

'The Set': Do Delaware's High Need Schools Struggle with Teacher Retention?

February 2013

Monthly Data Briefs from the Delaware Dept. of Education's Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Unit

The DDOE designated **49 schools** as 'high-need' and eligible for the state's talent retention and attraction program (Delaware Talent Cooperative). This brief explores teacher characteristics and retention patterns in the state's highest need schools.

Table 1. Teacher Characteristics by School Poverty Level

	State Avg.	Avg. for High Poverty Schools	Avg. for Low Poverty Schools	Difference between High and Low Poverty Schools
Percent Novice	3.6	4.7	3.4	1.3*
Average Years Experience	12.4	11.1	12.8	-1.7*
Percent Male	24	13.6	27.5	-13.9*
Percent Black	10.8	14	8.1	5.9*
Percent Hispanic	1.5	2.3	1.4	0.9*
Percent White	86.9	83	89.6	-6.6*

*Difference is statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level.

Notes: Includes teachers in comprehensive, vocational, and magnet schools (2006-07 through 2010-11). High (low) poverty schools are in the top (bottom) FRPL quartile of schools.

Teacher Characteristics in DE High-Poverty Schools

- There are statistically significant differences in the characteristics of teachers in Delaware's high- and low-poverty schools. Low-poverty schools have slightly fewer novice teachers (3.4%) than high poverty schools with 4.7% of teachers considered novice.
- There is an almost 2 year difference in the average years of experience for low-poverty (12.8) and high-poverty (11.1) schools.
- While 27.5% of teachers in low-poverty schools are male, only 13.6% of teachers in high-poverty schools are male.
- There are larger proportions of black and Hispanic teachers in high-poverty schools (14% and 2.3% respectively) than in low-poverty schools (8.1% and 1.4% respectively).

Teacher Retention in DE High-Need Schools



- 73.3% of teachers in high-need schools in 2007-08 were teaching in the same school in the following year. In all other schools in 2007-08, 82.5% of teachers were in their same school the following year.
- Three years later, only a little more than half (52.6%) of teachers in high-need schools in 2007-08 were teaching in the same school as compared to 66.1% of teachers in all other schools.
- 58% of teachers in high-need schools in 2007-08 were no longer teaching in the same school four years later. This is 17 percentage points higher than the 42% of teachers in non-high need schools who left their schools by 2011-12.
- Rates of same-school teacher retention four years later vary by district. For example, Capital School District's high-need schools retained 55% of 2007-08 teachers four years later while only 53.2%, 45.4%, and 25.3% of teachers were retained in Colonial, Red Clay, and Christina school districts, respectively.

Destination for High-Need School Transfers

- The average teacher turnover rate in high-need schools between the 2006-07 and 2010-11 school years was 23.6%. This is nearly 9 percentage points higher than the turnover rate in all other schools (15%).
- In high-need schools during this period, 12.2% left teaching in DE public schools, 3.4% transferred to another high-need school, and 8% transferred to a non-high need school. In all other schools, 7.7% left teaching in DE public schools, 1.3% transferred to a high-need school, and 6% transferred to a non-high need school.
- Overall, 34% of the teachers who left a high-need school between the 2006-07 and 2010-11 school years transferred to a non-high need school. Only 9% of teachers who left a non-high need school during this period transferred to a high-need school.

Notes: Definition of 'high-need' is as specified for the DDOE Delaware Talent Cooperative (www.detalentcoop.org)

Source: Data include teachers in comprehensive, vocational, charter, and magnet schools unless otherwise specified. Data are based on preliminary findings from the Harvard Strategic Data Project Human Capital Diagnostic Report using DDOE records. Data are subject to slight change upon completion of final report.

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Average Teacher Turnover by School Need Status

