



Understanding the incentives that could motivate certified nonteaching teachers to teach in Michigan

Michigan education leaders would like to know whether recruiting certified teachers who are not teaching would be an effective way to fill teacher vacancies in public schools. To explore the viability of this option, the Michigan Department of Education partnered with the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Midwest to study the characteristics of these teachers, their reasons for not teaching, and the incentives that would motivate them to teach in public schools.

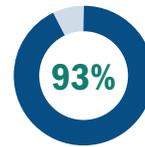
Key Findings



About **61,000** teachers certified in Michigan were not teaching in the state's public schools in 2017/18¹



have not taught in public schools for at least five years



are of nonretirement age²

A survey of those who are certified to teach in Michigan but who were not teaching in 2017/18 found that:

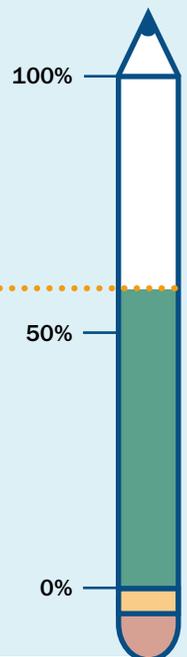


22% of respondents reported being an administrator or instructional leader.



of survey respondents

who were not teaching indicated that they would consider teaching in public schools in Michigan.



¹ Authors' calculations are based on Michigan Department of Education's survey of teachers who are not teaching, administered between December 2019 and January 2020.

² The remaining seven percent have renewed or advanced their teaching certificate after reaching retirement age.

Salary is one of the most important factors for certified teachers not teaching in Michigan.

Survey respondents most frequently selected wanting a higher salary among the top reasons for not teaching in Michigan public schools and selected an increase in salary among the top incentives that could motivate them to teach.



Most frequently³ selected
REASONS for **not teaching**

- 1 **Wanted a higher salary**
- 2 Became an instructional leader
- 3 Wanted more career growth opportunities
- 4 Took courses to improve career opportunities in education
- 5 Could not find a full-time position⁴

Most frequently³ selected
INCENTIVES to **teach**

- 1 **An increase in salary**
- 2 An easier way to renew or earn certification
- 3 Smaller class sizes or smaller student loads
- 4 Ability to maintain teacher retirement benefits
- 5 A less costly way to renew or earn certification

What are the implications for Michigan education leaders?



Provide financial incentives, including higher salaries, to recruit teachers.



Improve communication about the 2017 **changes to certification requirements** that simplified the attainment and renewal process.



Improve visibility of available teaching positions.



Enhance classroom support and leadership support to address concerns about classroom size and student load.

View the full report: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?projectID=4618>

Citation: Lindsay, J., Gnedko-Berry, N., & Wan, C. (2021). *Michigan teachers who are not teaching: Who are they, and what would motivate their return to teaching?* (REL 2021-076). U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest. <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>.

³ This information is based on responses from nonteaching teachers who provided their top three reasons for not teaching and top three incentives for entry or re-entry to teaching. The responses were not weighted and may not represent the preferred incentives among all Michigan certified teachers who are not teaching. The categories are not mutually exclusive.

⁴ The impression that teaching positions are rare in Michigan may be especially true for those who earned their certificate and tried to find teaching jobs prior to 2004, when the supply of newly certified teachers in Michigan was at its peak and teaching jobs were scarce.