



Exploring Administrator Mobility in Colorado, Missouri, and South Dakota

An Infographic From the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Central at Marzano Research

Education leaders in Colorado, Missouri, and South Dakota partnered with the Regional Educational Laboratory Central to examine turnover among principals and superintendents after 3 years.¹

Definitions of administrator mobility



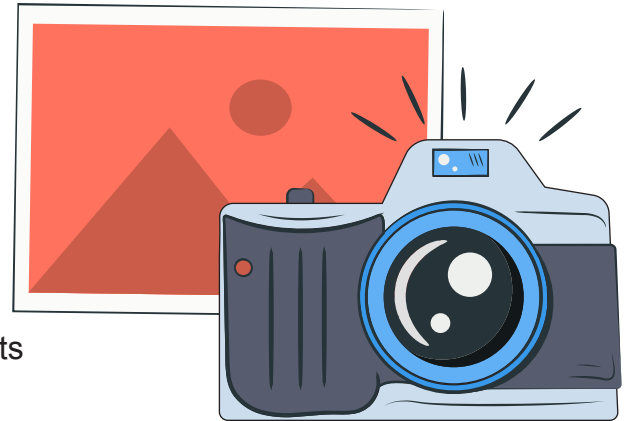
Stayers remained in an administrative position in the same school or district.



Movers transferred to an administrative position in a different school or district.



Leavers took a nonadministrative position or left the state public school system.

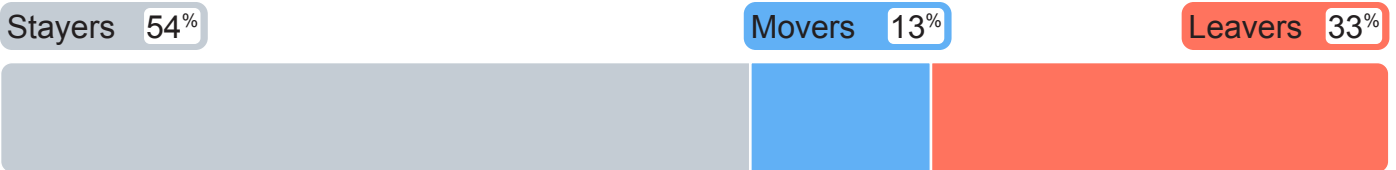


Snapshot

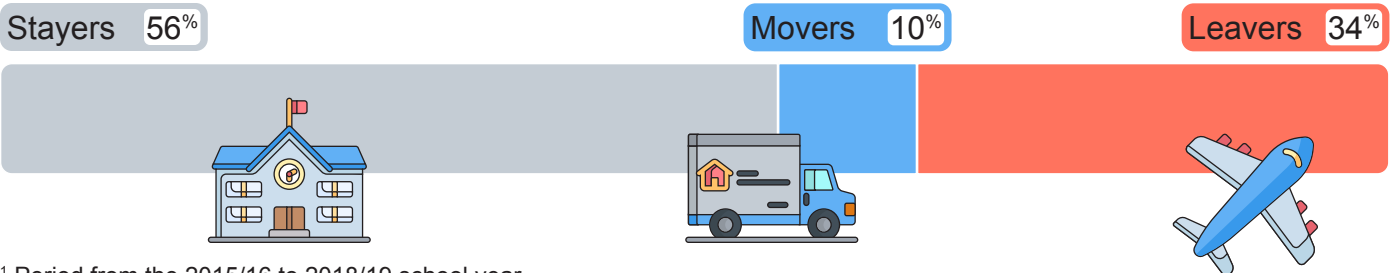
Principal and superintendent mobility

After 3 years, **nearly half** of principals and superintendents were either movers or leavers.

Principals



Superintendents

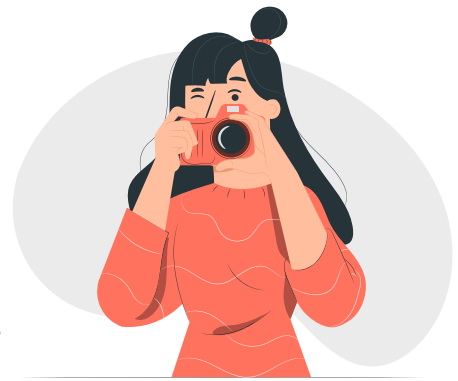


¹ Period from the 2015/16 to 2018/19 school year.

Deeper Focus

Characteristics associated with principal mobility

All characteristics below were associated with principal mobility. **Age, school improvement status, and average teacher salary** were most strongly associated with principals being movers or leavers rather than stayers after 3 years.

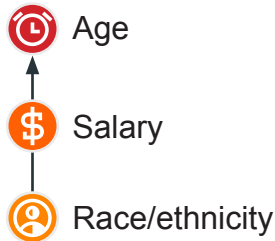


Principal Characteristics

Movers



Leavers



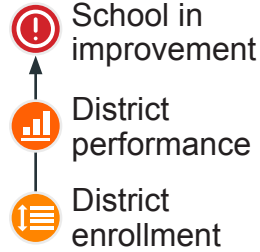
Principals **younger than 40** were **144% more likely to be movers** than stayers.



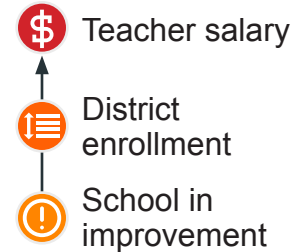
Principals who identified as a **racial/ethnic minority** were **53% more likely to be movers** and **28% more likely to be leavers** than stayers.

School/District Characteristics

Movers



Leavers



Principals in **schools identified for improvement** were **200% more likely to be movers** than stayers.



Principals in **schools with an average teacher salary of less than \$39,139** were **138% more likely to be leavers** than stayers.

Bigger Picture

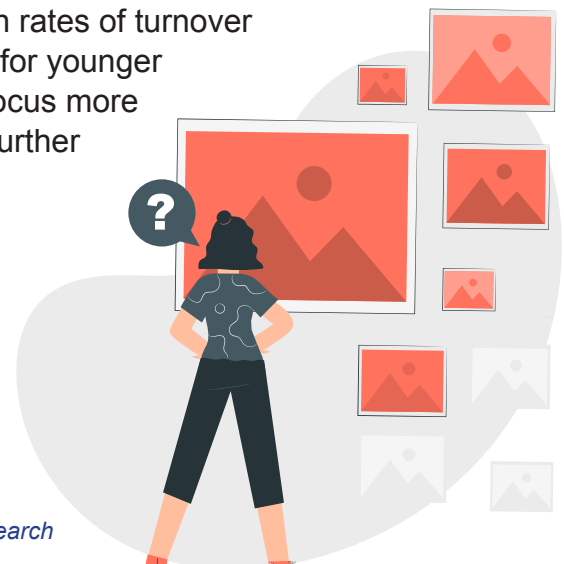
What strategies might reduce administrator mobility?

Principal turnover has been associated with lower student achievement, higher teacher turnover, and a less positive school culture and climate. The high rates of turnover suggest that education leaders might want to enhance supports for younger principals and principals in schools identified for improvement, focus more on recruiting and retaining racial/ethnic minority principals, and further examine how salary affects decisions to move or leave.

Key retention strategies include: ²

- Offering professional learning opportunities
- Improving working conditions
- Ensuring adequate and stable compensation
- Supporting decisionmaking authority
- Ensuring accountability systems are fair and useful

² Taken from *Understanding and Addressing Principal Turnover: A Review of the Research* by S. Levin and K. Bradley, 2019, Learning Policy Institute.



Please read the full report: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?projectID=5681>