



Equitable Teacher Distribution/Working Conditions

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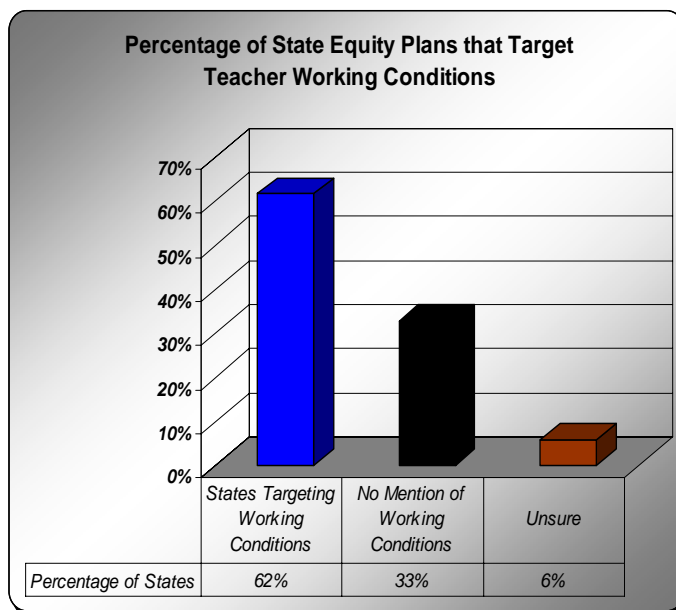
State Equity Plans that Address Working Conditions as a Means to Increase Teacher Retention and Equitable Teacher Distribution

By Angela Baber
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The 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires that all teachers of core academic subjects be highly qualified. States are working diligently to achieve this goal, but are facing many obstacles. One of the largest challenges that states face is the issue of equitable distribution of experienced teachers. On May 5, 2006, the U.S. Department of Education requested that states submit revised highly qualified teacher (HQT) plans. One of six required components of the plans is a strategy that details intended steps to ensure an equitable distribution of teachers with a specific focus to assure minority students and students from low-income families would not be disproportionately taught by inexperienced or under qualified teachers.

Research shows a strong correlation between teacher working conditions and teacher attrition and transition. In 2000-01, 32% of teachers in public schools reported that they moved to a new school due to dissatisfaction with workplace conditions.¹ The rate of attrition is roughly 50% higher in poor schools than in wealthier ones;² and teachers new to the profession are far more likely to leave than are experienced teachers.³ Teachers cite a lack of support and poor working conditions among the primary factors for leaving.

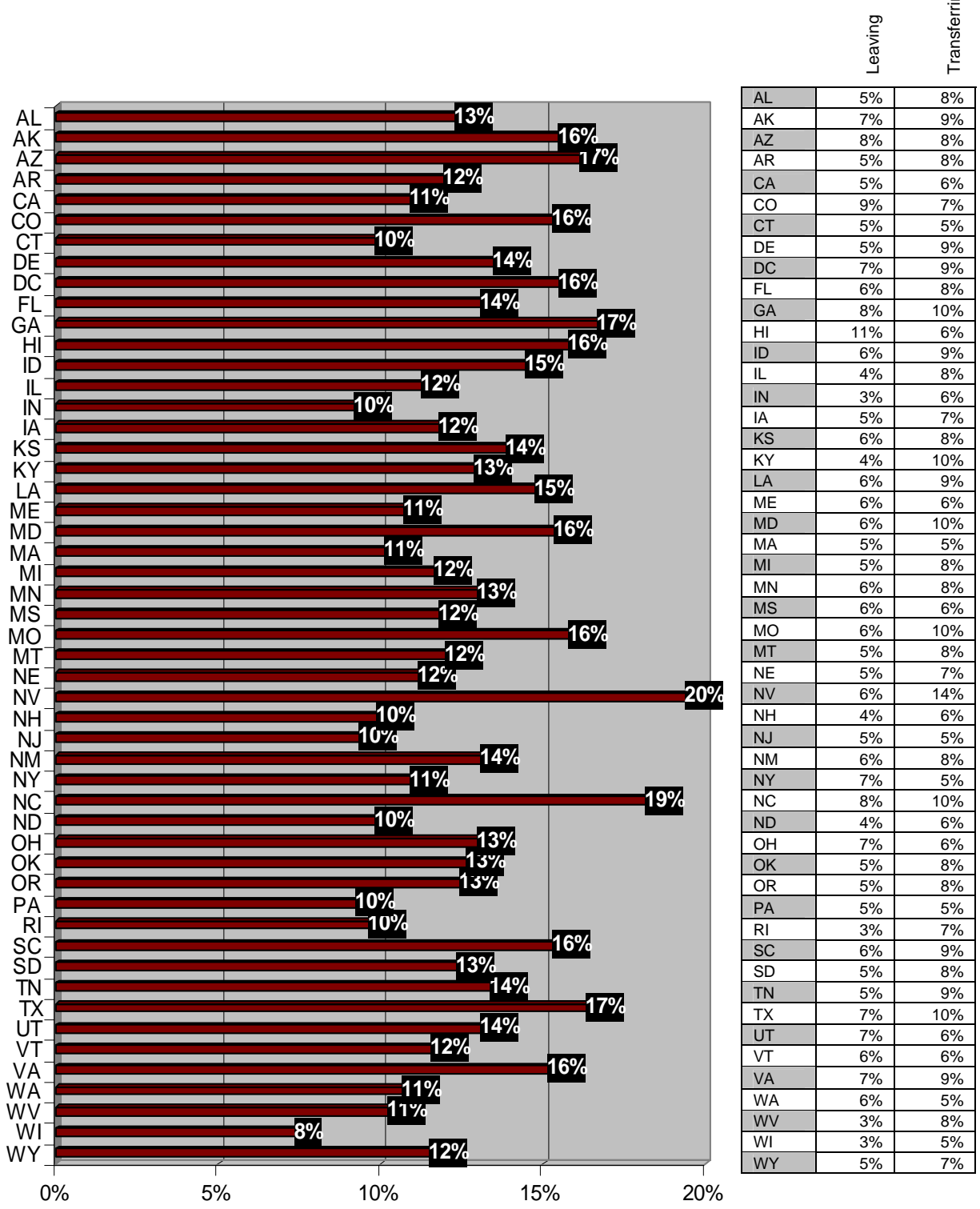
Findings from HQT plans suggest that states are interested in tackling this issue. The majority of state equity strategies addressed improving working conditions to increase teacher retention in schools with an emphasis on hard-to-staff schools. In fact, 62% of states, 32 total, identified working conditions as one way to increase the equitable distribution of teachers.



Source: U.S. Department of Education: [State HQT Plans](#)

Teacher Attrition and Transfer Percentages from 2000-2001 by State

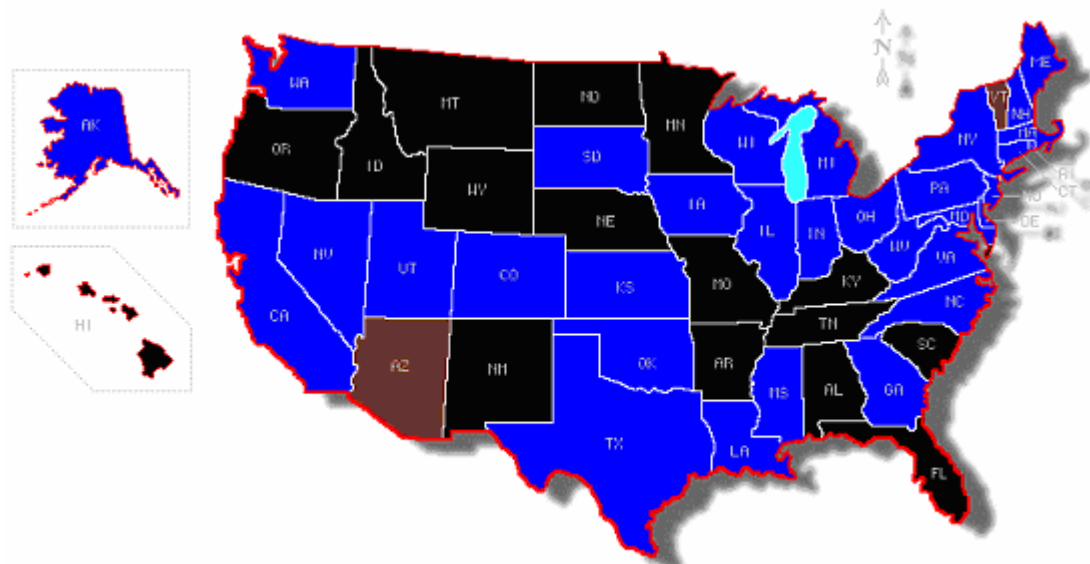
Total % Teachers Leaving and Transferring



Source: State estimations based on analysis by Richard Ingersoll, Professor of Education and Sociology, University of Pennsylvania, from the National Center for Education Statistics Student and Staffing Survey, and therefore include a slight margin of error.

In the table below, states shaded in blue have state equity plans that address working conditions as one way to increase teacher retention and equitable distribution of teachers. For detailed information on state plans visit the U.S. Department of Education’s [State HQT Plans](#) page. Thirty-two states addressed working conditions, 17 states (including DC) did not address working conditions and it was unclear whether three states (including Puerto Rico) intend to address working conditions or not.

HQT Equity Plans that Target Working Conditions as a Means to Increase Teacher Retention and Equitable Distribution of Teachers – State Map



All 50 states, DC and Puerto Rico Submitted State HQT Plans.

- State Plan Targets Working Conditions
- State Plan Does not Mention Working Conditions
- Unsure

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¹ Micheal T. Luekens, Deanna M. Lyter, and Erin E. Fox. *Teacher Attrition and Mobility: Results from the Teacher follow-up Survey 2000-01* (NCES 2004-301). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2004).

² National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future. (2003.) Figure 5 shows a yearly rate of teachers moving/leaving “Low Poverty” schools at 12.9 percent which and moving/leaving “High Poverty” schools at a rate of 20 percent, which is roughly 55 percent higher.

³ Richard Ingersoll. (2003.) *Is There Really a Teacher Shortage?* Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania. “Beginning teachers [under five years] leaving at a rate that outpaces experienced teachers is a long-noted phenomenon, with most research upholding that teaching has always had a higher rate of attrition among newcomers.” Study available online at http://www.gse.upenn.edu/faculty_research/Shortage-RMI-09-2003.pdf.