

What Got You Over the Hump?



A Study of Major Factors Relating to Teacher Retention in Public Schools

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Purpose of the Research

- Examine teacher retention as a result of several determinants that influence teachers to stay in the profession

Rationale for the Study

- Effects of decreasing retention are undeniable
 - “reduced student achievement, particularly for low income students, rising teacher shortages, high costs of teacher recruitment and induction, and negative effects on coherent program implementation, particularly with on-going reform initiatives” (Levy, 2018, p.10)

Hypothesis

- There exists a ladder of issues, or needs, that teachers or schools must be able to meet in order for teachers to be retained in the profession over the long term.
- Foundational/required issues ascending the ladder to preferred conditions were:
 1. Teacher pay
 2. Restorative practices and behavior consequences
 3. Evaluation methods
 4. Implementation of personally sought professional development
 5. Appropriation of instructional aides and co-teachers
 6. Opportunities for SLC/PLC and departmental co-planning
 7. Professional development offered and directly applicable to classroom practice
 8. Opportunities for personally or professionally fulfilling added responsibilities
 9. Sources of teacher wellness or opportunities for self-care

Methods

- The 9 factors influencing retention were posed to teachers around the globe.
- Research was completed using a Likert scale- a continuum of agreeance to disagreeance style of survey.
- Short answer questions and brief interviews were completed with participants that wanted to be asked further questions.
- 53 currently employed teachers responded from multiple countries, with the highest percentage of teachers responding from the DC, Maryland, and Virginia areas.
- **Summary of Process:** Following the Likert scale question regarding whether or not an issue was likely to keep the teacher in or push them out of the teaching profession, the participant would complete a follow up question.

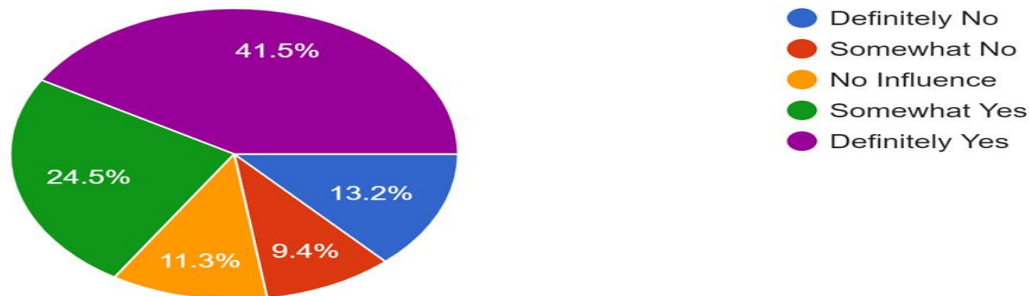
Literature Review

- Dahlkamp, Peters, and Schumaker (2017) discuss the relationship between principal self-efficacy, workplace climate, and retention among teachers.
- Mary Levy (2018) presents an in depth analysis of teacher and principal retention information made available by DCPS and DC public charter schools.
- Schaefer, Long, and Clandinin (2012) review previous research on variables such as individual factors, burnout, resilience, personal demographic features, person factors (family), teacher support, salary, professional development, collaboration, environmental context, student issues, and teacher education.
- Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) had a survey sample size of 2569 teachers. They analyzed six areas: (1) value (2) support (3) relationship with colleagues (4) relationships with parents (5) time pressure (6) student discipline.

Data and Analysis- Questions 1 & 2

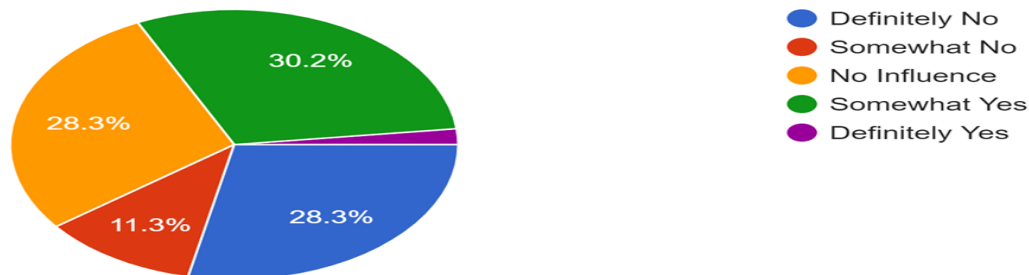
Has the salary scale at your school influenced you to stay in the profession?

53 responses



Has the implementation of consequences for student behavior, and/or restorative justice influenced your decision to stay in the profession?

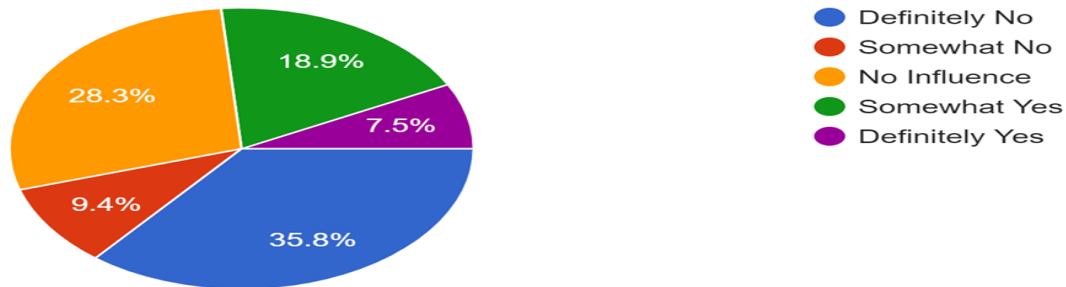
53 responses



Data and Analysis- Questions 3 & 4

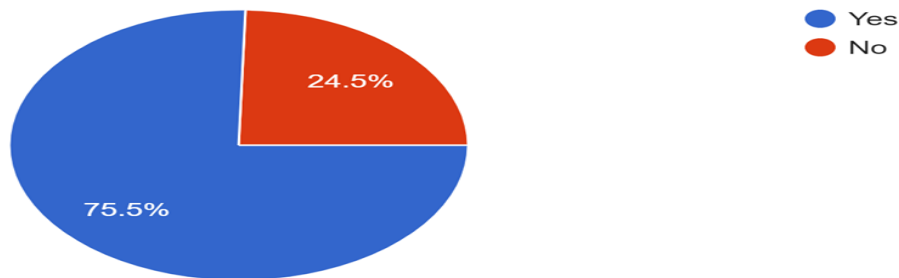
Has the teacher evaluation process at your school influenced your decision to stay in the profession?

53 responses



Have you personally chosen to implement any significant professional development in order to improve your practice?

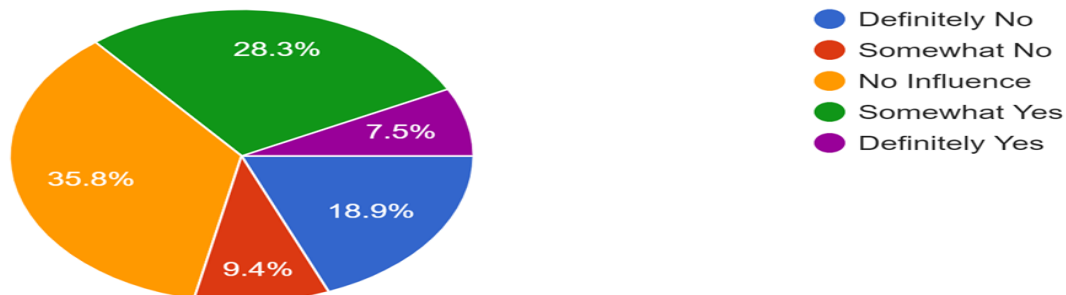
53 responses



Data and Analysis- Questions 5 & 6

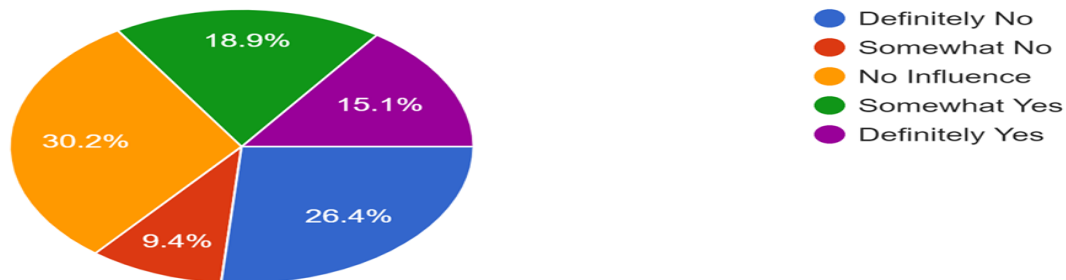
Has in class support (via instructional aides/co-teachers, etc.) for students with special needs or educational plans of some kind influenced your decision to stay in the profession?

53 responses



Has the use of co-planning time and/or the use of small learning communities or professional learning communities influenced your decision to stay in the profession?

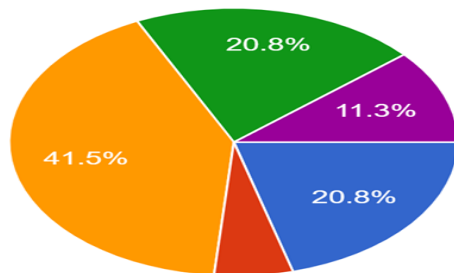
53 responses



Data and Analysis- Questions 7 & 8

Has the presence, or lack of, professional development directly related to your content area influenced your decision to stay in the profession?

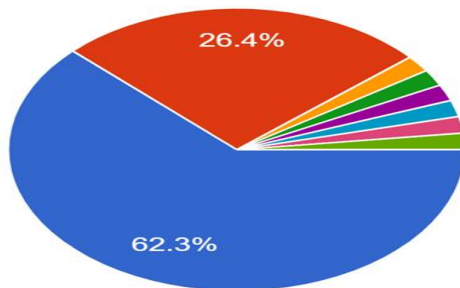
53 responses



- Definitely No
- Somewhat No
- No Influence
- Somewhat Yes
- Definitely Yes

Has your school provided ways you can take on extra responsibility for something that you may find professionally or personally fulfilling?

53 responses

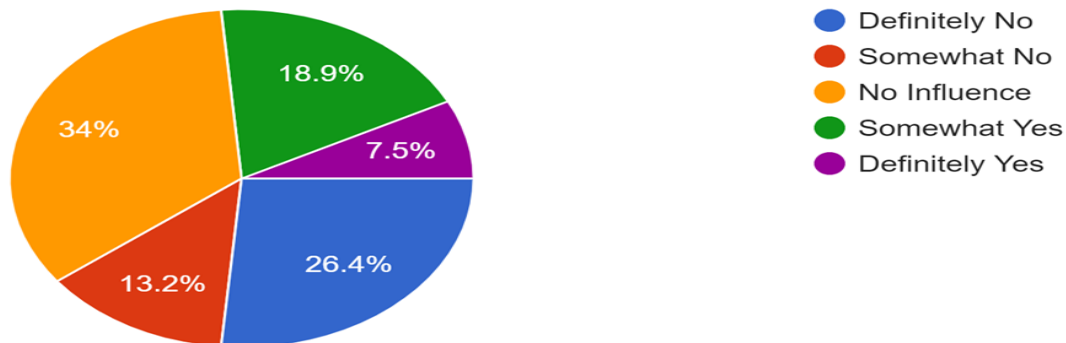


- Yes
- No
- I used to do somethings, but passive aggressively was told no more.
- Yes but those roles aren't exactly what every teacher is looking for.
- I think if I bring something to my admini...
- My school has not offered too much n...
- It used to before the new administration.
- I was giving more responsibilities outsi...

Data and Analysis- Question 9

Have school wellness and/or self-care opportunities influenced your decision to stay in the profession?

53 responses



Findings & Recommendations

- “There is a growing consensus among researchers and educators that the single most important factor in determining a student’s performance is the quality of his or her teachers” (Schaefer et al., 2012, p.106-107).
- “shift the conversation from one focused only on retaining teachers, toward a conversation about sustaining teachers” (Schaefer et al., 2012, p.1), they will likely be retained.
- Not surprisingly, this study found that the “climate” of a school is what will likely retain a teacher more than anything.
- Teacher pay raises, directed professional development (virtual or in person), and affordable housing for teachers in high cost of living areas are more tangible recommendations that have been, and clearly continue to be, recommendations for retention.
- Given the necessity of quality teachers within the fabric of society, it is important to gain more understanding regarding why some teachers are able to get over the hump, and some are not.