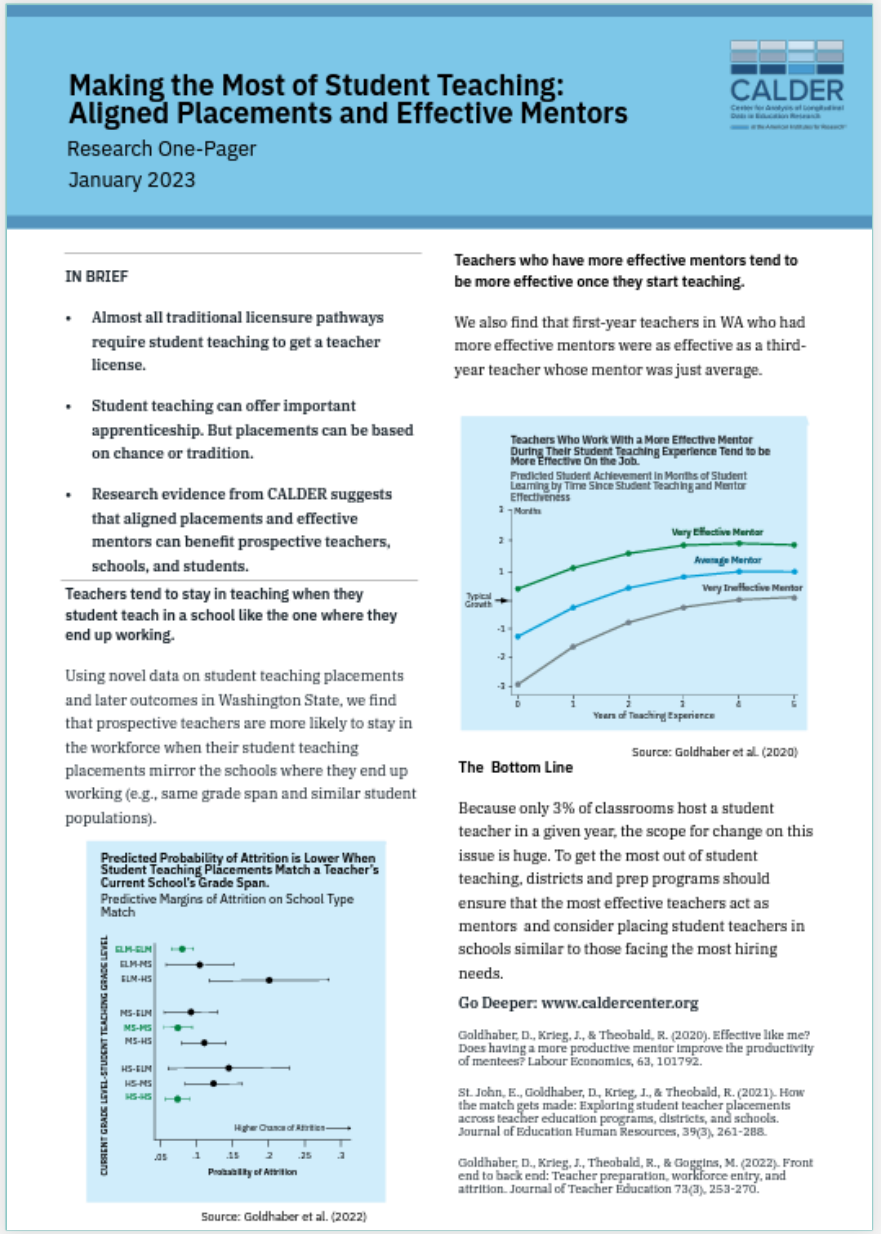
Placements should appropriately take into consideration stakeholders' different voices and perspectives and be made via a fair and transparent process. This creates a more intentional and productive pipeline into teaching and not only improves clinical experiences but longer-term outcomes!

Our work and others' indicate better matches with quality mentors can have additional benefits:

- Better student outcomes in novice teachers' classrooms
- Higher retention rates for novice teachers
- Year-one teachers who feel better prepared and more confident
- Improved engagement of teacher leaders and future teacher leaders
- A more inclusive, respectful and accountable professional culture across intuitions

Related Results from CALDER Center

[Making the Most of Student Teaching: Aligned Placements and Effective Mentors](#)(January 2023).
CALDER Research One-Pager No 4.



Making the Most of Student Teaching: Aligned Placements and Effective Mentors

Research One-Pager

January 2023

CALDER

IN BRIEF

- **Almost all traditional licensure pathways require student teaching to get a teacher license.**
- **Student teaching can offer important apprenticeship. But placements can be based on chance or tradition.**
- **Research evidence from CALDER suggests that aligned placements and effective mentors can benefit prospective teachers, schools, and students.**

Teachers tend to stay in teaching when they student teach in a school like the one where they end up working.

Using novel data on student teaching placements and later outcomes in Washington State, we find that prospective teachers are more likely to stay in the workforce when their student teaching placements mirror the schools where they end up working (e.g., same grade span and similar student populations).

Predicted Probability of Attrition is Lower When Student Teaching Placements Match a Teacher's Current School's Grade Span.

Predictive Margins of Attrition on School Type Match

Source: Goldhaber et al. (2022)

Teachers who have more effective mentors tend to be more effective once they start teaching.

We also find that first-year teachers in WA who had more effective mentors were as effective as a third-year teacher whose mentor was just average.

Teachers Who Work With a More Effective Mentor During Their Student Teaching Experience Tend to be More Effective On the Job.

Predicted Student Achievement in Months of Student Learning by Time Since Student Teaching and Mentor Effectiveness

Source: Goldhaber et al. (2020)

The Bottom Line

Because only 3% of classrooms host a student teacher in a given year, the scope for change on this issue is huge. To get the most out of student teaching, districts and prep programs should ensure that the most effective teachers act as mentors and consider placing student teachers in schools similar to those facing the most hiring needs.

Go Deeper: www.caldercenter.org

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Quick Guide

Regardless of who leads the placement process in a given context: the EPP, the LEA or a hybrid of overlapping processes, we have a shared responsibility to take a closer look at our practices:

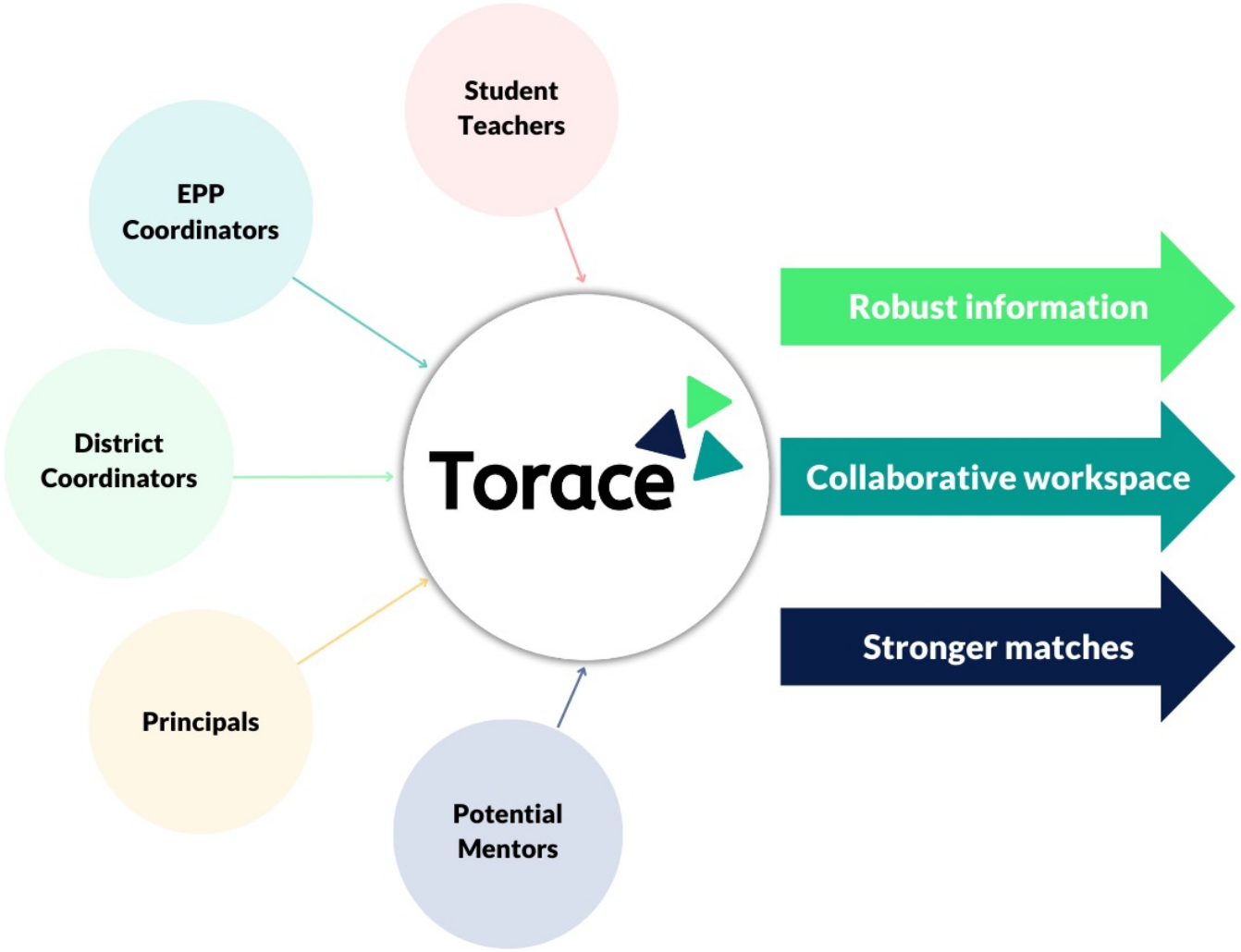
- **How deep are our mentor pools and how are those pools cultivated?**
  Are opportunities to mentor and to grow into mentoring make widely available? Is there a transparent screening process? What training and supports are offered?

- **What participant information is consistently available for making matches?**
  Minimal requirements around licensure and grade band? What participants have to offer? What participants are seeking?

- **Whose voices are represented in the process and via what channels?**
  Directly via interview, application, or survey? Indirectly by another party like a liaison or coordinator? Some groups but not others because of access and opportunity?

- **Who intervenes in the process and at what points?**
  LEA administrators in certain roles? School leaders? IHE administrators in certain roles? Mentor Teachers? Student Teachers? Etc.

Transform Your Process



More Resources & Support

- Understanding your Context: Get orientated to the work by learning more about the context of your program. Know where you are so that you know where you want to go.
  - PDF: The Importance of Institutional Partnerships
  - PDF: Identify Your Placement Process
  - PDF: Articulate Your Philosophy of Matching
- Learn About What is Possible: Shift your perspective on the work to understand how you can do more with your matching.
  - Infographic: Make the Shift from Making Placements to Facilitating Matches
  - Blog Article: Drivers of a Good Matching Process
  - Blog Article: 5 Recommendations for Strengthening Student Teaching
- Take Action:
  - PDF: Identify Drivers for Improvement
  - For Educator Preparation Programs specifically:
    - PDF: Steps for Developing a Mentor Pool
    - PDF: Reflection Questions for Educator Preparation Programs
  - For LEAs specifically:
    - PDF: Tips for Casting a Wider Net for Mentors
    - PDF: How to Determine Mentor Eligibility
    - PDF: Reflection Questions for Districts

Get District Resources!

Get EPP Resources!

References

Note: These references were complied in 2017 and have not been updated. One important study from 2018 with conclusions very closely aligned to this work is: https://caldercenter.org/sites/default/files/CALDER%20WP%20204-1018-1.pdf

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Let’s stay in touch!

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Schedule a Meeting: