

# REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY

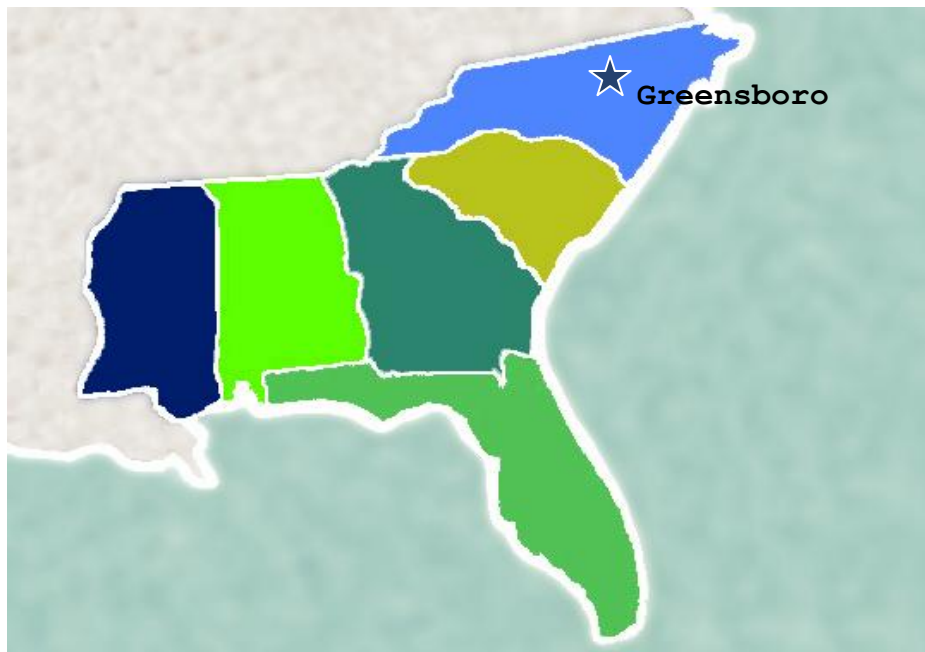
## SOUTHEAST ~ SERVECenter

January 2008, EBE # 186

### EVIDENCE BASED EDUCATION REQUEST DESK

#### OUR GOAL

To assist educators and policymakers in their efforts to apply the evidence base to decisions about policies, programs, and practices they encounter.



#### REQUEST:

- What are the causes and what is the solution to teacher recruitment and retention?

#### RESPONSE

Teacher recruitment and retention is a topic of major interest, and the REL-SE has previously done work in this area for other clients. Those documents, EBE reports #41 and #56 are attached. Because approximately one year has passed since those responses were completed, for this request REL-SE staff conducted searches of the Internet and UNCG online education databases for subsequent research and studies concentrating on the use of teacher recruitment and retention practices. REL-SE staff members also consulted relevant non-profit organizations (AIR, Mathematica, NASSP, etc.) as well as U.S. government websites (U.S. ED, GAO, IES, WWC, etc.) for recent articles, evaluations, and research regarding teacher recruitment and retention techniques and initiatives. A summary of the conclusions from the two most recent comprehensive looks at the topic (Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006) and Center for Educator Compensation Reform (2007) is included. An annotated bibliography follows. Articles listed below, as well as the two earlier EBE responses, are attached as PDFs when possible.

If you have any questions regarding this document, please contact the REL-SE, 1-800-755-3277 or RELSoutheast@serve.org

## **Summary of Conclusions from Guarino, Santibanez, and Daley (2006) and Center for Educator Compensation Reform (2007)**

*1. Results that arose fairly consistently regarding the characteristics of individuals who enter the teaching profession were as follows:*

- Females formed greater proportions of new teachers than males.
- Whites formed greater proportions of new teachers than minorities, although there is evidence that minority participation rose in the early 1990s.
- College graduates with higher measured academic ability were less likely to enter teaching than were other college graduates. It is possible, however, that these differences were driven by the measured ability of elementary school teachers, who represent the majority of teachers.
- A more tentative finding based on a small number of weaker studies is that an altruistic desire to serve society is one of the primary motivations for pursuing teaching.

*2. Several findings emerged with a strong degree of consistency in empirical studies of the characteristics of individuals who leave the teaching profession:*

- The highest turnover and attrition rates seen for teachers occurred in their first years of teaching and after many years of teaching when they were near retirement, thus producing a U-shaped pattern of attrition with respect to age or experience.
- Minority teachers tended to have lower attrition rates than White teachers.
- Teachers in the fields of science and mathematics were more likely to leave teaching than teachers in other fields.
- Teachers with higher measured academic ability (as measured by test scores) were more likely to leave teaching.
- Female teachers typically had higher attrition rates than male teachers.

*3. Regarding the external characteristics of schools and districts that are related to teacher recruitment and retention rates, the empirical literature provided the following fairly consistent findings:*

- Schools with higher proportions of minority, low-income, and low-performing students tended to have higher attrition rates.
- In most studies, urban school districts had higher attrition rates than suburban and rural districts.
- Teacher retention was generally found to be higher in public schools than in private schools.

*4. The following statements summarize the consistent research findings regarding compensation policies and their relationship to teacher recruitment and retention:*

- Higher salaries were associated with lower teacher attrition.

- Teachers were responsive to salaries outside their districts and their profession.
- In surveys of teachers, self-reported dissatisfaction with salary was associated with higher attrition and decreased commitment to teaching.

5. *Rigorous empirical studies of the impact of pre-service policies on teacher recruitment and retention were sparse. In general, few results emerged across studies, and the following findings were therefore not particularly robust:*

- Graduates of nontraditional and alternative teacher education programs appear to have higher rates of retention in teaching than national comparison groups and may differ from traditional recruits in their background characteristics.
- There was tentative evidence that streamlined routes to credentialing provide more incentive to enter teaching than monetary rewards.
- Pre-service testing requirements may adversely affect the entry of minority candidates into teaching.

6. *Findings from the research on in-service policies that affect teacher recruitment and retention were as follows:*

- Schools that provided mentoring and induction programs, particularly those related to collegial support, had lower rates of turnover among beginning teachers.
- Schools that provided teachers with more autonomy and administrative support had lower levels of teacher attrition and migration.
- Accountability policies might lead to increased attrition in low-performing schools.

## **Annotated Bibliography**

**American Federation of Teachers (2007). *Meeting the challenge: Recruiting and retaining teachers in hard-to-staff schools.***

**Abstract:** *This report offers insights and solutions for recruiting and retaining teachers in high-poverty schools.* “Meeting the Challenge” asserts that teaching and learning will only thrive in schools where basic needs are met. Teachers and students need to teach and learn in schools that have strong administrative support; faculty input; safe and orderly working conditions; and adequate time for training, planning, and instruction. This report asserts that when the proper programs and resources are implemented at hard-to-staff schools, student achievement will improve, and recruiting and retaining teachers will be much less difficult. **[PDF Included]**

**Amrein-Beardsley, A. (2007). Recruiting expert teachers into hard-to-staff schools. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 89(1), 64-67.**

**Abstract provided:** This article discusses the importance of increasing the quality of teachers and the number of high-quality teachers in hard-to-staff schools as ways to raise levels of student

achievement in such schools. The author considers how highly qualified teachers can be attracted to America's most challenging schools. The quality of the principal, salary, and benefits and the quality of other teachers are three significant factors to be considered by teachers before taking positions in hard-to-staff schools. Additionally, five of the most frequent policies mentioned by expert teachers to improve student achievement are listed and briefly discussed. Overall, the author concludes that only radical reforms would help schools and student recover learning. **[PDF Included]**

**Atwell, N. (2007). *Project TRREE: Teacher recruitment and retention for educational excellence*. New York, NY: Research and Taskforce work presented at American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) April 2007. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. Ed. 496528).**

**Abstract provided:** Project TRREE (Teacher Recruitment and Retention for Educational Excellence) is a three-year, federally funded project conducted by the Kentucky Department of Education. The purpose of the project is to develop a systemic approach to increase the number of highly qualified special education teachers with a focus on recruitment of linguistically, culturally, and ethnically diverse educators. This report was intended to be used as a resource to develop recruitment and retention approaches that are better suited to specific schools, districts, and communities. **[PDF Included]**

**Barnes, G., Crowe, E., & Schaefer, B. (2007). *The cost of teacher turnover in five school districts: A pilot study*. National Commission on Teaching and America's Future.**

**Abstract provided:** This paper reports the results of a pilot study of the cost of teacher turnover in five school districts. It examines the rate of turnover; the relationship between turnover and teacher and school characteristics; and the costs associated with recruiting, hiring, and training replacement teachers. It found evidence that turnover costs, although difficult to quantify, were significant at both the district and the school level. It also found that teachers left high-minority and low-performing schools at significantly higher rates. This has implications for the differential impact of the costs of teacher turnover on high-need schools. The relationship between teacher turnover and other school and teacher characteristics varied across the five school districts. **[PDF Included]**

**Cavanagh, S. (2007). 'Competitiveness' Bill to aid math, science is signed by president. *Education Week*, 26(45), 24.**

**Abstract:** This article covers President Bush's signing of the *America COMPETES Act* into law. This Act seeks to bolster mathematics and science education through improved teacher recruitment and training and the promotion of successful classroom practices through federal grants for schools. **[PDF Included]**

**Center for Educator Compensation Reform. (2007). *Annotated bibliography of research and publications on educator compensation.***

**Abstract provided:** The Center for Educator Compensation Reform devised this annotated bibliography to provide Teacher Incentive Fund Grantees and other interested stakeholders with a list of citations for articles, books, and documents all related to the broad topic of educator compensation reform. The chapters titled “Compensation and Teacher Supply” and “Compensation and Teacher Retention” provide numerous citations and abstracts regarding the role of compensation in recruitment and retention and various empirical studies of why teachers stay and leave. **[Word Document Included]**

**Gehrke, R.S., Swanson, R., & McCoy, K. (May 2007). *Sustaining and retaining beginning special educators: It takes a village. Teaching and Teacher Education, 23(4), 490-500.***

**Abstract provided:** The need to support and retain beginning teachers has become a critical given: (1) the shortage of teachers in certain disciplines, and (2) the current emphasis on teacher qualifications and student achievement. In this study, five first-year special education teachers in the southwestern section of the United States provided information on the persons and activities that supplied them with much needed and valued support. The results indicate that having a strong network of support and a variety of resources positively influenced these teachers' abilities to focus on student learning and on their intent to remain in their positions.

**Gorard, S., See, B.H., Smith, E., & White, P. (2007). *What can we do to strengthen the teacher workforce? International Journal of Lifelong Education, 26(4), 419-437.***

**Abstract provided:** This paper considered recurrent alarms in England, Wales, and other developed countries concerning shortages of teachers. It summarized the conclusions from a mixed-methods international study of teacher supply, quality, and retention. The research used large-scale, secondary data sets from a variety of sources, at both the individual and aggregate level; and analyses conducted for regional, national, and international comparisons. These were supplemented by questionnaire-based surveys and focus groups in England and Wales. One conclusion was that there was no evidence of a general crisis in teacher recruitment and retention over the past decade and no reason to suspect one was imminent at time of writing. There were some difficulties in recruiting teachers in particular subject areas and geographical regions, but these were largely related to policies regarding recruitment targets and entry requirements that could be changed easily. Fluctuation in the demand for teachers was more closely related to the organization and funding of schools than to variations in the supply of potential entrants to the profession. The authors considered why the results of this project appear substantially different from those of much previously published research in this area and warn against the uncritical use of particular indicators and measures. They go on to suggest what steps could be taken to strengthen the teacher workforce in England and Wales, such as proposing increasing targets and funding places to make training available to more students. **[PDF Included]**

**Guarino, C.M., Santibanez, L., & Daley, G.A. (2006). Teacher recruitment and retention: A review of the recent empirical literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 76(2), 173-208.**

**Abstract provided:** This article critically reviews the recent empirical literature on teacher recruitment and retention published in the United States. It examines the characteristics of individuals who enter and remain in the teaching profession, the characteristics of schools and districts that successfully recruit and retain teachers, and the types of policies that show evidence of efficacy in recruiting and retaining teachers. The goal of the article is to provide researchers and policymakers with a review that is comprehensive, evaluative, and up to date. The review of the empirical studies selected for discussion is intended to serve not only as a compendium of available recent research on teacher recruitment and retention but also as a guide to the merit and importance of these studies. **[PDF Included]**

**Haar, J.M. (Winter 2007). Retaining experienced, qualified teachers: The principal's role. *Rural Educator*, 28(2), 28-34.**

**Abstract provided:** The writer outlines one teacher's experience as a rural science teacher in comparison with what the literature identifies as essential components to retaining effective, qualified teachers. This teacher's experience addresses information about the internal and external challenges of teaching, relevant professional development experiences, and administrative support.

**Link:** [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_qa4126/is\\_200701/ai\\_n18705280](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa4126/is_200701/ai_n18705280)

**Kardos, S.M., & Johnson, S. (September 2007). On their own and presumed expert: New teachers' experience with their colleagues. *Teachers College Record*, 109(9), 2083-2106.**

**Abstract provided:** Background/Context: In order to develop effective strategies for retaining able and committed teachers, it is important to understand how new teachers experience their work with their colleagues. A previous qualitative study conducted by the authors and others presented a conceptual framework for understanding new teachers' experiences of the professional culture of their schools. The prior work suggested that new teachers might be more likely to stay in teaching and remain at their schools when they work in what the authors called integrated professional cultures. Such an approach promotes frequent and reciprocal interaction among faculty members across experience levels, recognizes new teachers' needs as beginners, and develop shared responsibility among teachers far the school Foots of Study. This study uses the concept of integrated professional culture to frame an inquiry about new teachers' experiences at their schools and with their colleagues. Research Design: The study examines the experiences of a representative random sample of 486 first- and second-year teachers surveyed in four states (California, Florida, Massachusetts, and Michigan). Participants were chosen using two-stage stratified cluster sampling. The mail survey achieved a response rate of 65 percent. The authors conducted descriptive analyses of the questionnaire data and summarized new

teachers' experiences in a series of comparative tables Conclusions/Recommendations: The data revealed that many novice teachers report that their work is solitary, that they are expected to be prematurely expert and independent, and that their fellow teachers do not share a sense of collective responsibility for their school. In integrated professional cultures, new teachers interact with experienced colleagues in an ongoing way. However, the authors found that approximately one-half (in CA and MI) to two-thirds (in FL and MA) of new teachers generally plan and teach alone. In integrated professional cultures, new teachers are recognized as novices and offered extra assistance; however, the authors found that less than one-third (MI) to less than one-half (CA) reported that extra assistance was available to them. Finally, in integrated professional cultures, teachers share a sense of collective responsibility for the school. However, less than half of the new teachers in the four states reported that teachers share responsibility for the students in their school Taken together, these findings reveal that many new teachers work without the support of integrated professional cultures. Given these findings, the authors discuss in detail what policymakers and school leaders can do to address the critical challenge of supporting new teachers.

**Kersaint, G., Lewis, J., Potter, R., & Meisels, G. (August 2007) Why teachers leave: Factors that influence retention and resignation. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23(6), 775-794.**

**Abstract provided:** Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior is used to examine continuing teachers' plans to remain or resign and the likelihood of resigned teachers to return to teaching in the next three years. Specifically, this study examined factors that encourage or hinder resigned teachers from returning to teaching, the importance of such factors, and the importance of those factors for teachers who remained in teaching. We find that family issues are of greatest concern to all teachers and that leavers place much more emphasis on the time they are able to spend with their families than do stayers. The importance assigned to all factors is influenced by demographic characteristics.

**Malloy, W.W., & Allen, T. (Winter 2007). Teacher retention in a teacher resiliency-building rural school. *Rural Educator*.**

**Abstract provided:** This article focused on the challenge of teacher retention in rural schools in relation to the No Child Left Behind mandate that school districts must attract and retain highly qualified teachers. This case study examined the extent to which a rural school enhanced teacher retention by overcoming the barriers that might otherwise have presented a challenge to teacher retention. Findings from this study suggest that the nurturing-the-nurturers concept, inherent in teacher resiliency-building schools, enhances teacher retention strategies.

**Link:** [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_qa4126/is\\_200701/ai\\_n18705279](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa4126/is_200701/ai_n18705279)

**Metz, S. (Summer 2007). Supporting new teachers. *The Science Teacher* ,74(5), 8.**

**Abstract provided:** The city of Lawrence, Massachusetts, has established a district-run mentoring program to support all new teachers. Designed to address the issue of teacher retention, the program pairs each new teacher with a mentor who teaches the same subject area or grade. As most experienced teachers are asked to take on the role of mentor at some point, the program ensures that experienced teachers are trained in effective mentoring practices.

**Nunez, M., & Fernandez, M. (Winter 2006) Collaborative recruitment of diverse teachers for the long haul--TEAMS: Teacher Education for the Advancement of a Multicultural Society. *Multicultural Education*, 14(2), 50-56.**

**Abstract provided:** This article is part of a special issue on innovative practices in education. The TEAMS (Teacher Education for the Advancement of a Multicultural Society) Teaching Fellowship Program uses creative partnering to recruit, prepare, and support a confident, critical, and diverse teaching force prepared to tackle the challenges of inner-city teaching for the long term. This innovative model of teacher development, which has developed a strong network of dedicated teachers, focuses on diversity and culturally responsive pedagogy and provides teachers with the tools to be successful in urban public schools.

**REL Pacific. (2007). Preparing and licensing high-quality teachers in Pacific region jurisdictions. *Issues & Answers*, 31.**

**Abstract:** The Pacific region needs more highly qualified teachers, but current teacher preparation and training programs and certification and licensing processes are not meeting this need. By creating an accurate picture of teacher preparation and licensing across the Pacific region, this report provides educators and policymakers with knowledge that they can use in addressing teacher quality, preparation, and licensing.

**Link:** <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?id=55>

**Smith, T.M. (February 2007) How do state-level induction and standards-based reform policies affect induction experiences and turnover among new teachers? *American Journal of Education*, 113(2), 273-309.**

**Abstract provided:** Since the early 1980s, states have been increasingly active in setting policies that structure the initiation or "induction" of new teachers into teaching. This article uses the Schools and Staffing Survey merged with state-level data collected for *Education Week's* "Quality Counts" reports to examine the impact of state policy on beginning teacher turnover. States that mandate participation in induction programs tend to have more beginning teachers mentored, although state-level funding for these programs is not associated with increased mentorship. Requiring that beginning teachers and their mentors be matched by subject, grade, or school does not appear to ensure such a match, although states that have this requirement do have mentorship programs that are more effective at reducing turnover. Finally, states with



stronger standards, assessments, and accountability systems have lower turnover among beginning teachers.

**Stotko, E.M., Ingram, R., & Beatty-O’Ferrall (January 2007) Promising strategies for attracting and retaining successful urban teachers. *Urban Education*, 42(1), 30-51.**

**Abstract provided:** The writers address the recruitment and retention of successful urban teachers. They describe the discouraging and neglectful teacher recruitment practices used in some urban school districts. They then present strategies for recruiting and retaining teachers, arguing that these processes should reflect research findings on the characteristics of effective urban teachers.

**Suell, J.L., & Piotrowski, C. (2007). Alternative teacher education programs: A review of the literature and outcome studies. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 34(1), 54-58.**

**Abstract provided:** This paper provided an overview on alternative teacher education programs (ATEP). This review covered the formation, development, and design of these non-traditional certification approaches over the past two decades. Research studies on five critical issues: teacher retention and attrition, importance of mentors, teacher education and needs assessment, minorities and male, and student achievement were emphasized. Recent comparative studies on traditionally trained and ATEP teachers were noted. Research, to date supports the ATEP model for training teachers. **[PDF Included]**



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- Research on a particular topic
- Information on the evidence base for curriculum interventions or professional development programs
- Information on large, sponsored research projects
- Information on southeastern state policies and programs

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