ISER’s work in teacher turnover, supply, & demand

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ISER has studied Alaska’s teacher workforce for over 50 years.

**Institute of Social & Economic Research**
- Alaska-focused
- Nonpartisan
- Policy-focused
- Intended to help people understand social and economic systems

**Center for Alaska Education Policy Research**
- Education pathways & workforce development
- Teacher supply & demand
- Arctic, rural, & Indigenous education
1. Teacher shortages are a national concern.

Alaska hires teachers in a national market.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Demand</th>
<th>Supply</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Competitiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>US</strong></td>
<td>Strong economy creates increased demand for teachers in other states</td>
<td>Decreased interest in teaching profession</td>
<td>High turnover in profession in general</td>
<td>Strong economy allows other states to offer better compensation packages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Decreasing enrollments and graduates in teacher preparation programs</td>
<td>In good economy, highly qualified teachers find jobs in private sector or other fields</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AK</strong></td>
<td>AK’s demand for teachers has been steady for past decade</td>
<td>AK-prepared teacher supply has been flat since at least 2008</td>
<td>About 22% of AK’s teachers turn over annually</td>
<td>In AK’s fiscal crisis, teacher salaries and benefits have not increased commensurate to other states</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most of AK’s new teacher hires come from the lower 48</td>
<td>UAA, AK’s largest teacher preparation program, suspended admissions in 2019</td>
<td>Turnover is higher in rural and low-income schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Teacher turnover is expensive.

It costs districts over $20k to replace a teacher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Per teacher cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Separation</td>
<td>Administrative tasks, technology, physical plant</td>
<td>$2,449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>Job fairs (including travel), advertising</td>
<td>$1,910*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiring</td>
<td>Applications, interviews, background checks, HR</td>
<td>$4,902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation &amp; training</td>
<td>New teacher orientation, mentoring, PD</td>
<td>$11,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>Coursework, field placement, certification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher productivity</td>
<td>Student learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. There are lots of reasons why teachers leave.

Some conditions can be improved with policy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School-community relationships</th>
<th>Working conditions</th>
<th>Community characteristics</th>
<th>Salary &amp; compensation</th>
<th>School &amp; district administration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Physical plant</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>Pay</td>
<td>Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Class size</td>
<td>Amenities</td>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>Feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent engagement</td>
<td>Workload</td>
<td>Climate</td>
<td></td>
<td>Recognition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Recruitment and retention challenges both contribute to workforce shortages, but require different solutions.

Berman, M., & DeFeo, D. J. (in review). How much is enough? Teacher compensation to address disparities in teacher qualifications in high needs public schools.
Improved compensation will *help* recruitment & retention.

• But we can’t fix the problem with salary and benefits alone.
• Districts attempt to substitute benefits for wages when they can’t raise salaries.
  • Benefits cost money too, but sometimes their value to teachers is higher than their cost.
• Some benefits are more effective for attracting new teachers, others for retaining current teachers.
  • Housing
  • Personal leave days
Wrapping up

Teacher turnover is a wicked problem.
Solutions will need to be multi-faceted and inclusive.

The problem itself is:
• Complex
• Systemic
• Highly variable
• Characterized by distributed responsibility

Thinking about solutions:
• There is no silver bullet.
• Efforts will need to be coordinated.
  • Communities
  • Schools
  • Districts
  • State
• The effects of our efforts will not be immediate.
• We can’t afford not to.
Thank you & questions

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