

Staff Attrition in Pennsylvania Schools Rose During the Pandemic, Particularly for Staff of Color and Early Career Staff

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Mathematica researchers [examined the annual rates at which staff left their positions](#) (staff attrition rates) in traditional school districts and charter schools in Pennsylvania and found that overall attrition rates rose from 4 to 5 percent from fall 2020 to fall 2021. Other key findings include:



- Pre-pandemic attrition rates for staff of color were generally higher than for non-Hispanic White staff, and these differences grew during the pandemic except for school administrators, where they narrowed.
- Gaps in attrition rates were also exacerbated during the pandemic for teachers and health and counseling staff early in their careers and in charter schools and for local education agency (LEA) administrators in large LEAs.
- Remote learning was not associated with increased attrition among elementary school teachers. (Analyses on remote learning did not cover teachers in other grades and subjects.)

The COVID-19 pandemic raised concerns about the possibility of increased staff attrition from the public school sector, as it did for other occupations during the Great Resignation that followed the pandemic's onset. Recruiting and retaining education staff were pressing challenges even before the pandemic began. Since March 2020, education staff have needed to adapt to new job expectations and risk exposure to an unknown virus. These factors might have contributed to staff leaving public education jobs due to mental and physical health concerns and other issues.

"As Pennsylvania's Department of Education continues its focus on [achieving the state's goal of strengthening and diversifying the educator](#) workforce by 2025, these findings suggest the emergence of new hurdles for doing so and underscore the importance of a concerted effort to support and retain staff," said [Stephen Lipscomb](#), a principal researcher at Mathematica, an

independent research and evaluation firm, and co-author of the study.

The findings add to other recent research showing an uptick in staff attrition after the uncertainty early in the pandemic about the economy and schools' reopening plans for fall 2020. It will be important to continue monitoring staff attrition rates to determine whether this is a one-off impact of the pandemic or the start of a new trend.

About Mathematica

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