
Thank you for your request to our REL Reference Desk regarding success and tenure of teachers who transfer from the public school systems to work in charter schools. Ask A REL is a collaborative reference desk service provided by the ten regional educational laboratories (REL) that, by design, functions much in the same way as a technical reference library. It provides references, referrals, and brief responses in the form of citations on research based education questions.

The information below represents the most rigorous research available. Researchers consider the type of methodology and give priority to research reports that employ well described and thorough methods. The resources were also selected based on the date of the publication with a preference for research from the last ten years. Additional criteria for inclusion include the source and funder of the resource.

Question: *Are there any statistics on the success and tenure of teachers who transfer from the public school systems to work in charter schools?*

Note: No research was found specific to this question, however, some of the related research citations are provided below.

Search Process

Key words and search strings used in the search: *teacher tenure AND success AND charter schools; teachers transferring from public schools to charter schools*

Search databases and websites:

1. ERIC: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/>
2. JSTOR: <http://www.jstor.org/action/showAdvancedSearch>
3. Google Scholar: www.google.com/scholar
4. Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Resources: <http://ies.ed.gov>
5. What Works Clearinghouse: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

Sample Citations Retrieved: (NOTE: Abstracts and executive summaries are copied directly from the reports when possible to ensure accuracy):

Cannata, M. & Engel, M. (2012). Does Charter Status Determine Preferences? Comparing the Hiring Preferences of Charter and Traditional Public School Principals. *Education Finance and Policy*, 7(4), 455-488. doi: 10.1162/EDFP_a_00076

Abstract/Summary: The academic success of any school depends on its teachers. However, relatively little research exists on the qualities principals value in teacher hiring, and we know almost nothing about charter school principals' preferences. This article addresses this gap in the literature using survey results for a matched sample of charter and traditional public school

principals. We compare regression-adjusted survey responses of charter and traditional public school principals to examine whether charter school principals report placing more emphasis on teacher hiring than principals in traditional public schools and whether principals' preferences for teacher qualifications and characteristics vary between charter and traditional public schools. While we find some mean differences in principals' reported hiring focus and preferences across charter and traditional public schools, regression results indicate that these differences are driven not by charter status but by school characteristics, such as average teacher experience and school enrollment.

Carruthers, C.K.(2012). The Qualifications and Classroom Performance of Teachers Moving to Charter Schools. *Education Finance and Policy*,7(3), 233-268. doi: 10.1162/EDFP_a_00067

Abstract/Summary: Do charter schools draw good teachers from traditional, mainstream public schools? Using a thirteen-year panel of North Carolina public schoolteachers, I find that less qualified and less effective teachers move to charter schools, particularly if they move to urban schools, low-performing schools, or schools with higher shares of nonwhite students. It is unclear whether these findings reflect lower demand for teachers' credentials and value added or resource constraints unique to charter schools, but the inability to recruit teachers who are at least as effective as those in traditional public schools will likely hinder charter student achievement. (Contains 23 footnotes, 3 figures, and 8 tables.)

Cowen, J. M. & Winters, M. A. (2013). Do Charters Retain Teachers Differently? Evidence from Elementary Schools in Florida. *Education Finance and Policy*, 8(1), 14-42. doi: 10.1162/EDFP_a_00081

Abstract/Summary: We analyze patterns of teacher attrition from charter schools and schools in the traditional public sector. Using rich data on students, teachers, and schools in Florida, we estimate teacher effectiveness based on repeated test scores reported at the student level for each teacher over time. Among all teachers, those in charter schools appear more likely to exit the profession than those in the traditional public sector, and in both sectors the least effective teachers are more likely to exit than their more effective counterparts. Few of these relationships appear evident for within- or between-district transfers, and there are no differential relationships between effectiveness and attrition in the charter sector. We interpret these results as indicating that whatever administrative or organizational differences may exist in charter schools, they do not necessarily translate into a discernible difference in the ability to dismiss poorly performing teachers.

Goldring, R., Gray, L., & Bitterman, A. *Characteristics of Public and Private Elementary and Secondary School Teachers in the United States: Results from the 2011-12 Schools and Staffing Survey* (NCES 2013-314). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, D.C.:

National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from:
<https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2013/2013314.pdf>

Abstract/Summary: This report presents selected findings from the Public School Teacher and Private School Teacher Data Files of the 2011-12 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). SASS is a nationally representative sample survey of public and private K-12 schools, principals, and teachers in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. School districts associated with public schools and library media centers in public schools are also part of SASS. The purpose of SASS is to collect information that can provide a detailed picture of U.S. elementary and secondary schools and their staff. This information is collected through the following surveys: district, school, principal, teacher, and library media center. The 2011-12 SASS uses a school-based sample of public and private schools. Because SASS uses a school-based sample design, districts, principals, and library media centers associated with public schools were included, as were principals associated with private schools. Teachers associated with a selected school were sampled from a teacher list provided by the school or district. The selected samples include about 11,000 traditional and charter public schools, public school principals, and public school library media centers; 5,800 public school districts; 51,100 public school teachers; 3,000 private schools and their principals; and 7,100 private school teachers. The samples were drawn to support estimates by geography, grade span, and charter school status for public schools, and by geography, grade span, and affiliation group for private schools for a wide range of topics. The data were collected via mailed questionnaires with telephone and in-person field follow-up. The purpose of this First Look is to introduce new data through the presentation of tables containing descriptive information. Selected findings chosen for this report demonstrate the range of information available on the 2011-12 SASS Public School Teacher and Private School Teacher Data Files. The selected findings do not represent a complete review of all observed differences in the data and are not meant to emphasize any particular issue. This First Look report highlights findings from the SASS public and private school teacher surveys. The tables in this report contain counts and percentages demonstrating bivariate relationships. All of the results have been weighted to reflect the sample design and to account for nonresponse and other adjustments. The following are appended: (1) Standard Error Tables; (2) Methodology and Technical Notes; (3) Description of Data Files; and (4) Description of Variables. (Contains 21 tables and 14 footnotes.)

Gross, B. & DeArmond, M. (2010). *How do charter schools compete for teachers? A local perspective*. (Working paper #2010-1). Seattle, WA: Center on Reinventing Public Education, University of Washington-Bothell. Retrieved from:
<http://www.crpe.org/publications/how-do-charter-schools-compete-teachers-local-perspective>

Abstract/Summary: When policymakers and researchers debate personnel policies in public education, they sometimes hold up charter schools as examples of the benefits of a freer and

more competitive approach to attracting and retaining teachers. To date, most of the evidence about innovative charter school personnel policies comes from on-average comparisons between charter schools and conventional public schools. But there are good reasons to wonder whether on-average comparisons of charter schools and conventional public schools overlook important variation within the charter school sector. After all, an individual school's personnel policies may depend in part on local circumstances, including the local supply of teachers relative to demand, the financial resources available to the school, state regulations, and the behavior of competing employers. If charter schools are to inform larger debates in public education about human capital and personnel policies, a more localized perspective is an important piece of understanding the possibilities and limits of a less regulated system. With that in mind, this paper offers an exploratory look at how charter schools compete for teachers across local contexts. The data come from an original survey of hiring practices in charter schools and their local school districts in six-states. The analysis focuses on two areas of personnel practice: recruitment and compensation.

Ni, Y. (2012). Teacher Working Conditions in Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools: A Comparative Study. *Teachers College Record*, 114(3).

Abstract/Summary: Background/Context: Teachers affect student performance through their interaction with students in the context of the classrooms and schools where teaching and learning take place. Although it is widely assumed that supportive working conditions improve the quality of instruction and teachers' willingness to remain in a school, little is known about whether or how the organizational structure of charter schools influences teacher working conditions. Purpose/Research Question: This article compares teacher working conditions in charter and traditional public schools and among various types of charter schools. In doing so, it seeks to understand whether the different working conditions are influenced by the intrinsic institutional features of charter schools such as autonomy and competition, or by the extraneous factors such as measurable school and teacher characteristics. Research Design: This study utilized data from the 2003-2004 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), the nation's most extensive survey of K-12 schools and teachers, both for charter schools and traditional public schools (TPSs). This article is a quantitative analysis that involves three main steps. First, based on the responses to the SASS teacher questionnaire, confirmatory factor analysis was performed to generate multiple factors corresponding to key dimensions of teacher working conditions. Second, propensity score matching was used to pair charter schools with TPSs that are similar in terms of school location, educational level, school type, and student demographics. This matching process mitigates the confounding effects of these extraneous factors on teachers' perceptions of working conditions. Finally, a series of weighted Hierarchical Linear Models were utilized to compare teachers' perceptions of working conditions between charter and traditional public schools, controlling for teacher and school characteristics. Conclusions/Recommendations: The results show that charter and traditional public school teachers perceive their working conditions to be similar in many regards, including principal

leadership, sense of community and collegiality, classroom autonomy, opportunities for professional development, and adequacy of instructional supplies. However, charter school teachers perceive that they have significantly more influence over school policies, but a heavier workload than traditional school teachers. Among charter schools, district-granted charter schools show consistently more supportive working environments than charters granted by other organizations. This implies that state policy can have some indirect influence over charter school working conditions by providing substantial administrative support and oversight to charter schools authorized by independent organizations other than the established structure of school districts.

Renzulli, L.A. Parrott, H.M., & Beattie, I.R. (2011). Racial Mismatch And School Type: Teacher Satisfaction and Retention in Charter and Traditional Public Schools. *Sociology of Education*, 84(1), 23-48. doi: 10.1177/0038040710392720

Abstract/Summary: Studies of teacher satisfaction suggest that satisfaction is related to both the racial composition and the organizational structure of the schools in which teachers work. In this article, the authors draw from theories of race and organizations to examine simultaneously the effects of school type (traditional public vs. charter) and racial mismatch on teacher satisfaction and subsequent turnover. In doing so, they examine the organizational differences between traditional public and charter schools that contribute to systematic differences in satisfaction and turnover across these school types. Using 1999-2000 Schools and Staffing Survey data, the authors find that charter school teachers are more satisfied than are public school teachers because of greater autonomy. Charter school teachers, however, are more likely to leave teaching than are traditional teachers. The authors also show that teaching in racially mismatched schools results in lower levels of satisfaction for white teachers and that being in a charter school reduces this negative effect.

Stuit, D. & Smith, T.M. (2010). *Research Brief: Teacher Turnover in Charter Schools*. Vanderbilt University: National Center on School Choice. Retrieved from: http://www.vanderbilt.edu/schoolchoice/documents/briefs/brief_stuit_smith_ncspe.pdf

Abstract/Summary: This study examines how teacher turnover differs between charter and traditional public schools and seeks to identify factors that explain these differences. Using data from the National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) 2003-2004 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) and Teacher Follow-Up Survey (TFS), the researchers found that 25% of charter school teachers turned over during the 2003-2004 school year, compared to 14% of traditional public school teachers. Fourteen percent of charter school teachers left the profession outright and 11% moved to a different school, while 7% of traditional public school teachers left the profession and 7% moved schools. Using multi-nomial logistic regression, the researchers found the odds of a charter school teacher leaving the profession versus staying in the same school are 132% greater than those of a traditional public school teacher. The odds of a charter school

teacher moving schools are 76% greater. The analysis confirms that much of the explanation of this “turnover gap” lies in differences in the types of teachers that charter schools and traditional public schools hire. The data lend minimal support to the claim that turnover is higher in charter schools because they are leveraging their flexibility in personnel policies to get rid of underperforming teachers. Rather, the study found most of the turnover in charter schools is voluntary and dysfunctional as compared to that of traditional public schools.

Tryjankowski, A. M., Henry, J. J., & Verrall, E. (2012). It Could Work: Teacher Performance-Based Compensation in a New York Charter School. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 11(2), 194-215. doi: 10.1080/15700763.2011.629072

Abstract/Summary: Performance-based compensation systems have been under discussion for years and are now a required component of any state plan for Race to the Top funds. This article describes a system of performance-based compensation that has been in place at a K-12 school for the past four years. The system was developed by a team of teachers, union members, and administrators based on clear, schoolwide goals. Performance levels are set for teams of teachers who work collaboratively to meet goals. Effects on the professional culture of the school are explored, and suggestions are given for other schools interested in performance-based compensation. (Contains 8 tables and 2 notes.)

Wei, X., Patel, D., & Young, V.M. (2014). Opening the "Black Box": Organizational Differences between Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 22(3).

Abstract/Summary: Using survey data collected from 2,273 teachers in Texas, this study explores differences in school organization that contribute to the experiences (e.g., working conditions, instruction and student engagement in learning, self-efficacy and job satisfaction, and teacher evaluation) of charter school and traditional public school teachers. Researchers used propensity score matching to reduce the impact of selection bias and to produce accurate estimates of the charter-traditional public school differences. Compared with similar teachers in traditional public schools, charter school teachers reported a more supportive teaching environment, higher expectations of students among staff, a greater sense of responsibility for student learning, and higher levels of student engagement in learning. However, they reported, attending fewer professional development trainings focused on instruction and aligned to teaching assignments, fewer opportunities for professional development and collaboration with colleagues, and lower perceived fairness of teacher evaluation. Findings from this study provide valuable insight into the school organization factors that may underlie teacher turnover and represent unmet needs among charter school teachers, and suggest strategic areas of focus for policymakers, charter management organizations, and charter school leaders in addressing teacher retention and student achievement.

Referrals

Organizations:

- National Center on School Choice: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/schoolchoice>
- Center on Reinventing Public Education: <http://www.crpe.org/>

Federally Funded Resources:

- Institute of Education Sciences (IES), public search engine available at: <http://ies.ed.gov/pubsearch/>
- What Works Clearinghouse: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>
- National Center of Education Statistics – Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS): <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/>

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