

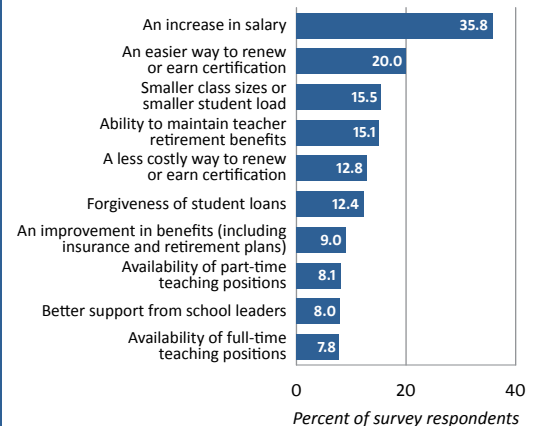
## Michigan Teachers Who Are Not Teaching: Who Are They, and What Would Motivate Them to Teach?

Michigan education leaders would like to know whether recruiting certified teachers who are not teaching would be an effective way to fill teacher vacancies in public schools. The study examined the characteristics of these teachers, their reasons for not teaching, and incentives that would motivate them to teach in public schools. Michigan education leaders could use the information to determine whether recruiting these nonteaching teachers is a viable option for alleviating teacher shortages and, if so, to guide a recruitment strategy tailored to teachers' preferences and needs.

### Key findings

- **About 61,000 teachers certified in Michigan were not teaching in the state's public schools in 2017/18.**<sup>1</sup> Of these, 70 percent had not taught in public schools since 2013/14, and 93 percent were younger than retirement age (that is, they were age 60 or younger). About 22 percent of them might be in administrative or instructional leadership roles in public or private schools; such teachers might not be good candidates for filling teaching positions.<sup>2</sup>
- **Respondents to a survey of certified teachers who were not teaching in public schools in 2017/18 most frequently selected salary as one of the three most important reasons for not teaching.** In addition to wanting a higher salary, "became an administrator or instructional leader," "wanted more career growth opportunities," "took courses to improve career opportunities in education," and "could not obtain a full-time position" were frequently selected as one of the three most important reasons for not teaching.
- **Respondents most frequently selected a higher salary as one of the three most important incentives that would motivate them to teach in a Michigan public school.** Other incentives that were frequently selected as one of the three most important incentives were "an easier way to renew or earn certification," "smaller class sizes or smaller student load," "ability to maintain teacher retirement benefits," and "a less costly way to renew or earn certification" (see figure).
- **The majority of survey respondents indicated that they would consider becoming a public school teacher.** About 58 percent of survey respondents indicated that they would consider teaching in a Michigan public school.

### Survey respondents most frequently selected a higher salary as one of the three most important incentives that would motivate them to teach, 2019/20



Note: Percentages are the proportion of respondents who selected the incentive as one of the three most important incentives that would motivate them to teach. The categories are not mutually exclusive; 7,563 respondents selected at least one most important incentive.

Source: Authors' calculations based on the Michigan Department of Education's survey of teachers who are not teaching, administered between December 2019 and January 2020.

1. The place of residence of these certified teachers is unknown. However, results from a nonrepresentative survey of these teachers indicate that 16 percent of the 61,000 might be living 20 or more miles outside of Michigan.  
2. Michigan administrative data suggest that 3.9 percent of nonteaching certified teachers have an administrative role in a public school.