

Washington, DC Retains Effective Public School Teachers

DCPS and public charter schools retain almost 80% of their effective teachers at their schools.

The attrition and retention of good teachers is critical for any school system's success. In Washington, DC, school systems' management of teachers is widely credited for the ongoing improvements in student learning, at the same time that some have raised questions about teacher attrition. The recent release of two analyses casts new light on these issues and provides important insights.

Teacher Retention

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) and The New Teacher Project (TNTP) recently released [a foundational report](#) on the DC public school systems' teacher workforce (including both DCPS and public charter schools combined). Washington, DC retained 78% of our strongest public school teachers at their schools between SY2017-18 and SY2018-19. This includes 83% of teachers rated highly effective and 74% of teachers rated effective (see graphic). Across all

effectiveness ratings, DCPS and public charter schools retained 70% of their teachers. The remaining 30% were teachers who transferred to a different school (within Washington, DC or elsewhere), transitioned into non-instructional roles, retired, or otherwise left the teaching profession.

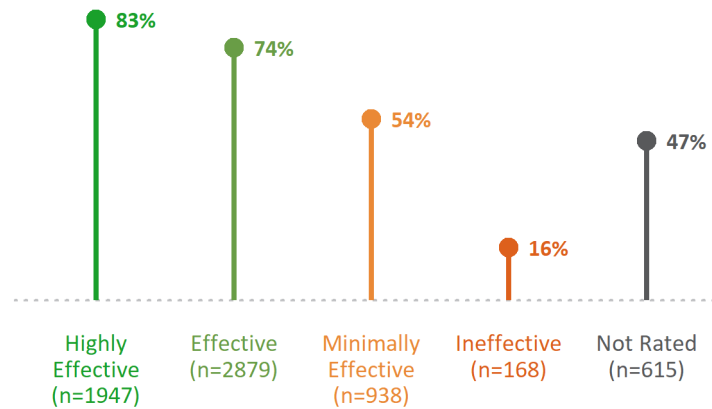
Additionally, DCPS recently published [new data](#) highlighting teacher retention from SY2018-19 to SY2019-20. More than 90% of effective and highly effective teachers returned to DCPS as a system, and 76% of DCPS teachers (across all effectiveness levels) returned to the same school they taught at the year prior, a nearly 8 percentage point increase in retention from a decade ago.

Teacher Experience

Metrics of teacher experience provide additional context related to teacher attrition and retention. Research suggests

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Citywide Within School Teacher Retention Rates by Effectiveness Rating SY2017-18 to SY2018-19



Source: Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). *District of Columbia Teacher Workforce Report*. October 2019. Page 26. Figure 17.

that teachers improve the most in their first year of teaching and then reach a plateau after three to five years. The majority of teachers in DCPS and public charter schools have more than five years of experience (59%) and just 11% have one year or less. In addition, close to 70% of DCPS teachers have six or more years of experience.

Teacher Diversity

DCPS and public charter teachers are more racially diverse than teachers nationally (62% teachers of color vs. 29% of public

school teachers nationwide) and, notably, there is no substantial difference in retention rates by race and ethnicity. This differs from the national trend where teachers of color have lower retention rates.

DCPS also reported that efforts to recruit and retain educators of color, such as the [Male Educators of Color Collaborative](#), are paying off. Last school year, 14% of DCPS teachers self-identified as Black or Latino/Hispanic males, compared to the national average of 4 percent.

Sources:

[DC Teacher Workforce Report](#)
[DCPS Teacher Retention](#)

Feedback:

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