CONDITION OF

TEACHER SUPPLY AND DEMAND

IN OHIO 2004

INTRODUCTION

In 2001, the State Board of Education directed the Department to review the issues of teacher supply and demand in order to provide guidance to key policy questions. Susan Tave Zelman, superintendent of public instruction, responded by committing to develop an ongoing system to analyze the data and report to the State Board of Education on an annual basis on the *Conditions of Teacher Supply and Demand in Ohio.*

A teacher supply and demand study should provide useful information to state policy makers, educational administrators, institutions of higher education and job seekers. A well-designed study should reveal information about the forces that influence how and why educators move in and out of public school positions, as well as how staffing needs are influenced by within-state shifts in district enrollments.

Previous reports on the condition of teacher supply and demand in Ohio provided good descriptions of the landscape of teacher trends by relying on existing quantitative databases. The analysis of these trends often illuminated problems or issues that were occurring in the market but could provide little understanding of why the problems were occurring. The *Condition of Teacher Supply and Demand in Ohio 2004* study provides the first attempt to both address "what is happening" in the teaching profession as well as provide an explanation for "why the problems are occurring." This study builds on information from existing databases on student enrollment, teacher workforce demographics, teacher attrition and mobility, teaching vacancies, the pipeline for new teachers in higher education, and staffing issues in community schools.

New this year was the collection of qualitative data on the perceptions of teachers and district administrators about the causes of teacher attrition and mobility as well as their judgments about the ways to improve the recruitment and retention of teachers.

The combination of qualitative and quantitative data has resulted in a change in format for this report. Whereas in previous years the report concentrated on describing teacher supply and demand, this report concentrates on illustrating issues that emerge from the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data. The report is organized around three sections.

- In the first section, two issues of teacher recruitment are presented along with a section describing the best practices of teacher recruitment among Ohio districts participating in the study.

- The second section presents three issues of teacher retention with an accompanying best practice in retention section.

- The final section presents a case study of a district with a comprehensive and strategic approach to the recruitment-retention continuum.

For each of the issues presented in this report, quantitative data drawn from analysis of existing databases and qualitative data from interviews of teachers and administrators is provided to describe and explain the area of concern. Where current state activities are in place to address the issue, these are described. Further policy recommendations are also made as warranted.

Accompanying this report are two data appendices. The first presents the quantitative data and follows the format of last year's report. The second appendix presents the qualitative findings. This appendix presents the results of focus groups and individual interviews conducted with a sample of approximately 100 teachers and 20 school district administrators across the state.

| I | Recruitment of Teachers : SECTION I |

This section of the report presents two key issues and best practices related to the recruitment of teachers. The first issue presents findings that indicate that while, overall, Ohio produces enough teachers to meet demand, there is a discrepancy in some areas between the number needed and the number produced – preparation institutions are over-producing teachers in some areas while under-producing in others.

The second issue presents data on the number of teachers lost to the profession between completion of their preparation program and accepting positions in schools – approximately 40 percent of all potential teachers who complete preparation programs in Ohio and are eligible for licensure fail to apply for a teaching license and do not take a position in an Ohio public school district. The best practice portion of this section examines the most common strategies for recruiting teachers. This presentation of practices specifically addresses the use of technology, networking, and the role substitutes play as recruits.

ABOUT THE DATA

This year's study includes both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data in this section provides information on:

- Student enrollment;

- Teacher workforce demographics;

- Teacher attrition and mobility;

- Teaching vacancies;

- The pipeline for new teachers in higher education; and

- Staffing issues in community schools.

The qualitative data provided in this report is from a study investigating recruitment and retention issues in Ohio. This study was designed to elicit the perceptions of teachers and the practices of districts related to recruitment and retention and interviewed approximately 20 district administrators in Ohio and 100 teachers from these school districts.

1   **Ohio's Preparation of Teachers Does Not Match Existing Need : ISSUE 1**

INTRODUCTION

While teacher preparation programs in Ohio are producing enough teachers to meet the overall demand for teachers in the state, there exists a discrepancy between the number of teachers needed in specific grade levels, subject areas, and regions, and the number produced in Ohio's institutions of higher education. In the 2003 study, the vacancy rate in fall 2002 for regular teachers was 1.9 percent. In comparison, the vacancy rate for special education teachers was 5.6 percent. The highest overall vacancy rates were in poor rural school districts (4.5 percent) and urban districts with moderate socio-economic status (SES) (4.4 percent).

The lowest vacancy rate was for districts in small towns with moderate SES (1.7 percent). Vacancy rates also varied significantly by region, with the highest rate in the very rural south (with only one teacher preparation institution) at 6.5 percent and the lowest in the southeast (with three teacher preparation colleges and universities and two branch campuses) at 1.4 percent.

This year's analysis of the data yield virtually identical findings to the previous analysis. Ohio teacher preparation institutions prepare more teachers than needed in the areas of early childhood education, social studies and physical education. Previous years' studies identified middle school education as shortage areas; this year, fewer vacancies for middle school teachers were reported. At the same time, preparation institutions continue to under-produce teachers in special education, mathematics and foreign language, among other specializations.

A Profile of the Production of Teachers in Ohio

Table 1.1
Enrollment and Completion of Teacher Preparation Courses

	Total Across All Groups	African-American	Asian-American	Hispanic	Native American	Other/Unknown	Pacific Islander	White
Enrollment	45,380	2,541	192	445	116	5,362	63	36,661
Completers	9,132	396	41	79	13	1,083	18	7,502

The 50 reporting institutions currently enroll approximately 45,000 students in teacher education programs across all classes (e.g., freshman, sophomore, junior, senior). Ohio colleges and universities continue to produce approximately 7,000 education graduates who are eligible for licensing per year. Approximately 3,700 applied for a first-time license last year. As it is not yet possible to identify how many of the 7,000 graduates are adding to an existing license, we can only estimate that somewhere between 20-25 percent of all graduates do not apply for a teaching license.
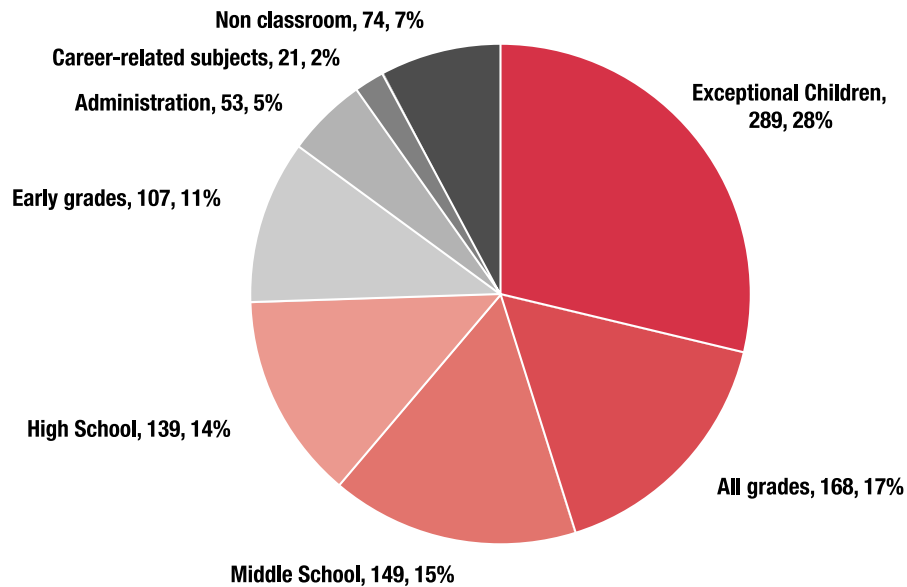
1   **Ohio's Preparation of Teachers Does Not Match Existing Need : ISSUE 1**

DATA ANALYSIS

Ohio's Vacancies

Fewer than half of districts with responses to the vacancy survey reported that they had unfilled positions the first week of school 2003. Within the 150 Ohio school districts that did report vacancies, there were 781 unfilled classroom teaching positions as of the opening of school in fall 2003. Only 62 of these were for part-time positions.

Figure 1.1
Reported Vacancies by Grade Level

Non classroom, 74, 7%
Career-related subjects, 21, 2%
Administration, 53, 5%
Early grades, 107, 11%
High School, 139, 14%
Middle School, 149, 15%
Exceptional Children, 289, 28%
All grades, 168, 17%

Vacancies for teachers assigned to work in regular classrooms included 107 vacancies for primary grades, 148 for middle school grades, 139 for high school teachers, and 168 for teachers teaching a class not limited to a specific grade (e.g., art, music, physical education, etc.). The largest number of vacancies occurred for positions working with exceptional children across grade levels, with 289 vacancies.

These vacancies are often filled with teachers on temporary licenses or with long-term substitutes. Table 1.2 illustrates that since 1999, the use of teachers with temporary licenses has decreased. However, utilization of long-term substitutes has increased over this same period of time.

Table 1.2
Percentage of Teachers with Temporary and Long-term Substitute Licenses

Position type	1999	2000	2002	2004
Temporary licenses	5.1	5.6	3.7	3.14
Long-term substitutes, omitting community	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.4
Long-term substitutes, all schools	0.0	0.4	2.9	6.96
Long-term substitutes, just community schools	N/A	N/A	N/A	44.98

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When we examine data statewide, there are seven teachers serving under long-term substitute licenses for every one hundred teachers. Additional analysis reveals that the large increase in long-term substitutes results from the large-scale utilization of these licenses in community schools. Across all community schools, there are nearly 45 long-term substitute licenses per hundred teachers.

Subject Area Vacancies

Table 1.3 depicts the number of reported vacancies by subject area. While special education accounts for the largest number of vacancies, other subject areas, such as mathematics, science, and the arts and foreign language had substantial vacancies. Subject areas with the fewest shortages are physical education, social studies and reading. This data parallels national data.

Table 1.3
Vacancy Rates by Type of Teacher

Subject or teaching area	Reported Vacancies
Special Education total	289
Mild to moderate needs	50
Severe behavior handicaps	46
Specific learning disorder	34
Cognitive disability	23
Multiple disabilities	16
Early childhood intervention	14
Preschool through third grade	95
Science	64
Mathematics	60
Middle school combination of subjects	51
Foreign Language	46
Visual Arts	42
Music	39
Language Arts	34
English	34
Gifted	28
School Psychologist	27
Non-classroom, such as mentoring	24
English as a Second Language	19
Physical Education	16
Reading	14
Social Studies	11

1   **Ohio's Preparation of Teachers Does Not Match Existing Need : ISSUE 1**

Production versus Need

There is considerable difference between the numbers of students enrolled in and graduating from various licensure programs in Ohio and the areas of teacher shortages in the state. One of the requirements for becoming a prospective new teacher is passing a subject-specific Praxis examination. Table 1.4 compares the percent of prospective new teachers based on Praxis test-taking to the percentage that subject represents of all the vacancies reported in the vacancy survey.

Table 1.4
Percent of Prospective New Teachers and Vacancies

Content	% of Prospective New Teachers	% Vacancies Fall 2003
Art	3.37%	5.12%
Early Childhood	34.94%	11.51%
English and Language Arts	5.28%	8.28%
Foreign Language	1.27%	5.60%
Mathematics	3.18%	7.31%
Middle School	19.87%	6.21%
Music	3.07%	4.75%
Phys Ed	3.13%	1.95%
Science	6.71%	7.80%
Social Studies	6.43%	1.34%
Special Education	10.63%	35.20%

- Early childhood (elementary) education graduates account for 35 percent of the total number of those who passed Praxis tests and are eligible for licensing, yet account for only 12 percent of vacancies.

- Reversing a trend from the previous two years, middle childhood education graduates account for 20 percent of the total number of those who passed Praxis tests and are eligible for licensing, compared to only 6 percent of vacancies.

- The percentage of positions vacant in any special education subject is roughly 3.5 times the percentage of potential special education teachers passing a Praxis test.

- More potential teachers chose to prepare for a social studies license (89 test-takers) than a mathematics license (69 test-takers) or an English/Language Arts license (49 test-takers.)

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Alternative Licensure Programs

Over the past four years, the Ohio Department of Education has worked aggressively with local districts and institutions of higher education to develop and fund alternative license programs. These programs include:

- *Expanding the Pool of Qualified Teachers (EPQT)*

  A unique federal grant awarded to the Ohio Department of Education is providing, for a limited time, financial aid to support current and former military personnel who wish to become classroom teachers. EPQT is designed to increase the number of teachers in high-need content areas such as mathematics, science and foreign language (grades 7-12) and intervention specialists K-12. Five universities from Ohio are partnering with ODE on this grant: University of Dayton, Wright State University, Ohio University, Ashland University and Cleveland State University.

Table 1.5
2003-2004 Expanding the Pool of Qualified Teachers Enrollment to Date

Number Enrolled	• 46 enrolled • 30 candidates scheduled to begin winter and spring 2005 • 42 in application process
Gender of Participants (Enrolled)	• 39 male • 7 female
Certification Areas (Enrolled Participants)	• Mathematics – 17 • Science – 16 • Intervention Specialists – 9 • Foreign Language - 4

- *Troops to Teachers Program (TTT)*

  Troops to Teachers is a cooperative project between the U.S. Department of Defense and the Ohio Department of Education. Troops to Teachers is a federally funded program to assist retired and separated members of the Armed Forces, as well as Guard and Reserve personnel with obtaining licensure and employment as teachers. Troops to Teachers provides support to personnel who are making the transition to teaching and to the districts who hire them.

Table 1.6
1994-2004 Troops to Teachers Enrollment to Date

Gender	• 183 male • 32 female
Certification Areas	• Mathematics - 28 • Science - 20 • Intervention Specialists - 23 • Social Studies - 20 • Elementary Education - 13
Program Statistics	• 68 percent are teaching in high need schools • 28 percent are minorities

- *Ohio Department of Education/Ohio Dominican University/Lesley University Program*

  Recognizing that in 2003, Ohio had 13.8 percent of its intervention specialists serving under a temporary license, the Ohio Department of Education's Center for the Teaching Profession and its Office of Exceptional Children, along with Ohio Dominican University and Lesley University, developed a model for training already licensed teachers to become fully licensed intervention specialists.

  The program is delivered over four semesters through a blended program format that includes summer intensive institutes and course work offered one weekend a month during the school year, along with online learning modules.

  To date, more than 50 teachers are enrolled. Discussions and planning are underway to scale up the program statewide beginning summer of 2005. The goal will be to enroll 200 – 250 teachers.
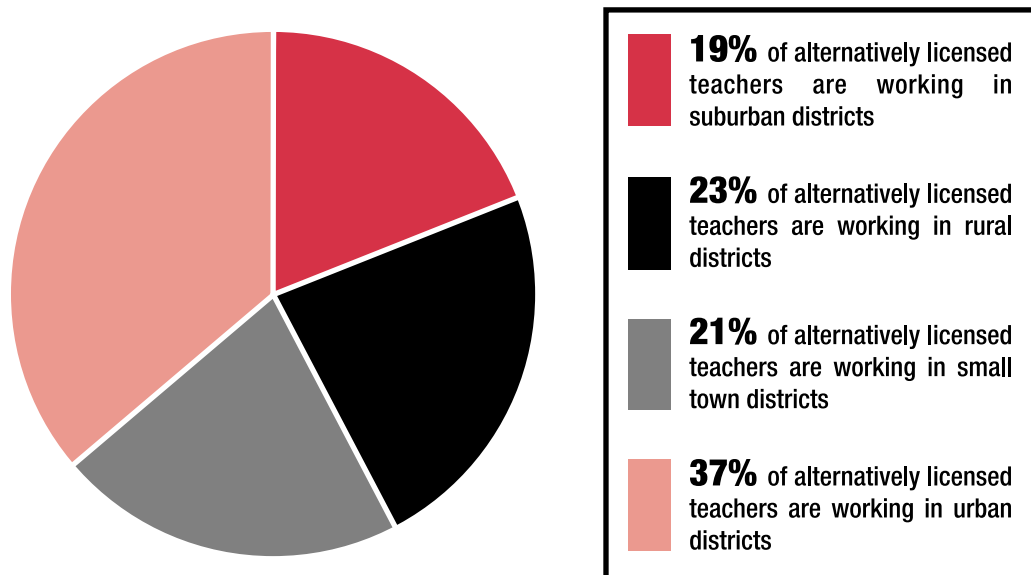
• *Diversity Grants*
In December 2000, the Ohio Department of Education offered a grant program to support districts'
design and implementation of recruitment activities to address the need for teachers in mathematics,
science and special education in districts with high poverty. The Ohio Department of Education
awarded nine Local Education Authorities (LEA) up to $200,000 each. The LEAs created partnerships
with institutions of higher education, special education regional resource centers and regional
professional development centers. By June 2005, more than 300 people who have
participated in the Diversity Grant Program will be prepared to assume teaching positions via alternative
licensure.

Outcomes of Alternative Licensure Programs:
The implementation of alternative licensure programs in Ohio has resulted in a substantial increase in the number
of teachers who have become teachers through alternative or conditional licenses. Data demonstrates that teach-
ers who enter the profession through alternative routes are teaching in high need districts and in subject areas with
high vacancy rates.

Figure 1.2
Where are Alternatively Licensed Teachers Working?

19% of alternatively licensed teachers are working in suburban districts

23% of alternatively licensed teachers are working in rural districts

21% of alternatively licensed teachers are working in small town districts

37% of alternatively licensed teachers are working in urban districts

1   **Ohio's Preparation of Teachers Does Not Match Existing Need : ISSUE 1**

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue to Fund and Support Alternative Licensure Programs
Budget recommendations for the 2006-2007 biennium budget include requests to continue funding for alternative licensure programs developed by the Ohio Department of Education in cooperation with local school districts and institutions of higher education. Senate Bill 2 requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules that establish an alternative principal license and rules that establish an alternative license for superintendents and any other administrative position. Recommendations for an alternative license for principals will be presented to the State Board of Education in January 2005.

Develop and Pilot Regional Partnerships Between Institutions of Higher Education and School Districts
These pilots would link school districts with two-year and four-year institutions of higher education in their region to forecast future staffing needs, recruit and train teacher candidates in necessary areas, and then provide placement to those trained.

Provide Additional Incentives to Attract Teachers into High Need Areas
The 2006-2007 biennium budget request includes funding to pay incentives to teachers who teach in hard-to-staff schools and in high-need subject areas.

Provide Incentives to Preparation Institutions to Develop Programs in High Need Areas
Because revenue is dependent on student tuition, preparation programs have no incentive to limit the number of students in over-subscribed teaching fields. Further, because programs must also be financially self-sufficient, there are strong disincentives to developing new programs in teaching fields that have thus far failed to attract interest from students. To date, no state has attempted to balance supply and demand by focusing incentives on the supply side of the problem. Despite this lack of attention, there are a number of actions that could be pursued including:

> • *Providing program development funds for shortage fields;*

> • *Providing funds to recruit students into shortage field programs; and*

> • *Providing incentives or tuition offsets that limit enrollment in over-subscribed teaching fields.*

1   **Ohio's Preparation of Teachers Does Not Match Existing Need : ISSUE 1**

2   **Ohio Loses Many Teachers between Program Completion and Induction : ISSUE 2**

INTRODUCTION

Since attrition rates for new teachers are typically much higher than experienced teachers, the need for support and guidance for new teachers has been well-documented since the mid-1980s. New teachers will become a valuable commodity as experienced teachers retire because they are the likely candidates to fill these vacancies. Ohio's attrition and retirement rates help illuminate this issue and indicate that the greatest attrition occurs between program completion and acceptance of the first teaching position.

Attrition in Ohio

Attrition of new teachers in Ohio has been increasing in recent years. For example, after four years, 80 percent of those teachers hired in 1997 remained in the public schools while only 76.6 percent of those hired in 2000 remained after the same number of years. Also, while first-year attrition remained an almost steady 7 percent since 1998, it suddenly grew to almost 12 percent in 2003. It is not clear how much of this spike in attrition was caused by involuntary departures due to reductions in force.

Table 2.1
Percentage of Teachers Employed in a Base Year Still Employed After One to Seven Years

Base Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
After 1 year	95.05%	93.12%	92.72%	92.30%	93.22%	93.12%	88.51%
After 2 years	90.86%	87.56%	86.96%	87.50%	88.14%	84.29%	
After 3 years	85.41%	82.29%	82.45%	82.95%	80.89%		
After 4 years	80.27%	78.15%	78.18%	76.60%			
After 5 years	76.20%	74.06%	72.85%				
After 6 years	72.14%	68.95%					
After 7 years	67.04%						

2   **Ohio Loses Many Teachers between Program Completion and Induction : ISSUE 2**

DATA ANALYSIS

Retirement in Ohio

Ohio's teacher workforce is aging, and as it does, the percentage of teachers eligible to retire increases. For example, the percentage of teachers with more than 30 years of experience has increased in Ohio from three percent to six percent over the last six years.

Table 2.2
Distribution of Ohio Teachers by Years of Total Experience: 1998 – 2004

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
0 to 10	39.30%	41.60%	44.20%	46.40%	48.50%	49.70%	46.1%
0 to 5	24.20%	26.50%	28.80%	30.60%	32.10%	32.60%	26.9%
6 to 10	15.10%	15.10%	15.40%	15.80%	16.40%	17.10%	19.2%
11 to 20	29.20%	27.40%	25.80%	24.60%	23.80%	23.60%	25.7%
21 to 30	28.30%	27.70%	26.60%	25.30%	23.60%	22.10%	22.6%
31 Plus	3.20%	3.30%	3.40%	3.70%	4.00%	4.50%	5.7%

Because Ohio's attrition rates among new teachers are consistent with the national trends at the same time that the percentage of teachers eligible for retirement is on the rise, it is important to explore what is happening in the transition between teacher preparation and induction in order to increase the number of teachers who complete preparation programs and accept jobs in Ohio's schools.

Ohio's Licensing and Hiring Trends

While Ohio colleges and universities continue to produce approximately 7,000 education graduates who are eligible for licensing per year, only about 40 percent (2,790) received licenses in 2000 as depicted in Table 2.3. Furthermore, by 2004, the rate of employment among the 2,000 graduates was 1,502 or about 54 percent of the license-receiving cohort.

Table 2.3
2000 Graduates with Teaching Licenses Effective in 2000 Employed by Different Types of School Districts, 2001 – 2004 (All Position Assignments)

	2001	2002	2003	2004
City School District	590	850	862	783
Local School District	432	588	611	576
Village School District	49	68	72	68
ESC	25	32	30	24
Community School	13	19	32	29
JVSD	14	17	17	21
Total Employed	1,123	1,575	1,624	1,502
Total 2000 Graduates with teaching licenses	2,790	2,790	2,790	2,790

2   **Ohio Loses Many Teachers between Program Completion and Induction : ISSUE 2**

Interestingly, a comparison with the hiring trends for the class of 1999 graduates, as reported in *The Condition of Teaching Report 2003*, shows a very similar pattern. Initial placement rates equaled 40 percent in the first year for both the 1999 and 2000 cohorts.

For both groups of new graduates, hiring increased each year for two more years to a maximum of 58 percent and then fell back to about 54 percent. However, a large difference existed in the total number of licensed graduates from 1999 at 4,147 and the number of newly licensed 2000 graduates at 2,790.

District Recruitment Policies
Because attrition rates are highest among new teachers, districts must be well-prepared to recruit and support new teachers to the profession. In Ohio, however, many districts lack policies that address the recruitment of teachers. Most of the districts interviewed reported that there is no policy or strategy in place to recruit new teachers. When there are no concrete district policies, superintendents create guidelines for recruitment.

Administrators' Perceptions on Recruitment Policies

Lack of Policy	*"We do not have a district policy [for recruiting teachers]. There are no special incentives for teachers to come to this district."*
Creation of Guidelines	*"There is not really a district policy, more of a guideline.* *We sit down and discuss the things we feel would sell teachers on the area and develop a campaign."*

2   **Ohio Loses Many Teachers between Program Completion and Induction : ISSUE 2**

Hiring Policies Shape Recruitment
The New Teacher Project, in a study of policies that inhibit hiring in urban districts, found three hiring policies that drive hiring failures:

1. Vacancy notification requirements, which typically allow retiring or resigning teachers to provide very late notice of their intent to depart, thereby make it difficult to identify vacancies in time to hire;

2. Teacher union transfer requirements, which often further stall hiring by giving existing teachers the first pick of openings before new teachers can be hired. In essence, school districts must wait for transfers to occur before hiring new teachers; and

3. Late budget timetables and inadequate forecasting, which foster chronic budget uncertainties and leave administrators unsure about which positions will be funded in their schools.

The recruiting efforts of school districts participating in this study appear to be negatively impacted by the policies identified by The New Teacher Project. Ohio districts describe their recruiting efforts more as passive rather than active. Many districts say that recruiting practices are shaped by collective bargaining agreements.

Districts are required by collective bargaining agreements to post internally any available position before notifying the general public of the vacancy. Many districts also report that teachers need not notify them of retirement until July 10. Working within these constraints, superintendents from small, rural districts often then assume the responsibility for recruiting teachers.

Common Recruitment Practices

Teachers Unions strongly influence recruitment activities	*"The only one [recruitment policy] we are handcuffed to - and I say that facetiously because it works great - we have to post the position internally. That is with an agreement with the teachers' association."*
Superintendents shape recruitment strategies	*"The district will actively recruit candidates by ways developed by the superintendent of the district. The policy empowers the superintendent with the procedure to do that."*
Superintendents recruit from local colleges	*[Our policy] "dictates that we should find teachers from area colleges and universities."*

Problems with recruiting teachers are exacerbated in both urban and rural areas of the state
Having adequate recruitment strategies in place is important for all districts, but it is especially important for those with high vacancy rates such as those in rural and urban areas. Among regular school districts responding to the vacancy survey in the fall of 2003, the highest vacancy rates were in urban districts with moderate socio-economic status, with a rate of 3.6 percent.

2   Ohio Loses Many Teachers between Program Completion and Induction : ISSUE 2

Salary Issues Related to Recruitment
Some districts are unable to compete with wealthier districts who offer higher salaries. In addition, these districts cannot afford to employ extensive recruitment strategies.

Geographical Location of Universities
Because a popular recruitment strategy is to recruit from nearby colleges and universities, rural districts are at a disadvantage because there are few nearby institutions preparing educators. "We are a rural district. There are no major Ohio teaching institutions that are close to us, and we offer low salaries."

Ohio Department of Education's Web-based Recruitment System
One strategy for addressing recruitment issues in the state is the implementation of the Ohio Department of Education's Web-based recruitment system. Many districts are taking advantage of the ODE's Web-based recruitment system. This Web site allows both hiring districts to post positions and candidates to complete employment applications via the internet. By the end of September 2004, districts had posted more than 3,000 jobs to the Web site. More than 16,000 applications for jobs had also been posted.

The map below illustrates the number of districts in each county using this tool. In some cases, the apparent high use is as much related to the number of districts in a particular county as it is to the frequency of Web site use.

Districts Posting Jobs

1-5 districts

6-10 districts
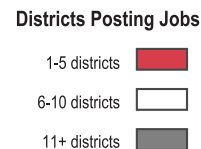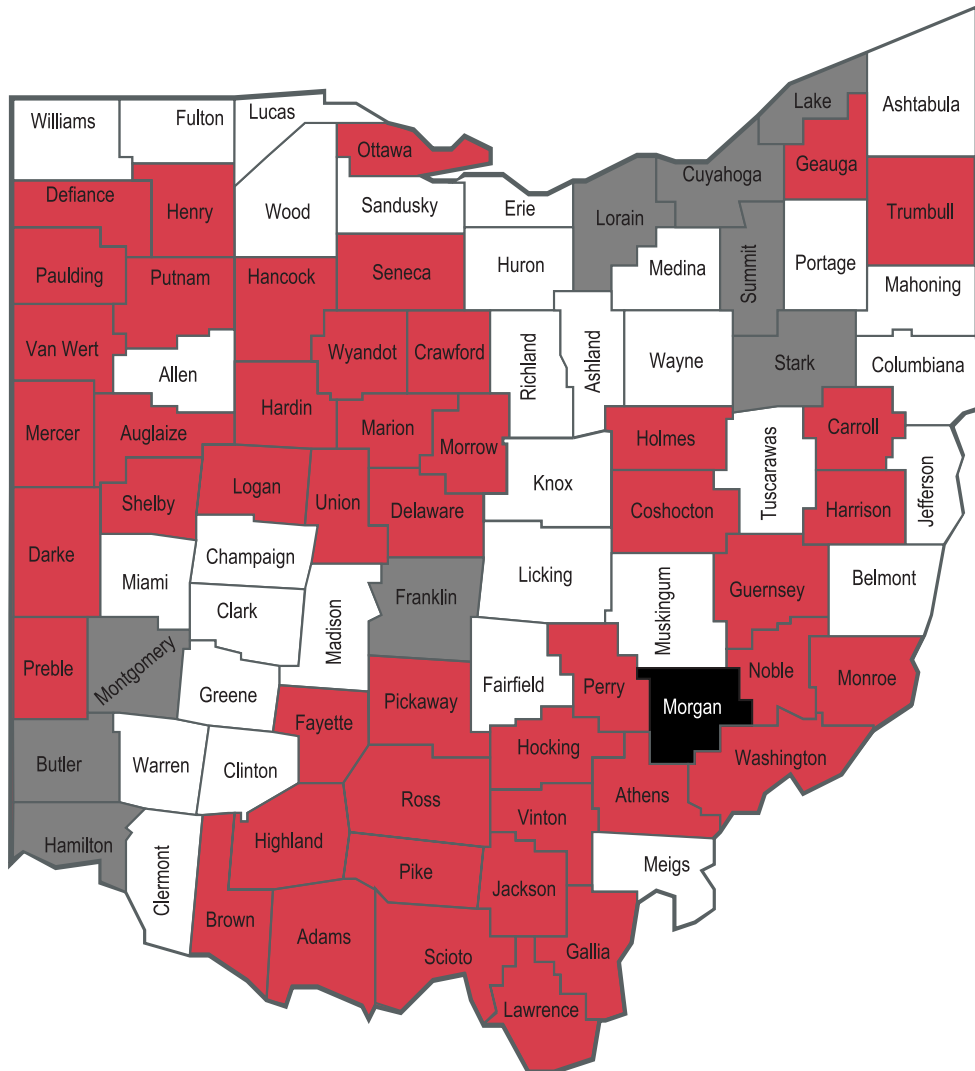
11+ districts

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Encourage Districts to Adopt Strategic Recruitment and Hiring Practices
A report created by The New Teacher Project examines the national evidence on urban hiring practices and the effect on teacher quality and applicant attrition. This research suggests that because of late hiring practices, districts are losing high-quality teachers who withdraw their application after months of waiting.

The New Teacher Project discovered three hiring practices that seem to be pervasive obstacles in most districts. It was discovered that late teacher notification requirements often make it challenging for administrators to know which positions will be vacant in the fall. Compounding this issue is that collective bargaining transfer requirements often complicate hiring practices since existing teachers are given priority over new teachers for new openings. Lastly, poor forecasting and budget timetables also create uncertainty about which positions will be funded each year.

Given these complications, a series of policy changes has been recommended by the New Teacher Project to remedy the current situation. These are outlined below.

Revise teacher notification requirements	**Create measures to ensure early notification by resigning or retiring teachers and remove disincentives for providing early notice.**
Reform collective bargaining transfer	**Expedite teacher transfer processes and work toward and create mechanisms to allow principals to consider external and internal candidates equally.**
Address budget barriers	**Promote earlier and more predictable budgets and insulate the highest-need schools from budget fluctuations.**
Revamp human resources	**HR departments must develop efficient systems for receiving, processing, tracking and placing applicants and also allow schools to have a role in the hiring process.**

Encourage Districts to Use Data-Driven Practices in Hiring
Given the attrition of new teachers, especially those in urban and rural schools, districts should be encouraged to adopt screening and hiring processes that identify those applicants who are most likely to be successful in their particular environment. In *Increasing the Odds: How Good Policies Can Yield Better Teachers*, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) suggests that districts develop screening mechanisms that rate candidates on attributes associated with effective teachers. NCTQ identifies seven attributes on which applicants should be screened:

    1) High achieving: The individual has a history of success no matter what the endeavor.

    2) Responsible: Instead of blaming others or circumstances, the individual takes full responsibility for achieving a positive outcome.

    3) Critical thinker: The individual reflects about the linkages between cause and effect instead of simply reacting to effect.

    4) Organized: The individual is able to juggle multiple projects and tasks successfully.

    5) Motivating: The individual is able to influence and motivate others to action, as evidenced by effective leadership in extracurricular activities.

6) Respectful: The individual assumes the best about people, especially people in low-income communities.

7) Shares the goals of the organization: The individual wants to work toward the mission of the district.

As another example, the Gallup organization has developed a screening tool that identifies those teachers who are most likely to be successful in urban school environments. Euclid City School District in Ohio has developed its own similar instrument that identifies whether applicants are suited to working in their specific context.

Market and Encourage the Use of Data from the Web-Based Recruitment System by School Districts
The Department should continue to market the Web-based recruitment system to districts. Through additional training, ODE can share the applicant pool with districts.

Identify the Reasons that Teacher Preparation Students Fail to Obtain Licenses
While 40 percent of those students who graduate from preparation programs in the state fail to obtain a teaching license, the reasons for this discrepancy are unknown. However, some new teachers are likely to go to other states to teach. A qualitative study that identified why these students choose not to pursue the career they prepared for would help to identify future courses of action for this problem.

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INTRODUCTION

A review of the literature reveals a number of practices utilized to recruit new teachers. Financial incentives tend to be popular and often come in the form of scholarships, loan-forgiveness programs or signing bonuses. Despite the popularity of these incentives, research suggests that they tend to be short-term solutions to shortage issues and it is unclear if they have a lasting effect on retaining teachers. Another tactic that seems quite common is the practice of recruiting potential candidates by targeting colleges and universities. Other recruitment strategies have focused on the creation of alternative teacher preparation programs which makes it easier for individuals who are interested in transitioning to the teaching profession.

Additional innovative strategies include raising students' interests in the teaching profession, recruiting teachers from other countries, attracting retired teachers back to the profession, and simplifying the hiring practice. Other research suggests that recruitment efforts are dependent on retention efforts such as districts' focus on developing supportive work environments and providing adequate resources and recognition.

Consistent with best practices suggested by research literature, districts across the state of Ohio target colleges and universities in recruiting teachers. Beyond this, districts also engage in some practices that have not been recommended in the national research but which appear to be successful in the Ohio context. The majority of Ohio districts studied rely on four types of practices to recruit teachers. These practices include:

- Using Web sites and other technology;

- Networking with universities and colleges;

- Recruiting substitutes; and

- Attending recruitment fairs at colleges and universities.

While most districts interviewed incorporate some of these practices, overall the districts have not expanded upon these procedures to create comprehensive and strategic plans to recruit new teachers. Each of these practices is discussed in more detail in the following section.

Using Web Sites and Other Technology
Using technology to attract new teachers to the district is indeed a common practice among districts interviewed. Districts use both local and state technology when recruiting teachers. Most of the districts post vacancies on their Web sites.

For example, one small, rural, high poverty district used the district's Web site to post available positions within the district. In 2003 – 2004, the Ohio Department of Education launched a statewide, Web-based recruitment system. Using the Ohio Department of Education's Web site proves to be an effective means of advertising for hard-to-fill positions because a greater number of candidates access the Web site.

One administrator from a small, rural town with average socioeconomic status stated that, "I had a guidance position that I needed to fill so I posted it on the ODE Web site. Guidance positions are usually difficult to fill." Another district stated that, "The feedback we've gotten from candidates is that they use the ODE Web site."

Recruitment Table 1 displays the number of positions, by type, posted on the Ohio Department of Education's Web site between Jan. 1, 2004 and Sept. 1, 2004.

Recruitment Table 1
Number of positions posted on ODE Web site

	Cumulative total, Jan 1 to July 1	New postings, June 1 to July 15	New postings, July 15 to September 1 2004
Special education total	352	166	104
Special education (not more specific)	148	69	37
Intervention specialist mild/moderate	57	25	24
Intervention specialist moderate/severe	51	15	15
Special education, specific learning disability	51	37	16
Special education, emotional disturbance or severe behavior handicaps	26	10	10
Special education preschool	19	10	2
Principal	80	50	10
Music	64	27	7
9-12 Science	62	30	7
9-12 Mathematics	60	30	8
K-3 classroom	48	15	17
9-12 Language Arts	36	12	8
Preschool	33	14	4
Counselor	31	21	7
Foreign Language	21	19	5
School Psychologist	20	12	7
4-9 Mathematics	13	5	2
9-12 Social Studies	13	9	2
Computer Science	12	7	5
Visual Arts	11	4	4
Curriculum Specialist	9	6	3
4-9 Language Arts	9	4	1
4-9 Social Studies	5	2	1
4-9 Science	4	1	1
Career tech any subject	3	1	2

Along with the district's individual Web site and the state's Web site, some school districts studied have gone further to incorporate online recruiting practices. One district stated that it posts hard-to-fill positions on professional association Web sites, while other urban districts reported using specific help-wanted Web sites affiliated with the city's daily newspaper. Districts include these extra measures to, "make sure we have a good pool of candidates, especially when we have a tough position to fill," explained an administrator from a small, rural town with average SES.

Networking with Universities and Colleges

Districts target local, regional, state and even neighboring states' colleges and universities to establish a recruiting network to fill new positions within the district. Districts advertise openings with teacher preparation programs in the schools of education at colleges and universities. "We also send a bulletin to the placement offices in regional colleges and universities," explained an administrator from a small, rural, low poverty district. Another administrator from a small, rural, low poverty district said they send job postings to all the colleges and universities that have teacher preparation programs. This practice is widespread across most of the school districts in the study.

Networking

One administrator from a small, rural, low poverty district stated:

"It makes sense for us to hire people that have roots in central Ohio. Usually if a student went to Wright State University, he or she is from Ohio and does not plan to move away."

Other districts that were studied maximize their relationship with universities and colleges. For example, a small, rural, high poverty district said, "[We] actually go to the classes at the university and let the students know what positions are needed. [While in the classroom] we discuss content standards and the application process…we make an overhead of the ODE Web site to show the students where to go to obtain information about certification and curriculum standards so they know what is going to be required of them." This proactive step by the district helps to ensure that the new group of teachers from the local university understands the licensure process to become local teachers. District administrators generally believe that hiring from the local university ultimately improves the odds of yielding local candidates.

One urban/suburban district with above average SES has an innovative recruiting strategy. This district has implemented a model program known as the December Reception. This reception takes place in December for all local and regional student teachers, as well as all winter graduates from the local and regional universities. At the reception, district administrators sell the district by talking about the culture of the town and the district. The district's current teachers share their experiences, and school administrators are introduced based on their content area. Food is served and after formalities are exchanged, everyone is encouraged to network and make contacts. The December Reception is a strategic recruitment event because, "before they [candidates] leave they sign up for an interview, there are four Saturdays scheduled for interviews…we are the first district they hear about. We ask about 10 percent back for a second interview." This strategy ensures the district has the first opportunity to locate the best candidates.

Recruiting Substitutes

Some districts in this study view substitute teachers as potential candidates for open teaching positions. Districts target substitute teachers because they are already working in the district, they know the school culture, and they are familiar with the student population. Since substitute teachers spend ample time in schools, the administration has an opportunity to become familiar with the substitute's teaching style and classroom management skills. Because of this, districts can hire substitute teachers with confidence.

"We try to welcome our substitute teachers by holding group substitute meetings and making them feel like they are part of our staff," stated an administrator from a small city characterized by low SES.

"For elementary teachers, I have basically been hiring our substitutes," explained one urban district with average SES.

B   **BEST PRACTICES** IN TEACHER RECRUITMENT

Attending Recruitment Fairs at Colleges and Universities

Although most districts in this study attend recruitment fairs, the actual recruitment process varies from district to district because each has specific needs. Districts naturally want to attract the best candidates, so inevitably they compete with each other. Many districts rely on visual tactics to attract candidates at job fairs. These include:

- Videos;

- Reports, periodicals, brochures;

- Folders containing information about the community;

- Interactive CDs; and

- Unusual souvenirs.

B   **BEST PRACTICES** IN TEACHER RECRUITMENT

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Encourage Districts to Grow Their Own

Districts should be encouraged to develop "grow your own" programs as a solution to the current and looming shortages in the profession by recruiting and training quality students who may return to the district as tomorrow's quality teachers. With funding from the U.S. Department of Education, eight Ohio public school districts and Ashland University currently participate in this type of program. Currently in its third year, this "Grow Your Own Program" expands the pool of minority and under-represented teacher applicants, such as male elementary education teachers, female mathematics teachers and teachers of color in all subjects, and the hiring of the applicants for teaching positions in participating districts.

Each district targets these under-represented groups within its seventh-grade population. From each targeted seventh-grade population, a cohort of 60 students is selected (30 in winter/spring and 30 in the fall/winter) who have the potential to attend college. Programs and activities are designed by member districts to motivate the students as well as nurture the potential of the selected seventh-graders. Parents and guardians of participating students, and interested community groups and agencies are encouraged to help support the seventh graders. There are follow-up activities to nurture and sustain interest in returning to the local community throughout college. Support is continued through high school with Future Educators of America (FEA) chapters, the Camp Attracting Prospective Educators (CAPE) Summer Camps and other similar activities. Students who attend college teacher preparation programs will return and conduct their student teaching experiences in participating districts. These districts will then work to employ the students as teachers in their schools.

Expand Alternative Licensure Routes for Hard-to-Fill Positions

Districts need a larger pool of potential applicants for hard-to-fill positions. State-level efforts should concentrate on expanding programs that result in more licensed professionals for these positions. As an example, Lesley University of Boston, Ohio Dominican University and ODE have developed an online program to move special education teachers working on temporary licenses to full licensure.

Disseminate Best Practice Strategies for Recruitment

A number of practices and strategies have been identified that increase a district's ability to recruit new teachers. These practices should be disseminated widely to help those districts who continue to struggle with recruitment or those that lack systematic recruitment practices.

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| **II** | **Retention of Teachers : SECTION II** |

This section of the report presents three key issues and the best practices related to the retention of Ohio's teachers. The first issue in this section (Issue 3) explores teacher and administrator perceptions on working conditions. The second issue (Issue 4) looks at retirement issues and the challenges of the STRS retirement policies. The last issue in this section (Issue 5) explores the declining number of teaching positions in the state and the impact of reduction in force (RIF) actions. The best practices portion of this section focuses on retention strategies of Ohio school districts and also explores how unconventional rewards, caring school environments and strong school leadership influence retention.

About the Data
This year's study includes both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data in this section provides information on:

- Student enrollment;

- Teacher workforce demographics;

- Teacher attrition and mobility;

- Teaching vacancies;

- Pipeline for new teachers in higher education; and

- Staffing issues in community schools.

The qualitative data provided in this report is from a larger study investigating recruitment and retention issues in Ohio. This study was designed to elicit the perceptions of teachers and the practices of districts related to recruitment and retention and interviewed approximately 20 district administrators in Ohio and 100 teachers from these school districts.

Working Conditions

For practicing teachers, various forces and conditions in the school are likely to contribute to their sense of a productive and supportive environment in which to work. Among these are:

- Time to reflect and plan;

- Supportive leadership;

- Access to resources and advice; and

- Manageable load of classes, students or other assignments.

Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy
Revisiting What States are Doing to Improve the Quality of Teaching

INTRODUCTION

Teachers leave teaching in Ohio at a rate between seven and eight percent each year. For teachers in the early years of their career, the rate of attrition is even higher.

- Approximately 93 percent of all teachers were still employed after one year;

- Eighty-eight percent of all teachers were still employed after two years;

- Eighty-three percent after three years; and

- Seventy-eight percent are employed after four years.

The attrition rate of African-American teachers is higher than average. The attrition rate of African-American teachers was at least 50 percent higher than that of white teachers in every year from fiscal year 1998 through fiscal year 2003. High poverty urban districts also show high attrition rates. Teachers in these districts are more likely to leave teaching all together than move to other districts in Ohio.

Working conditions can ultimately influence whether or not teachers choose to remain in the profession.

In the qualitative portion of this study, teachers and their district administrators differed significantly in their perceptions of the working conditions. The difference in perceptions of working conditions is most readily observed when administrators and teachers talk about attrition.

Superintendents, assistant superintendents and district administrators were asked why they felt teachers left their district. In the teacher interviews, teachers who were identified as wanting to leave their position were asked what motivated them to do so. In comparing the two sets of responses, the only parallel was that teachers need support from the district to be effective teachers.

When asked why teachers leave their positions, district administrators tended to focus on economic and familial reasons for attrition. These reasons also tend to be conditions outside their locus of control – i.e., spousal transfer, starting a family, and teacher pay. In contrast, teachers in this study cited socio/emotional reasons for leaving the profession. The teachers' reasons for attrition include concerns regarding leadership, recognition for accomplishments, collaboration and school safety.

The responses from the two sets of participants indicate a clear disconnect between district administrators and their teachers. Bridging this gap may result in less attrition as district administrators attend to the working conditions most important to teachers.

Beyond both sides reporting a need for a supportive district environment, district administrators report different reasons for teacher attrition than do teachers. The following sections present the district administrators' perceptions related to teacher attrition, and the reasons teachers provided for leaving.

> *The Governor's Commission on Teaching Success*
>
> *The Governor's Commission on Teaching Success* issued its report in February 2003. The Commission's findings included 15 recommendations in four broad categories.
>
> **Recommendation six calls for:** *Improved teacher retention by creating teaching and learning environments characterized by supportive, professional cultures; shared leadership; and time for job embedded professional development and collaborative planning.*

DATA ANALYSIS

District Administrators' Perceptions of Teacher Attrition
Of the district administrators interviewed, most agree on these common reasons for teacher attrition.

- Taking a teaching position closer to home;

- Spouse takes a job causing the teacher to move from the district;

- Teacher leaves to start a family;

- A general feeling of lack of support; and

- Pay or incentives from other districts.

When asked why teachers leave the district, one administrator from an urban district with average poverty replied, "I have one teacher that is leaving to get a job closer to home." However, even hiring local candidates does not ensure the teacher does not move away; sometimes, "when people leave it is usually a spouse situation and the teacher moves with the spouse," explained a different administrator from an urban district with average SES.

Another cause of teacher attrition cited by administrators is pay. "Teachers usually leave because of higher pay," said an administrator from a small, rural town with high poverty. Districts also do not always remain cognizant of each other's best interest, for example, "when teachers leave it is because they are recruited out of our district by other districts. Some of these other districts pay bonuses to these teachers for coming to them," explained an administrator from a small, rural town with average poverty. This practice of recruiting teachers from rural and urban districts for suburban schools occurs most often for hard-to-fill positions such as special education, mathematics and science.

Of surprise to researchers in this study, some of the districts interviewed are not actively working on retaining teachers. Not all districts feel teacher retention is a high priority. "We are not actively working to combat our teachers going to another district," said an administrator from a small, rural town with average SES.

This district did not feel that the level of teacher attrition is critical, and therefore does not feel it needs to be addressed. Another administrator from a small, rural town with average SES replied that, "I am not sure what we can do to keep them from leaving." Another administrator from an urban/suburban area with above average SES indicated that teacher retention is not a problem and the district does not focus on it as an issue because, "We are the highest paying. We have good working conditions with small class sizes. When we pay number one and no co-pay on medical where are they [teachers] going to go? They stay in our district. The people at the state say money is not everything, but it sure is far ahead of whatever is in second place."

The district level administrators we interviewed believed that teachers sometimes leave the district to take a position closer to home, to start a family, or because a teacher's spouse takes a job in a different location. These reasons cited for teacher attrition are out of the districts' control.

Teacher Perceptions of Teacher Attrition
When teachers were asked what motivated them to leave a particular school district, they provided different reasons than those cited by the district superintendents and administrators.

According to the teachers that participated in statewide focus groups and interviews, they are leaving their positions because poor working conditions exist at the district and/or school level. Throughout the interview process, eight factors contributed to the teachers' perception of poor working conditions. These include:

- Lack of leadership;
- Lack of resources;
- Inappropriate feedback;
- Unsafe school environment; and
- Lack of recognition;
- Lack of support;
- Lack of voice in decision-making;
- Lack of collaboration.

Teachers interviewed leave the profession because of poor working conditions
According to teachers, they leave the profession because an uncaring environment exists at the district and/or school level. Although few commented on leaving for economic or familial reasons, the majority of respondents indicated that working conditions did contribute to their decision to leave the profession. Teachers interviewed reported the following conditions as reasons for leaving the profession.

Elements of Poor Working Conditions	Perceptions of Teachers Interviewed
Lack of Leadership	*"…a new superintendent or new principal would have been instrumental in keeping me in the profession…The lack of leadership is a major factor in my decision to leave…Significant leadership does not exist in my school."*
Lack of Recognition	*"I don't think most teachers expect it [recognition], but it plays in when the general population becomes dissatisfied, then it becomes apparent when people will not thank you…"*
Lack of Resources	*"The lack of resources plays a very big role in the decision to leave. Everything teachers need requires a grant and that takes a lot of time to apply for. This is an unfair process."*
Lack of Support	*"The only support I got was from outside the district. I never thought it would be a factor but it's hard going in to work when people won't talk to you. I thought I was tougher than that, but I am not."*
Inappropriate Feedback	*"My first year expectations were not explicit, and I did not have any guidance as to what was expected of me."*
Lack of Voice	*"We have no ability to influence decisions. The major factor in my decision to leave is because teachers are not listened to."*
Unsafe School Environment	[There is] *"no ramification for students' behavior. It's awful. I mean, I just don't feel safe there at all. I can't believe what some of the kids plan and get away with…Some days I wonder if I'll make it out alive today."*
Lack of Collaboration	*"The atmosphere is very unpleasant place to work, very un-teamlike. I just can't get used to the fact that the school board and the teachers don't work together and that they both say horrible things and that there are these picket lines, walkouts, etc."*

3   **Working Conditions Impact Teacher Retention : ISSUE 3**

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Statewide Working Conditions Survey
The findings from the interviews with teachers in the state of Ohio are consistent with literature which suggests that other factors, such as working conditions, must be addressed to keep teachers in the field. The Education Commission of the States tells us that "many educators cite a stressful or unsupportive work environment, marked by student and parental apathy, discipline problems, inadequate physical facilities, lack of collegial support, unsupportive leadership, and lack of decision making authority, as reasons for leaving the profession."

Because of this, the Ohio Department of Education is developing a working conditions survey to be administrated in the state to further explore this issue. Questions for this survey are currently being developed. The questions will be reviewed by focus groups of teachers around the state and a draft of the survey will be piloted in spring 2005.

The Ohio Department of Education plans to develop Web-based tools and resources to help districts utilize data from the survey to improve working conditions. The Department also is considering sponsoring a statewide conference similar to what has been done in several other states.

Encourage Districts to Focus on Improving the Working Conditions Most Important to Teachers
While financial incentives are certainly attractive to teachers, administrators might want to consider making changes to the teacher working environment. Since teachers identified cultural reasons for staying or leaving the profession, it is evident that this will have implications for recruitment and retention.

Strengthen Mentoring Programs to Address Difficult Working Conditions
Design of mentoring programs should be multi-year and include strategies for supporting teachers in difficult work assignments. Program components should include classroom management, planning and teaching in a standards-based classroom, assessing and evaluating student progress, using effective teaching methods that are researched-based, differentiating instruction, student motivation and communication with parents.

A committee of practitioners has worked over the summer and fall of 2004 to develop a differentiated model for mentoring teachers (alternative licensed; teachers from hard-to-staff school). These new models will be piloted in the 2005-2006 school year.

Understand the Costs of Replacing Teachers
As has been presented, many of the school districts participating in this study were not attending to retention of teachers. Instead, many feel that attrition is inevitable. The decision to dismiss teacher attrition is made in absence of information about the costs of teacher replacement.

For example, no data is currently available about the costs of:

- Recruitment;

- Hiring processes; and

- Induction and mentoring programs.

Further, there is even less known about the intangible costs of attrition such as declines in morale and alienation of students that may be occurring. Undertaking a study that investigates the financial and emotional costs of teacher attrition may influence retention practices undertaken by districts.

INTRODUCTION

Ohio's teaching workforce is aging. Between 2000 and 2025, the national retirement-age population is expected to increase 77 percent. Furthermore, the U.S. Census Bureau projects that in the next 25 years, the growth of the working-age population for most states will remain flat or decline while the retirement-age population will grow dramatically in every state. Estimates for shortages of workers with postsecondary-level skills are projected to be about 14 million by the year 2020.

Ohio's aging teacher workforce
Ohio data suggests that there is an increase in the number of teachers eligible to retire, while there is a decrease in the number of young teachers entering the profession. This trend is reflected in Figure 4.1. The relative share of teachers in the youngest and oldest age groups increased between 1998 and 2003. However, the one year change from 2003 to 2004 showed a decline in the share of the 21-29-year-old age group.

Long-term and year-to-year increases occurred in the second youngest group (30-39) and the second oldest group (50-59). The share of the middle group of teachers in their forties fell dramatically by 12 percentage points over the longer term. This group also registered a small decline from 2003 to 2004.

Figure 4.1: Distribution of Ohio Teachers By Age Group: 1998- 2004
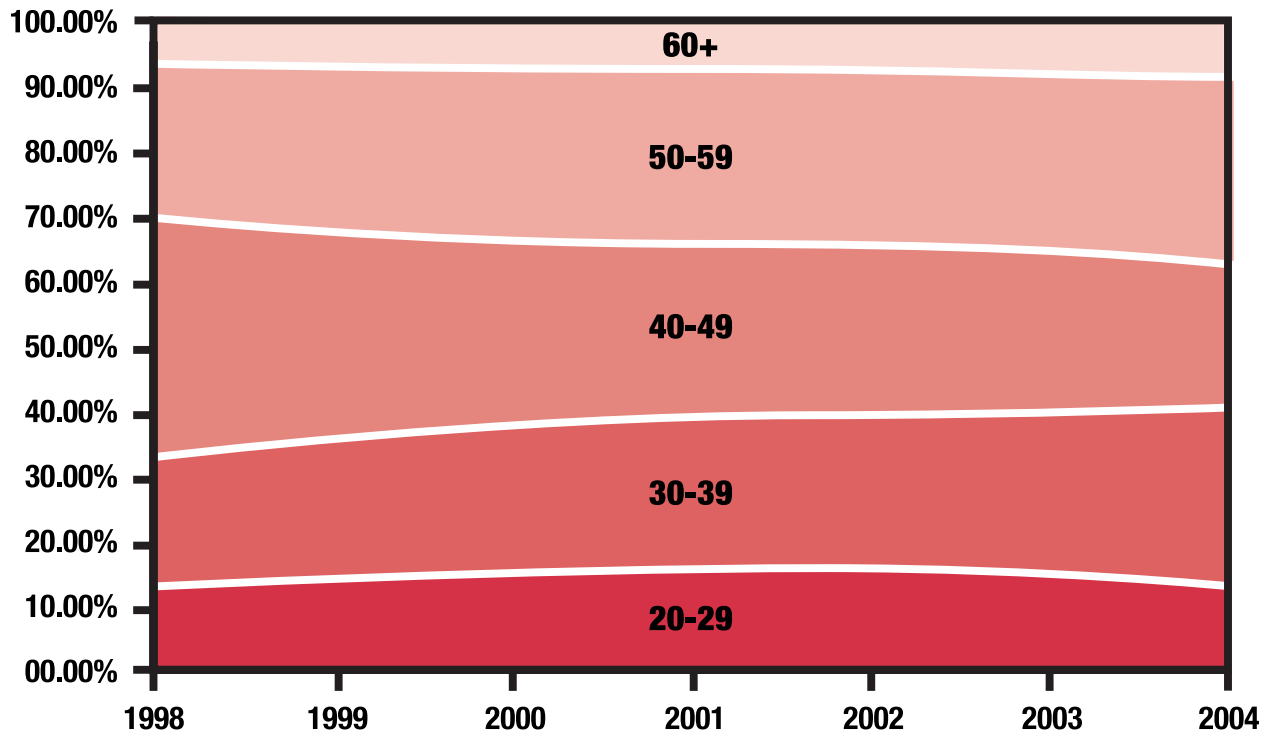
DATA ANALYSIS

Implications of an Aging Population

The aging teacher population has significant implications for staffing issues. Retaining teachers is a growing concern in many parts of the United States including Ohio. For example, of the teachers hired in Ohio in 1997, 28 percent of them had left the teaching profession by 2003.

Additionally in this study, there was significant growth in the percentage of teachers who are leaving the profession. According to Table 4.2, between 1998 and 2002 the number of teachers departing show relatively small variations. However, the number of teachers who departed after 2003 (shown in column labeled "2003") increased by more than 50 percent over the departures in the preceding year. The number of departures after 2003 exceeds by a large amount the number for any year between 1998 and 2002. Study in future years will help researchers determine if this spike is a temporary response to economic conditions or the beginning of a trend.

In addition, the percentage of teachers eligible for retirement is also increasing. In 1997, 29 percent of currently employed teachers were eligible for retirement. In 2003, 36 percent of teachers were eligible, and this trend is expected to continue. As the teacher population eligible for retirement continues to increase, it is likely that teacher supply and demand will be increasingly influenced by overall economic conditions.

Table 4.2
Number of Teachers in Regular K-12 School Districts Who Departed Teaching or Moved to a Different School District: 1998 – 2004

Departure Cause	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total Teachers	95,118	97,100	99,337	99,562	102,588	103,784	95,828
Teachers Departing (attrition + mobility)	8,195	9,182	9,900	8,963	8,922	13,498	N/A
Attrition	6,547	7,066	7,647	6,748	7,057	11,922	N/A
Mobility	1,648	2,115	2,253	2,215	1,866	1,575	N/A
Percentage							
Departure Rate (attrition + mobility)	8.60%	9.50%	10.00%	9.00%	8.70%	13%	
Attrition Rate	6.90%	7.30%	7.70%	6.80%	6.90%	11%	
Mobility Rate	1.70%	2.20%	2.30%	2.20%	1.80%	2%	

The percentage of teachers with 10 or fewer years of experience has increased from approximately 39 percent to about 46 percent since 1998 as demonstrated in Table 4.3 on the following page. In addition, the percentage of teachers with 11 to 20 years of experience fell by 3.5 percentage points when compared with figures from 1998. Teachers between 20 and 30 years of experience fell by even more – 5.7 percentage points.

Table 4.3 shows the data upon which Figure 4.2 is based.

Table 4.3
Distribution of Ohio Teachers by Years of Total Experience: 1998 – 2004

Departure Cause	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
0 to 10	39.30%	41.60%	44.20%	46.40%	48.50%	49.70%	46.1%
0 to 5	24.20%	26.50%	28.80%	30.60%	32.10%	32.60%	26.9%
6 to 10	15.10%	15.10%	15.40%	15.80%	16.40%	17.10%	19.2%
11 to 20	29.20%	27.40%	25.80%	24.60%	23.80%	23.60%	25.7%
21 to 30	28.30%	27.70%	26.60%	25.30%	23.60%	22.10%	22.6%
31 Plus	3.20%	3.30%	3.40%	3.70%	4.00%	4.50%	5.7%

Average experience levels are declining
The average experience level of Ohio teachers equaled about 14.5 years in 1998. By 2004, that average had fallen to about 13.7 years. The median level of experience fell over the same period, slightly more than 13 years to about 12 years. These findings are depicted in Figure 4.2 below.

Figure 4.2
Distribution of Ohio Teachers by Years of Total Experience
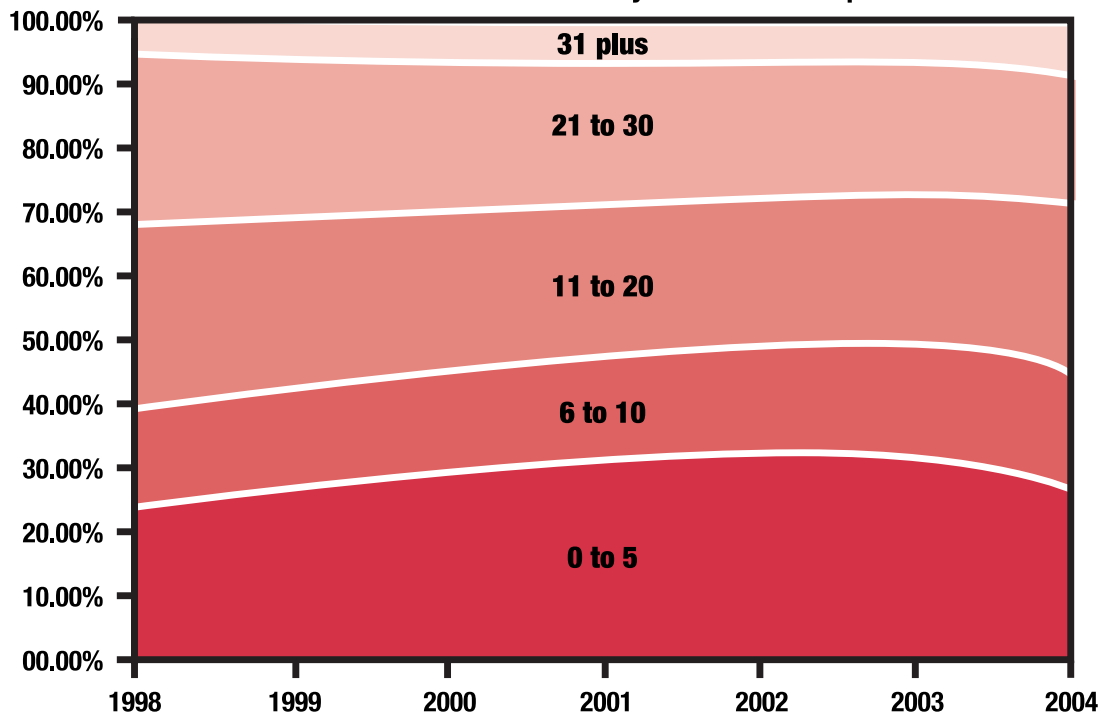
* The 2003 Condition of Teaching Report concluded that the number of teachers with zero years of experience was over-reported by school districts. Better reporting in 2004 appears to confirm that conclusion. The number of teachers with zero years of experience fell from almost 8,000 in 2003 to about 4,000 in 2004. However, in the context of an overall decline in total teachers, some reduction in the number of teachers with zero experience also may have resulted from fewer new hires in 2004.

4 Ohio's Aging Teacher Workforce and STRS Policy Issues Will Create Challenges for Staffing Schools : ISSUE 4

Current policy on teacher retirement are contributing to an aging workforce in Ohio
The State Teachers Retirement System (STRS) implemented a policy that incentivizes teachers remaining in their position for 35 years (receiving up to 98 percent of their salary with benefits). Healthcare payments are a significant component of this program: under the current STRS guidelines, only teachers with 35 years of active service are eligible for full health coverage in retirement.

Buying out senior teachers was at one time a popular practice used by districts to save money. Districts can no longer afford to buy out senior teachers' contracts. Buying out contracts is not feasible for districts because of the initial cost associated with this practice. The implications of this policy are that districts must not only buy out the needed years for retirement but they must also cover the cost of health insurance for the retiree.

Districts claimed that, *"We cannot do buyouts like we used to because of the 35 year incentive to stay. If we want to buy anyone out and they're at 33 years, we have to pay several times their salary to have them leave."*

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Figure 6. & Table 11. are from the Condition of Teacher Supply and Demand 2004, pg 26-27.

4 Ohio's Aging Teacher Workforce and STRS Policy Issues Will Create Challenges for Staffing Schools : ISSUE 4

INTRODUCTION

The overall number of teaching positions is declining and the decline is expected to continue. Teacher decline is primarily due to two factors: a decline in student enrollment and changes in student-to-teacher ratios. Enrollments in Ohio's regular school districts declined slightly from FY97 – FY03, dropping by nearly 46,000 students (2.5 percent) to 1.799 million. This trend is expected to continue from FY03 – FY08, with overall state enrollment dropping by nearly 16,000 students (1.3 percent).

Further compounding this decline in 2004 were the numbers of teachers dismissed in reduction in force (RIF) actions. To understand how RIFing impacts the decline in teaching positions it is helpful to first understand how and why teaching positions are declining overall.

Declining Enrollment
Total K-12 enrollment in Ohio's regular school districts declined by roughly 46,000 students or three percent between 1998 and 2004, reaching a level of approximately 1,780,000 in 2004 (See Table 5.1).

Table 5.1
Ohio's Enrollment in Regular School Districts

5 The Number of Teaching Positions in the State is Declining and RIFing is Accelerating the Decline : **ISSUE 5**
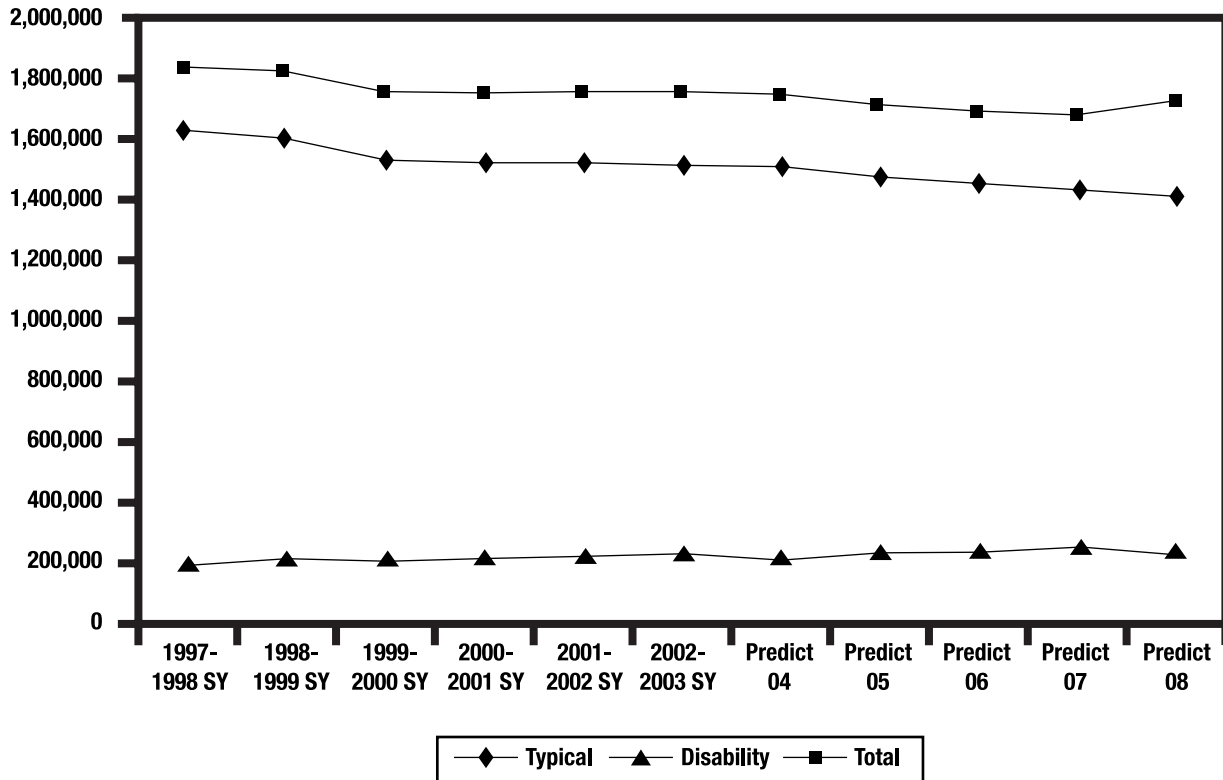
DATA ANALYSIS

Impact of Enrollment on Teaching Positions

According to the Ohio Department of Education's enrollment forecasts, K-12 enrollment in public school districts is expected to continue to decline between 2004 and 2009, dropping by about 16,000.

Applying 2004 pupil to teacher ratios (21 to 1) to the number of students projected in 2009, the total number of regular classroom teachers would decrease by about 760 (See Table 5.2). In other words, this scenario retains a constant pupil to teacher ratio in 2009 compared to 2004.

Table 5.2
Teacher Staffing Projections by District Typology

Typology	1998 Regular Classroom Teachers	2004 Regular Classroom Teachers	2009 Projection of Regular Classroom Teachers using Current 04 ratio	Change	Percent Change
Urban moderate SES	8,625	8,645	8,683	38	0.44%
Suburban/urban high SES	15,825	16,500	17,042	542	3.29%
Suburban very high SES	6,850	7,492	8,042	550	7.34%
Small town, very high poverty	7,325	7,058	6,836	-222	-3.15%
Small town, moderate SES	10,392	10,533	10,413	-120	-1.14%
Rural low poverty	8,399	8,590	8,487	-103	-1.20%
Rural high poverty	5,385	5,557	5,461	-97	-1.74%
Major city, extremely high poverty	15,795	14,678	13,327	-1,351	-9.20%
Sum of typology districts	78,597	79,054	78,291	-763	-0.96%

It is very possible that future pupil to teacher ratios will not remain constant due to economic and policy decisions. If districts returned to the pupil to teacher ratios that existed in 1998 (23 to 1), there would be a decrease of approximately 3,200 regular classroom positions in the state (See Table 5.3). Given the combination of declines in enrollment and current economic conditions in the state, this scenario is the more likely projection for the future.

Table 5.3
Teacher Staffing Projections by District Typology with Return to Previous Levels

Typology	2004 Regular Classroom	FY08-09 enrollment projection	Projected teachers using 98 Ratio	Change using 98 Ratio	Percent Change using 98 Ratio
Suburban very high SES	7,492	173,294	8,187	695	9.27%
Suburban/urban high SES	16,500	394,031	17,040	540	3.27%
Urban moderate SES	8,645	198,331	8,444	-201	-2.33%
Small town, moderate SES	10,533	241,300	10,051	-482	-4.57%
Rural low poverty	8,590	189,759	7,999	-591	-6.87%
Small town, very high poverty	7,058	153,356	6,570	-488	-6.92%
Rural high poverty	5,557	121,479	5,028	-530	-9.53%
Major city, extremely high poverty	14,678	291,380	12,697	-1,981	-13.49%
Sum of typology districts	79,054	1,762,930	75,890	-3,164	-4.00%

Under this assumption, suburban districts would require higher teacher staffing levels in 2009. Rural districts with high poverty would experience nearly a 10 percent decrease in the number of teachers required; major cities would experience nearly a 14 percent decrease in teachers.

Impact of RIFing on Teaching Positions
Accelerating the decline in the number of teaching positions in Ohio are reduction in force (RIF) actions taken by districts. In the 93 districts that reported RIF actions in spring of 2004, 1,699 teachers were laid off.

These districts also report that an additional 2,878 teachers will be RIF'd in the 2004-2005 school year if their levy initiatives failed in November of 2004. The combined estimate of 4,577 teachers RIF'd in these 93 school districts between spring 2004 and spring 2005 represents six percent of the entire teaching force of Ohio and exceeds esti-mates for the loss of positions projected through 2008 for the state as a whole by 1,413 positions (See Table 5.4).

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* More than 50% of the levy measures attempted by the 98 reporting districts failed in November 2004. Using a rough estimate that 50% of the projected RIFs will now occur, an additional 1,439 teachers could be dismissed in 2004 – 2005.

Table 5.4
Comparison of Estimated Teaching Position Loss with Estimated RIFs

Number of teaching positions lost with 1998 ratios by 2009	Number of RIFs identified by 93 districts	Number of additional RIFs necessary in 93 districts if levies fail	Total estimated number of RIFs with levy failure	Difference between projected 2009 loss and estimated RIFs
3,164	1,699	2,878	4,577	-1,413

Reasons for RIFing

Districts interviewed for this study primarily indicated a decline in enrollment as the reason for RIF actions. For example, one superintendent from a small town, rural, average poverty district explained, "This RIF was not due to financial issues, but changes in enrollment." Another administrator from an urban/suburban, below average poverty school district added, "We will close two elementary schools due to a decline in enrollment." However, it is important to note that the number of teachers RIF'd in these districts exceeds the estimated number of teaching positions lost to enrollment declines for the entire state through 2008.

Avoiding RIFing

Most of the school districts interviewed across Ohio report they are facing financial constraints and are having to RIF teachers. A few of the districts interviewed have managed to avoid the situation. In this study district administrators have identified four ways to escape RIFing:

- Passing levies;

- Not refilling retirement positions;

- Teacher buy-out contracts; and

- Cutting back on supplies.

In an attempt to salvage teaching positions and not resort to implementing a RIF, districts have become creative in their efforts to save money. Some districts are proactive in their pursuits.

One administrator from a small, rural, high poverty district explained that, "we are starting to make cuts based on a five year projection so that we are not hit all at once if we do not get a levy passed or relief for funding." Many districts look to passing levies or bond issues to see them through hard financial times. A superintendent from a small town, rural, average poverty district said that, "[we] passed a levy in March, we're in good shape." Another district stated, "We just passed a bond issue" (assistant superintendent, urban, average poverty district).

While some districts turn to levies to temporarily ameliorate financial woes, other districts are taking another approach to financial stability by not rehiring teachers for vacant positions made available through retirement. "We will lose 30 classified/certified and we're not in financial straits. Instead of waiting for the crunch, we are trying to stay out of trouble…Over half of the reductions are retirements that we will not refill" (administrator, urban/suburban, below average poverty district). "Right now our reductions will be four retirements, and these positions will not be replaced" (administrator, small, rural, high poverty district). To avoid financial trouble another assistant superintendent from a small, rural, high poverty district claimed that, "This year we have people who are retiring, but we are not going to refill the positions."

Other districts have taken other approaches to saving money and avoid RIFing. A superintendent from a small, rural, low poverty district stated, "We have crummy buildings and terrible facilities" but avoiding the expense of renovation lessens the probability of running into financial difficulty and RIFing. Another district "...had to cut some in the way of materials and supplies, but we will not RIF…this year we are lucky" (assistant superintendent, small town, rural, average poverty district).

Buying out senior teachers was a popular practice at one time to save districts money. However, "the dilemma is that people do not want to retire at 30 years because of what is happening with STRS (State Teachers Retirement System). The cost of medical insurance has doubled so people do not have the money to retire, so an incentive is not as welcoming as it has been, even two years ago" (superintendent, small city, high poverty district). Districts stated that, "we cannot do buyouts like we used to because of the 35 year incentive to stay. If we want to buy anyone out, and they're at 33 years, we have to pay several times their salary to have them leave" (administrator, urban, average poverty district).

Therefore, districts cannot afford to buy out senior teachers' contracts in order to avoid RIFing newer teachers. When asked about buying out contracts, one administrator from a small rural district, with average poverty claimed that, "We're looking into buyouts for senior teachers, but it does not really work because it is a big cost up front." Buying out contracts is not feasible for districts because of the initial cost associated with the practice.

Impacts of RIFing
When RIFing occurs, schools, districts, teachers and students are all impacted. Teachers and district administrators interviewed for this study identified a number of impacts of RIFing.

Table 5.5
Impacts of RIFing Identified by Teachers and District Administrators

Classes and programs cut	*"The programs we had to cut are business and alternative programs at the middle and high school level. Multimedia is another program that is being cut."* **(superintendent, small city, high poverty district)** *"We are going to discontinue programs that we used to offer at the high school like German, computer programming and PE programs (Scuba and swimming)."* **(administrator from a large city, high poverty district)**
Class sizes raised	*"The impact will be that our class size would go up."* **(administrator from an urban/suburban, below average poverty district)**
Teachers take on extra duties	*"The teachers being retained would be asked to take on extra duties."* **(administrator from a rural, high poverty district)**
Morale declines	*"RIFing is terrible. It destroys morale, and it is devastating to important programs."* **(administrator, small town, rural, average poverty district)** *"Being RIF'd has been very discouraging. This deflated me for the rest of the year. I had no motivation."* **(middle school teacher)**
New teachers are discouraged to enter profession	*"We are going to lose a whole generation of new teachers."* **(administrator from an urban, average poverty district)** *"Had I known that I would lose my job so abruptly, I would not have gone into teaching initially."* **(middle school teacher)**

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Create Tools/Resources That Allow Districts to More Accurately Forecast Needs
It is apparent that districts are faced with tight resources and declining enrollment. Given this context, many districts have RIF'd significant numbers of teachers and these numbers exceed estimates of teaching position loss through 2008. Districts need tools and resources that would allow them to accurately project the numbers and types of positions they currently need and will need in the future. Districts currently lack this information and must rely on incomplete information to make decisions about staffing needs.

Redistributing Teachers: Providing Incentives to Move into Critical Shortage Areas
Many states are creating programs that provide incentives for teachers to assume positions in hard-to-staff schools or in shortage areas. The Ohio Department of Education, along with Ohio Dominican University and Lesley University, have developed an innovative training program to increase the number of fully licensed intervention specialists in high-need school districts (i.e., urban and rural).

This program recruits already licensed teachers serving as intervention specialists under a temporary license. Over four semseters, the teachers engage in coursework and state testing that allows them to qualify for a professional license as an intervention specialist.

INTRODUCTION

According to research on teacher retention conducted by Richard Ingersoll, approximately one third of teachers leave their position because of a lack of support. Consistent with this research, Ohio teachers and administrators identified five elements of support that lead to improved teacher retention:

- Administrators believe teachers are important;

- A caring school environment;

- Professional development that meets individual needs;

- Strong school leadership; and

- Recognition for hard work and accomplishment.

Districts Improve Retention When Administrators Believe Teachers are Important
District administrators play a powerful role in establishing caring environments for teachers. Districts retain their teachers with the "...philosophical belief that the teacher is the most important employee and everyone else is support to them" (assistant superintendent, urban, average poverty district). District level administrators can set the tone for how teachers are perceived at the community, school and individual classroom levels. "Our teachers feel supported by the district" (superintendent, small, low poverty district), and people need to feel respected and valued in the workplace.

Some districts go to great lengths to retain their teachers, but as one administrator from an urban/suburban, below average poverty district said, "I think that we do not do or offer anything unique except for the feeling of reverence we convey for the position." One superintendent feels that teachers stay in his district because, "teachers feel valued by the community" (administrator, urban/suburban, below average poverty district). Thus, some school district administrators clearly understand the role they play in establishing the conditions necessary for teacher retention.

Teachers remain in the profession when they work in caring school environments.

Caring school environments are defined by teachers as having a variety of characteristics including:

- Commitment to students;

- Collaboration;

- Parental involvement;

- Teacher empowerment;

- Communication; and

- Resources.

While this list may not be exhaustive of all the conditions necessary for a caring school environment, the characteristics defined below are those most often identified by the Ohio teachers participating in this study.

Retention Table 1
Characteristics of Caring Environments Identified by Teachers

All teachers in the school have a commitment to students	*"Teachers care for their students and classrooms as well as the whole school."* **(middle school mathematics teacher)**
A high degree of collaboration exists among teachers	*"Everyone works together and it makes for a pleasant atmosphere."* **(high school science teacher)**
Teachers are empowered	*"We try to offer as much empowerment as we can for our teachers, which makes them feel they are respected."* **(administrator from a small, rural district with high poverty)** *"I feel valued. My opinions are often sought. I feel as though I have a stake and voice in school."* **(high school English teacher)** *"They hire good people and let us fly; as a result we can be creative, expansive, and pursue our desire to excel."* **(high school science teacher)**
Open lines of communication exist between teachers and administrators	*"They have an open door policy, and teachers discuss things with them and they know what we need."* **(elementary art teacher)**
Sufficient resources are available to teachers	*"I have always received resources when approaching administration; support for staff development; anything we asked for or needed."* **(high school mathematics teacher)** *"Anytime I need anything, I have the utmost confidence that the administration will get it for me."* **(elementary technology teacher)**

Teachers Who are Encouraged to Grow Professionally Remain in the Profession
Overall, Ohio school district administrators in the state of Ohio who participated in this study feel that new teacher induction support and professional development are key factors to teacher retention. An administrator in a large city, high poverty district feels, "retaining staff is all tied to professional development; it is a critical part of retaining teachers." This is a common notion across all of the school districts interviewed although each school district has a somewhat different approach to professionally developing their teachers.

Across the state for the new teacher, "Attending an orientation program is a condition of employment; it is a two and a half day program" (administrator, urban/suburban, below average poverty district). Each of the districts in this study has a different new teacher orientation program. In another district, "new teachers go through a one-week orientation" (superintendent, small city, high poverty district), and in another district, "new teachers start one week before everyone else does to attend a new teachers' workshop" (administrator, large city, high poverty district).

These orientation sessions last two days to a week and a half, and cover administrative issues, building logistics and curriculum standards. In addition to procedural information, "we give them a tour of the district, show them other schools in the district, and then introduce them to the Chamber of Commerce" (administrator, small town, rural, average poverty district). One district uses this time to provide its new teachers with some practical advice, "We give them [new teachers] Harry Wong's book, "*The First Day of School*" (assistant superintendent, urban, average poverty district).

Teachers in this study also believe that professional development is an important component for teacher retention but again they differ from administrators in what forms of professional development are needed. Teachers would like to have resources made available for professional development. A French teacher pointed out that "most occupations pay for some continuing education, but we have to pay for our own. We aren't provided that in education."

> Across the state, districts are committed to developing their teachers but their approaches to professional development vary from individually focused to collective participation opportunities.
>
> *"We offer a $750 stipend to every teacher, each year, to use how they see fit" (superintendent, small, rural, low poverty district).*

This stipend can be used for airfare to attend national conferences or for tuition for an education class at a college or university. The district offers this type of assistance so the teachers are able to take ownership of their personal professional development. However, if the teacher forfeits the opportunity to use the stipend, he or she does not receive the money. The money must be used for professional development purposes.

Another high school teacher said, "One of the reasons that I am in teaching is because I love learning. Boy, you learn so much in teaching, not just from the subject, but from human interaction…In my school district, the most you get reimbursed is half for what you pay. And you're lucky if you get that. This last round of classes I took, I took because I couldn't afford the ones I really wanted to take. So, I just kind of took classes that were convenient to take. I just put out money even though I didn't really want to take them."

Another district has, "been able to get money budgeted to aid teachers who wish to become nationally certified" (administrator, small, rural, high poverty district). Teachers in this school district who wish to become nationally certified are offered financial assistance for the process through the district. This incentive for teachers allows them to develop their craft and apply what they learn immediately to the classroom and gain national certification. In addition, "Ohio University is offered as a site for teachers to become nationally certified" (administrator, small, rural, high poverty district).

An administrator from a small city, high poverty district said, "We offer a unique program we call Leadership Academy." The Leadership Academy is offered to the district's teachers with the goal of identifying teachers who desire to become administrators. During this workshop teachers are coached with leadership skills and provided information on the process needed to become an administrator. The teachers are informed of administrator training programs, and expectations that should be met to advance in their career. This Leadership Academy is offered every few years instead of every school year in an attempt to keep interest alive in the project.

Districts and schools that are perceived by teachers as caring environments tend to emphasize professional development. A high school English teacher stated, "I have interest in technology in the classroom (interactive video and distance learning), the school made funds available to me to train people on distance learning and set up conferences, [for] professional development, I go to other schools. My professional days are without limit, where as in other schools it is limited. That's how I feel valued." Another first-grade teacher mentioned that she is given "…recommendations from the superintendent to attend training." Teachers who are encouraged to grow professionally claim they remain in the teaching profession since development is a characteristic of supportive and nurturing environments.

Strong School Leadership Plays an Influential Role in the Retention of Teachers

There are a number of qualities associated with outstanding school leadership. Leaders who are dedicated, supportive, and who honor their teachers with praise all contribute to positive and caring work environments. Good leaders also have a high degree of visibility and provide guidance through feedback.

One common way for leaders to recognize their staff is by giving praise. One teacher mentioned that "Our principal tells you what a great job you are doing…" Another teacher added, "Verbal praise is highly given by the principal." In addition to the administration playing a role in recognition, parents also contribute. A physical education teacher stated, "the administration and the board do recognize people though…and parents send letters. Nothing goes unnoticed."

Ohio teachers identify a number of qualities associated with strong school leadership. Each of these qualities is elaborated in Retention Table 2.

Retention Table 2
Qualities Associated with Strong School Leaders

Visible	*"The principal is commonly and frequently in classrooms and hallways, and knows most of the kids by name."* **(elementary teacher)**
Responsive	*"My concerns and needs are very well taken care of; problems are dealt with immediately."* **(first-grade teacher)**
Supportive	*"My current principal is very proactive and kid-oriented. I know that I will be backed by the administration, which is also important."* **(middle school teacher)**
Dedicated	*"The principal is at school late at night. I see his car in the parking lot on weekends and late evenings. I am amazed at the hours he puts in."* **(high school science teacher)**
Directive	*"We are given some type of directive as to say this is what we are aiming for, let's try to work together to find some strategies to reach our objective."* **(French teacher)** *"The principal has plans for helping you out, for improving teaching."* **(high school teacher)**

Teachers Remain in the Profession When They are Recognized for their Hard Work and Accomplishment

Teachers participating in this study crave recognition, as one high school Spanish teacher pointed out by stating, "I wouldn't care if the recognition were just a handwritten note. But I'd like recognition." Another teacher said, "I could use a few more compliments. I feel like they are trying to catch me not doing my job." "…I think that it is important for the legislature to really push for recognition. We need more than words…," added a French teacher. Although a lack of recognition is a consistent theme among participants, a number of teachers did provide examples of rewards they received throughout the course of their teaching careers. One elementary art teacher stated, "You do get rewarded – not in ways people expect. It takes time, but they come." The implication is that the rewards that teachers desire are not the ones they receive. For example, a sixth-grade teacher mentioned, "I got a pen for teacher appreciation week; at one point I got tickets to a Reds game."

Publications or printed materials highlighting achievements were also common forms of recognition. One French teacher stated, "The principal mentions in his bulletin when teachers have done something positive." Another high school English teacher added that there is "occasional press…newsletters with achievements, staff meetings." In another district there is a district-wide magazine that highlights achievements and the district also provides pay raises to recognize achievements. The district coordinator, "makes sure [the] local paper does stories" to acknowledge the work and dedication of the teaching staff. On a school level, achievements are announced at staff meetings and school activities are planned, such as breakfasts and parties to recognize teachers. Other districts do this as well.

Apart from printed recognition, verbal affirmations have also been identified as a type of reward. One teacher mentioned that, "Verbal praise is highly given by principal." A foreign language teacher supported this by saying, "The principal makes mention of achievements." One teacher stated, "our principal tells you what a great job you're doing. The principal is always there at programs." Furthermore, another teacher commented, "people say to me that I am such an asset." Verbal affirmation can be quite powerful as it reinforces teachers' perceptions that districts and schools care about what they do.

Only one teacher made mention of any financial reward. He stated, "...the board just passed a monetary reward for board certification…when I got it, no one knew what it was…the state gives us funding and our district also gives us a monetary reward. But [financial] rewards are very rare."

Given the paucity of rewards within the teaching profession, positive interactions with students have become something that teachers have identified as a type of reward. For example, a third-grade art teacher stated, "There is not a lot of recognition for the work that teachers do from districts…Most teachers have accepted that and look for those kids that come up and give them a big hug and those notes from parents expressing appreciation." A physical education teacher added, "Most people [teachers] are not concerned with getting personal accolades – outside money and raising resources for kids is more important…But that's [recognition] not what is important and that is not why we are in the business."

In the absence of traditional rewards, positive interactions with students become the primary reward. A K-4 art teacher stated, "The kids that say I am going to miss you. That is the kind of recognition that means the most. When parents praise what you did for their child." A home economics teacher added, "Because at the end of the day kudos come from the kids." A teacher elaborated by saying, "…the kids come to school and are excited to be there, that they play hard and work hard. That's what it's all about. I'm pumped before the day even starts due to interactions with my kids."

Whether the rewards are conventional such as notes and verbal praise or the reward of positive interactions with students, teachers report that receiving recognition and reward for their hard work plays an important role in their decisions to remain in the profession.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Encourage Schools and Districts to Concentrate on Improving the Working Conditions of Teachers
Ohio teachers have identified caring school environments that value them as professionals, have strong leadership, provide adequate professional development and reward their accomplishments as necessary to improve teacher retention. Schools and districts should be encouraged to focus on improving their instructional contexts to better align with the working conditions outlined by teachers as resulting in improved achievement.

| **III** | **Case Study of a Best Practice School District : SECTION III** |

This last section presents a case study of one district in Ohio that has a comprehensive strategy in place to recruit and retain teachers. What sets this district apart from others that were studied is the comprehensiveness of its approach to BOTH recruitment and retention.

While some districts have developed practices for recruitment and retention, these are often implemented unsystematically without a comprehensive strategy in mind. In comparison, the best practice district has developed a comprehensive strategy that acknowledges the role good recruitment plays in retention of teachers. The strategies identified by this district include:

- Forming a committee to evaluate staffing needs;

- Proactively recruiting minorities to match student populations;

- Proactively interviewing at recruitment fairs;

- Collecting quantitative and qualitative data from interview evaluations;

- Developing an interview protocol based on previous research on hiring;

- Developing a professional development plan to match district demographics;

- Conducting a longitudinal study to close the achievement gap;

- Focusing on overall support to retain teachers; and

- Taking proactive steps to avoid RIFing teachers.

Although most recruitment and retention activities in Ohio's districts are approached in isolation and not strategically conceived, researchers looked in depth at one district that has developed a comprehensive plan for recruitment and retention.

Introduction

While most districts incorporate some procedures to recruit and retain teachers, many efforts are approached in isolation and are not conceived comprehensively. Previous sections of this report have demonstrated that districts incorporate a number of strategies, both innovative and conventional, to recruit and retain teachers, yet most districts do not think of recruitment and retention systematically. Although some of these tactics have led to gains in recruitment, recruitment efforts alone will not solve school staffing problems if they do not also address the problem of teacher retention. Likewise, improving retention will not completely alleviate the need to recruit and hire new teachers.

Districts are not alone in viewing retention and recruitment in isolation. All too often, researchers study teacher recruitment and teacher retention independent of one another. There is little research that treats teacher recruitment as a component of teacher retention. When researchers have examined recruitment and retention strategies together, it is frequently reported that no data are available or that the information is not in a form that could be easily utilized. However, the case study that follows suggests that viewing teacher recruitment as a component of teacher retention is an effective strategy to reduce attrition rates. This Ohio district stood out as exemplary not only because it has set benchmarks that other districts could emulate, but also because it views teacher retention as an overall network of support that begins with teacher recruitment.

Data

Data discussed in this case study came out of a larger study investigating recruitment and retention issues in Ohio. This study was qualitative in nature and designed to elicit the perceptions of teachers and the practices of districts related to recruitment and retention. Teachers and administrators were interviewed about what impacts teacher recruitment and retention. What follows are findings related to the best district practices for recruiting and retaining teachers.

The qualitative findings are followed by supportive quantitative data.

> "Our district has good administrators that are supportive of teachers. We have high expectations of students and teachers…Our students and teachers get better each year because we have a supportive environment... I believe the teachers feel that if they need something in the district they get it whether it is technology, supplies or guest speakers.
>
> There is no shortage, but we are not high spenders. We have a philosophical belief that the teacher is the most important employee and everyone else is support to them. I view my job as doing things for principals to support teachers. I evaluate the principals; they support the teachers. We try to permeate that feeling to everyone from our bus drivers, to our cleaners; our job is educating the children."
>
> -Assistant Superintendent

Findings

The following is an example of the successful practices a district has incorporated to recruit, retain and avoid laying off teachers. The strategies identified by this district include:

- A recruitment plan created and implemented by a team of teachers. The team:
    - · Recruits minorities to match student populations;
    - · Interviews at recruitment fairs;
    - · Collects quantitative and qualitative data from interview evaluations;
    - · Develops an interview protocol based on previous research on hiring;
- Professional development that addresses student needs related to district demographics;
- Overall support to retain teachers, including participation in a longitudinal study of efforts made to close the achievement gap; and
- Proactive avoidance of teacher layoffs, known to educators as "Reduction in Force" or "RIFing."

Recruitment Planning Team

This district uses a committee of teachers devoted to recruitment issues. This committee of teachers is advantageous in that:

- It empowers the teachers who serve on the committee with an active role in determining the district's future;
- The team knows which conditions are most important to teachers; and
- After analyzing district data, the committee anticipates hiring needs and proposes strategies to procure the most suitable teachers based on ethnicity, purpose and teaching philosophy.

Recruitment with Retention in Mind

Administrators in this district share the philosophy that if they hire teachers who want to work in an urban district, then those teachers will stay in urban districts and teach urban students. The administrators in this district clearly understand the connection between their recruitment strategies and teacher retention.

By going to great lengths to obtain a wide pool of applicants, the district can recruit teachers who are likely to stay in the district. The following table summarizes the strategies mentioned by district staff.

Table C.1

	Prescheduled interviews	Easily determine candidates' licensing status	Dispense information about district	Look for teachers who want to work in urban district
Use of Web sites: Clevelandjobs.com; Ohio Department of Education, and district	Yes	Depends on Web site	Depends on Web site	
Recruiting fairs organized by colleges and universities	Yes	Yes	Yes	
District-sponsored recruiting nights	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Membership in minority recruiting consortium			Yes	Yes
Target historically black colleges			Yes	Yes

Research-Based Interview and Selection Protocol
Applicant interviews are scored using a protocol based on the research of Ron Ferguson, Harvard University. The premise of the protocol is that an interview form is developed on three legs of a tripod: knowledge of subject; pedagogy skills; and positive relationships with educational stakeholders. Each candidate undergoes multiple interviews. These interviews are scored, and hiring is based on scores.

This objective process to secure the most suitable candidates is an attempt to ultimately improve teacher retention. The assistant superintendent feels that this strategy works. "We do not make a whole lot of mistakes in hiring . . . so it [the interview process] helps with our retention because we found a good fit."

Participation in National Research
Because this district is an urban district, support for its teachers also manifests itself in participation in a study conducted by Ron Ferguson. One of the activities of the study is tracking students' and teachers' perceptions of the same classes. The findings from this study will support teachers by suggesting new teaching styles for more effective lesson facilitation.

Retaining New Teachers by Providing Support
The assistant superintendent for this exemplary district believes that support and recognition are reinforcements that keep teachers in the profession.

Support Begins With New Teacher Orientation
The district begins creating a positive working environment before new teachers set foot in their classrooms. It invites hires for a new teacher orientation. An administrator described this orientation. "It's a camp atmosphere."

Teacher orientation includes:
- Bringing in everyone the district feels can help the new hires;
- Team building activities;
- T-shirts;
- Giving each teacher Harry Wong's book, *The First Day of School*, a book chosen to target the needs of urban teachers; and
- Using Ron Ferguson's concepts to address cultural differences and introducing the new teachers to issues unique to urban schools.

Professional Development Through a Mentoring Program
Professional development extends past orientation as new hires enter a mentor program. Six years prior to the state's adoption of statutory requirements for entry-year programs, this district collaborated with Cleveland State University to implement a mentorship program. The program uses a lead mentor from Cleveland State to train district teachers to become effective mentors.

Key components of this program include the following:
- Experienced teachers who wish to mentor must take Praxis training at least every two years;
- New teachers select their own mentors from experienced teachers in their content area after the first three weeks of school;
- The entry-year teacher and the mentor usually meet monthly in a collegial atmosphere;
- The mentor is held accountable for the coaching and progress of the entry-year teacher;
- The mentor receives a stipend only after submitting a log of at least 40 hours of coaching; and
- There is an end-of-year ceremony with celebrations and rewards.

Ongoing Support and Recognition
Beyond professional development, the assistant superintendent for this exemplary district believes support and recognition are reinforcements that keep teachers in the profession. Many teachers interviewed identified various aspects of support, as presented in table C.2 on the following page.

This district strategically developed a supportive environment to recruit and retain their teachers. Support in this district is viewed as a multi-faceted network where teachers feel valued by administration and community. Caring about and supporting teachers has enabled this district to accomplish many things.

Table C.2

Element of support	Thoughts of teachers who were interviewed
A high level of caring	"There is a high level of caring, but it is in terms of being fair to the students, being friendly to them, being concerned with their academics and their social skills within our school setting."
Awards programs	There is "recognition in terms of teacher of the year from within the school district and teachers nominate other teachers."
Collaboration	"I think it is really important to collaborate with other educators within your school district, but it is extremely important to collaborate with educators outside of your school district . . . participate in staff development and in conferences. . . . It does affect your teaching. I like being able to share ideas."
Safe environment	"I . . have a sense that some of my colleagues are interested in my well-being. . . . think caring is within the realm of a structured environment particularly in terms of providing a sense of safety for the students, so that when they come to school they know they will be safe."
Sufficient classroom supplies	"We are each allotted a budget at the beginning of the school year, and we can use this to purchase materials for our subject area. Other supplies, paper, pencil, markers are readily provided to the school and you can have as much as you need whenever you need it. . . . I feel the school has taken on the responsibility of educators and districts, which is to provide sufficient resources for teachers to work."

Avoiding Layoffs

Not only has the district created a benchmarking mentor program, a district-relevant curriculum for new teacher orientation, and a strategy for recruitment, it also has found ways to avoid RIFing. When asked what the proposed budget cuts are for this year, the assistant superintendent replied, "No reductions. We just passed a bond issue."

Approximately five years ago, it saw a reversal in a long-standing decline in enrollment. Learning from earlier financial challenges over the past seven years, the district has taken proactive steps to prevent financial trouble. These steps included offering retirement incentives which resulted in reducing the average teacher experience from about 19 years to about 10. Since the teacher salary scale is based on experience, this resulted in significant savings. To generate additional revenue when its enrollment initially dropped, the district sold school-owned properties. This not only brought the district the sales price of the property, the real estate now generates property taxes that come to the district.

When the district regained enrollment, it found itself overcrowded and changed student groupings, rather than immediately re-open buildings. Thus, instead of reducing its workforce, in the coming school year, the district is hiring new administrators and teachers.

Quantitative Data

It is seldom possible to show clear cause and effect between district policy and outcome data. However, comparisons between staffing and student performance data from this district and data from the group of all urban districts show some remarkable differences.

Unlike the state as a whole and large urban districts, the enrollment in this district has grown over the past five years.

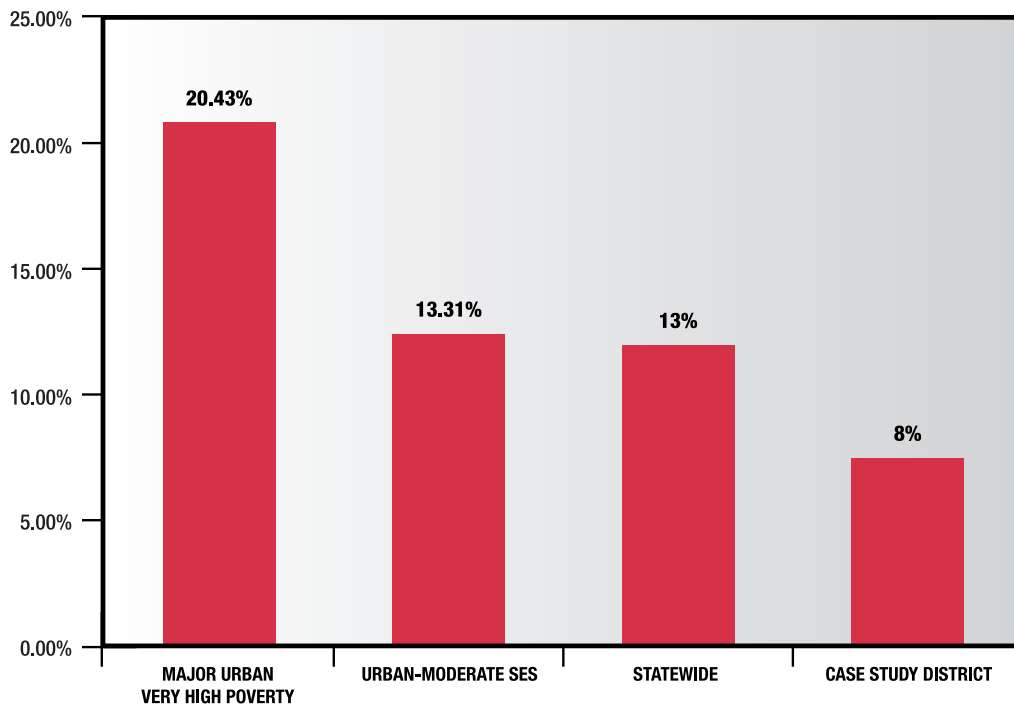**Table C.3**
FIVE YEAR CHANGES IN STUDENT ENROLLMENT
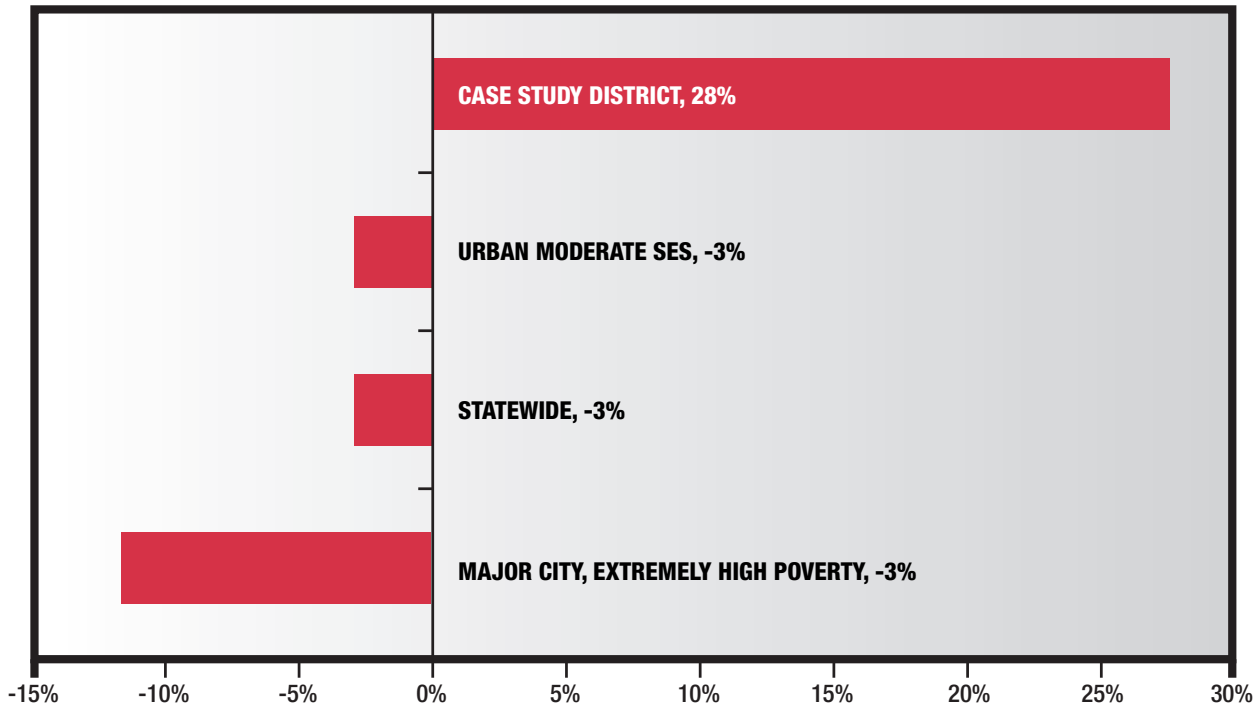
Table C.4
ENROLLMENT PER REGULAR TEACHER
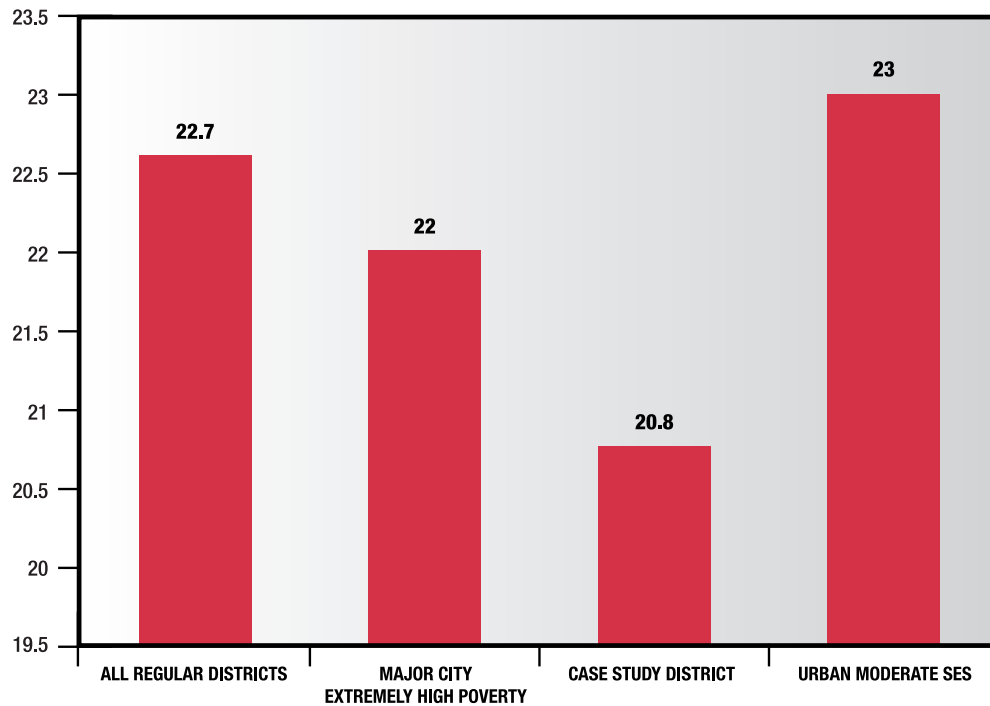
Overall, this district supports its teachers by ensuring that pupil/teacher ratios remain low.

Table C.5
TEACHER ATTRITION RATE

Teacher attrition for this district is less than for similar districts and the state as a whole.

Summary

Overall, this district is noteworthy because it realizes the connection between recruitment and retention. This district begins by convening a committee of teachers to define the district's hiring needs. Then candidates are proactively recruited according to the needs established by the teacher committee. Initial interviews are frequently conducted at recruitment fairs. The district uses a research-based series of interviews and quantitative and qualitative exercises to determine if the candidate is a good fit for an urban school environment.

Additionally, the district requires newly hired teachers to attend an orientation program designed for an urban school environment. The school district views teacher support as essential to teacher retention, and requiring professional development is part of that support. Another support for teachers is participation in a longitudinal study to examine the achievement gap between students. Finally, the district is able to function above state standards and within its budget because district administrators took initiatives to save money seven years ago. Presently, this district is expanding while other districts are laying off teachers.

Each of the individual practices engaged in by this district could be considered exemplary practices. Taken as a whole, the practices illustrate a comprehensive strategy that address issues of recruitment and retention simultaneously.

*Ingersoll, Richard, M., (2001). A Different Approach to Solving the Teacher Shortage Problem. Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy. Document R-01-1.

**ii The Southeast Center for Teaching Quality. (2003). Recruitment and Retention Strategies in a Regional and National Context. http://www.teachingquality.org/resources/SECTQpublications/Recruitment&RetentionStrategies.pdf

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Ingersoll, R. M. (2001). Teacher Turnover, Teacher Shortages, and the Organization of Schools. CTP Document. R-01-1. Seattle, WA: Center for Teaching the Study of Teaching and Policy, University of Washington.

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Minarik, Melanie, M., Thornton, Bill, and Perreault, George. (2003). Systems Thinking Can Improve Teacher Retention. Washington, DC: H. W. Wilson Company.

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http://www.teachingquality.org/resources/SECTQpublications/Recruitment&RetentionStrategies.pdf

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