

TEACHER RETENTION IN SOUTH CAROLINA: EXPLORING SCHOOL-LEVEL FACTORS

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COLLABORATOR ORGANIZATIONS

Research, Evaluation, and
Measurement Center



South Carolina Teacher Education
Advancement Consortium Through
Higher Education Research



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INTRODUCTION

- Studies have found relationships between teacher turnover rates and student achievement
- Retaining effective teachers is a challenge in the United States (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019)
 - Overall turnover rate in the U.S. is about 16%
 - Turnover rates are in the lowest in the Northeast and highest in the South
 - Turnover rates are higher in cities and suburbs than in towns and rural areas

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INTRODUCTION

- School poverty has been found to be associated with teacher retention (Hughes, 2012; Smith & Ingerscoll, 2004; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019)
- School administration appears to play an important role in teacher retention (Kukla-Acevedo, 2009; Boyd et al., 2010; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019)

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METHODS - DATA SOURCES

Participating Schools:

- 1,100 public schools in 82 school districts in South Carolina

School Level Variables:

- Teacher retention
- School poverty
- Principal's years at schools
- Other (teacher salary, climate, safety, enrollment, student teacher ratios, total PPE)
- School type
- School location



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METHODS - RESEARCH QUESTIONS & ANALYSIS

- What is the relationship between teacher retention and school level variables?
- How do teacher retention rates differ among elementary, middle, and high schools?
- How do teacher retention rates differ among schools of different poverty levels?
- How do teacher retention rates differ among schools with principals who have different years at the school?
- How do teacher retention rates differ between urban schools and rural schools?

Quantitative analysis (descriptive, t-test, ANOVA, correlation)



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RESULTS - TEACHER RETENTION BY SCHOOL TYPE

Teacher Retention by School Type

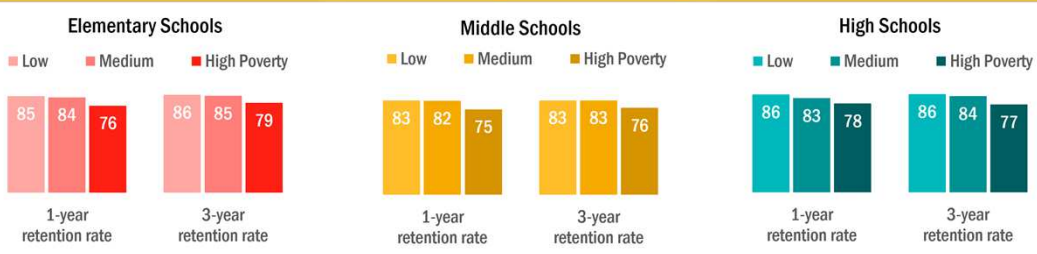
The average 1-year teacher retention rate was significantly higher at high schools than at both elementary and middle schools, while the average 3-year teacher retention rate at middle schools was significantly lower than that at both elementary and high schools.



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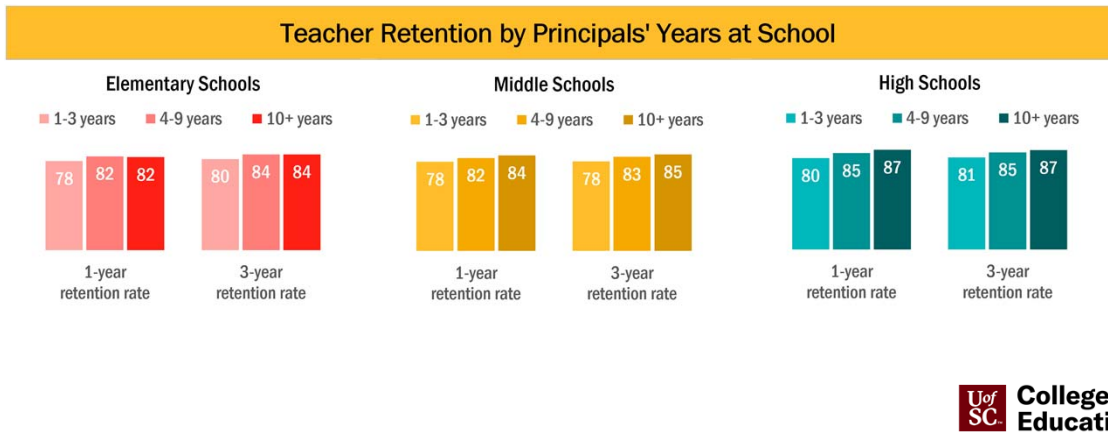
RESULTS - TEACHER RETENTION BY SCHOOL POVERTY LEVELS

Teacher Retention by School Poverty Levels



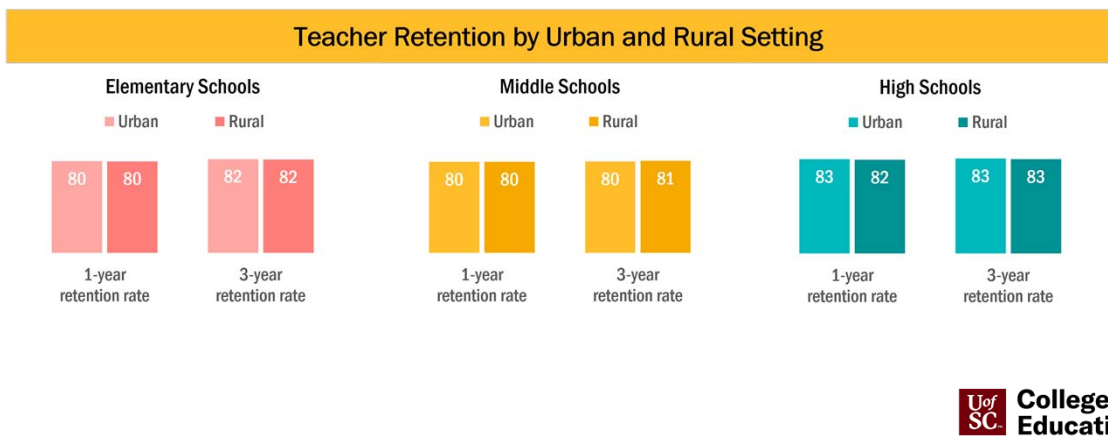
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RESULTS- TEACHER RETENTION BY PRINCIPAL TENURE AT THE SCHOOL



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RESULTS- TEACHER RETENTION BY LOCALE



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RESULTS - CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Correlation Coefficients of Teacher Retention Rates and School Level Factors

Factors	Elementary Schools		Middle Schools		High Schools	
	Retention Rate	Retention Rate	Retention Rate	Retention Rate	Retention Rate	Retention Rate
	(1 Year)	(3 Years)	(1 Year)	(3 Years)	(1 Year)	(3 Years)
Teacher Satisfaction with Learning Environment	0.31**	0.34**	0.27**	0.32**	0.33**	0.40**
Teacher Satisfaction with Social Physical Environment	0.29**	0.30**	0.24**	0.27**	0.28**	0.33**
Teacher Satisfaction with School Home Relations	0.36**	0.44**	0.35**	0.36**	0.36**	0.36**
Teachers Feel Safe	0.20**	0.23**	0.16**	0.17**	0.19**	0.23**
Teacher Rules Enforced	0.29**	0.31**	0.17**	0.24**	0.14*	0.14*
Teacher Salary	0.33**	0.45**	0.32**	0.41**	0.30**	0.44**
School Enrollment	0.23**	0.29**	0.20**	0.28**	0.24**	0.33**
Principal Years at School	0.11**	0.15**	0.17**	0.24**	0.29**	0.30**
Student Teacher Ratio	0.07	0.13**	0.14*	0.17**	0.26**	0.27**
School Poverty Index	-0.33**	-0.38**	-0.33**	-0.34**	-0.34**	-0.44**
Total Per Pupil Expenditure	-0.25**	-0.30**	-0.21**	-0.23**	-0.27**	-0.32**

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)



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CONCLUSIONS

- High schools had the highest teacher retention rates, and middle schools had the lowest teacher retention rates.
- High-poverty schools had the lowest teacher retention rates.
- Schools where principals had one to three years at their current school had the lowest teacher retention rates.
- Teacher retention rates were very similar for schools in urban areas and rural areas.
- Teachers' satisfaction with school home relations, teacher salary, and school poverty. tended to have relatively higher correlations with teacher retention rates.



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RECOMMENDATIONS

- Build a positive school community that actively involves and engages families.
- Consider school type and poverty in policy making, high poverty middle schools need particular attention.
- Develop strong administrative leadership through retaining principals and shared leadership.
- Increase teacher salary and provide incentives to effective teachers.
- Provide mentoring and certification opportunities for teachers.
- Build strong collaboration with teacher preparation programs at higher education institutions.



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THANKS!

Paper available at sc-teacher.org/resources/

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