

Methods to Attract and Retain Teachers in Hard to Staff Schools

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OVERVIEW

- ❑ Study conducted on behalf of Jefferson County, Aurora, and Denver Public Schools.
- ❑ Identified high performing schools in six states around the country that serve high percentages of students in poverty.
- ❑ Surveyed teachers and interviewed principals.
- ❑ Identified priority factors to retain teachers and create positive working conditions.



TOP 6 FINDINGS

1. Increased **planning time** for teachers.
2. Emphasis on working in **grade-level teams**.
3. Principals are instructional leaders who allow significant **teacher input** on key decisions (such as hiring, professional development).



TOP 6 FINDINGS (continued)

4. Schools enjoy some **flexibility** from district (eg. scheduling, induction, professional development, curriculum, budgeting).
5. **Supports** provided for struggling students (through extended day programs, student support teams, etc.).
6. **Technology** used to enhance instruction (eg. laptops for all teachers) .

FINDING #1: Increased Teacher Planning Time

- ❑ Schedules provide minimum 3 hours common planning time in addition to lunch and individual planning period.
- ❑ Early dismissal days give teachers common blocks of time to work together.
- ❑ Substitutes utilized to cover classes so teachers can view colleagues teaching.
- ❑ Schools ensure teachers are freed from covering lunch, recess, hall, or bus pickup/drop off duties.

FINDING #2: Grade level teaming of teachers

- Use of grade level teacher teams embedded in school culture.
- Teachers rank common planning very high in creating positive working conditions.
- Such planning grows in importance as teachers progress in professional experience.
- Teams used to: create common lessons, request and deliver professional development, deliver teacher induction, and to give input on hiring decisions.

Importance of Common Grade Level Planning Periods to Creating Positive Working Conditions (By years of teacher experience)		
Teacher Experience	Average Response (1 = Not important, 4 = Very Important)	Overall Rank Among All Factors
0-3 Years	3.18	4
4-10 Years	3.46	2
11+ Years	3.51	2

FINDING #3: Leadership Qualities

- Teachers have significant input into:
 - Hiring decisions.
 - Professional development.
 - Tailoring instruction for their specific classes.
- Principals are instructional leaders:
 - Participate in grade level team meetings or appoint an instructional leader to participate.
 - Focus on use of data to drive instruction.
- Principals seek out community support and volunteers.



FINDING #4: School Flexibility

School leaders use flexibility from districts to:

- ❑ Establish their own creative scheduling practices.
- ❑ Run school-level induction programs.
- ❑ Run school-level professional development programs.
- ❑ Deploy funds and staffing creatively.
- ❑ Develop unique curriculum, supporting materials and assessment programs to meet student needs.

FINDING #5: Student Supports

Schools support their struggling students through:

- *Mandatory* tutoring before or after school.
- Requiring students to attend tutoring in lieu of elective classes until proficiency is reached.
- Providing counselors and student support teams.
- Instituting half-day Saturday school programs to prepare students for standardized testing.
- Additional pay to teachers for participating in extended hours.

FINDING #6: Technology Support

- Technology ranks third in importance to teachers just below school leadership and common planning.
- Many schools had laptops for all teachers to use in common lesson design and data analysis.
- Smartboards, personal input devices, document cameras and LCD projectors enhance instruction.

Importance of Technology to Creating Positive Working Conditions (By years of teacher experience)		
Teacher Experience	Average Response (1 = Not important, 4 = Very Important)	Overall Rank Among All Factors
0-3 Years	3.20	3
4-10 Years	3.29	3
11+ Years	3.41	3