

Understanding the supports associated with teacher retention in Michigan

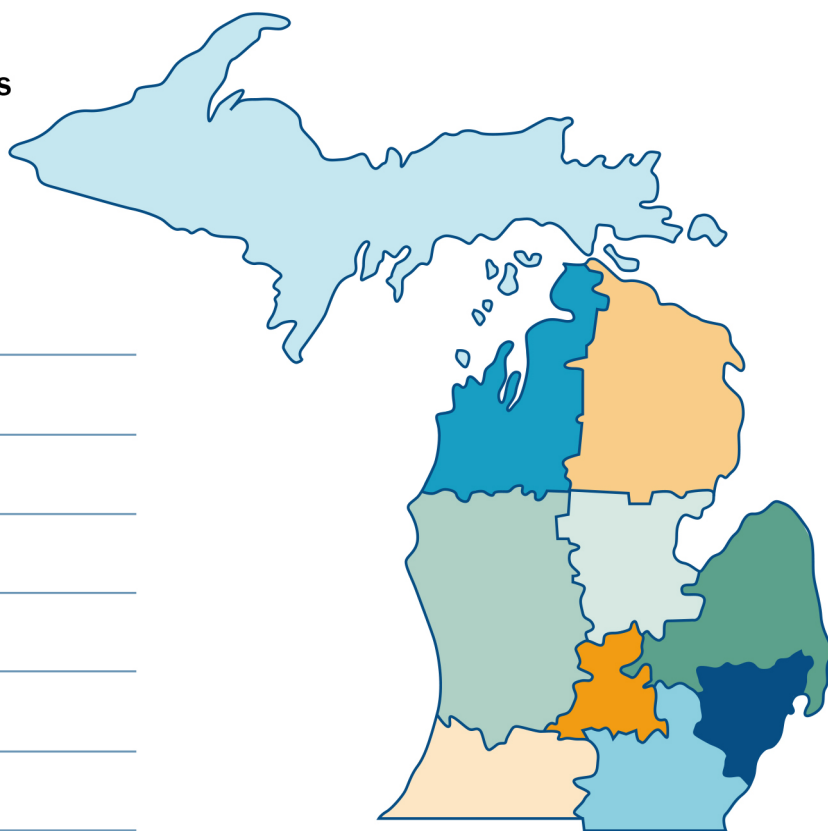
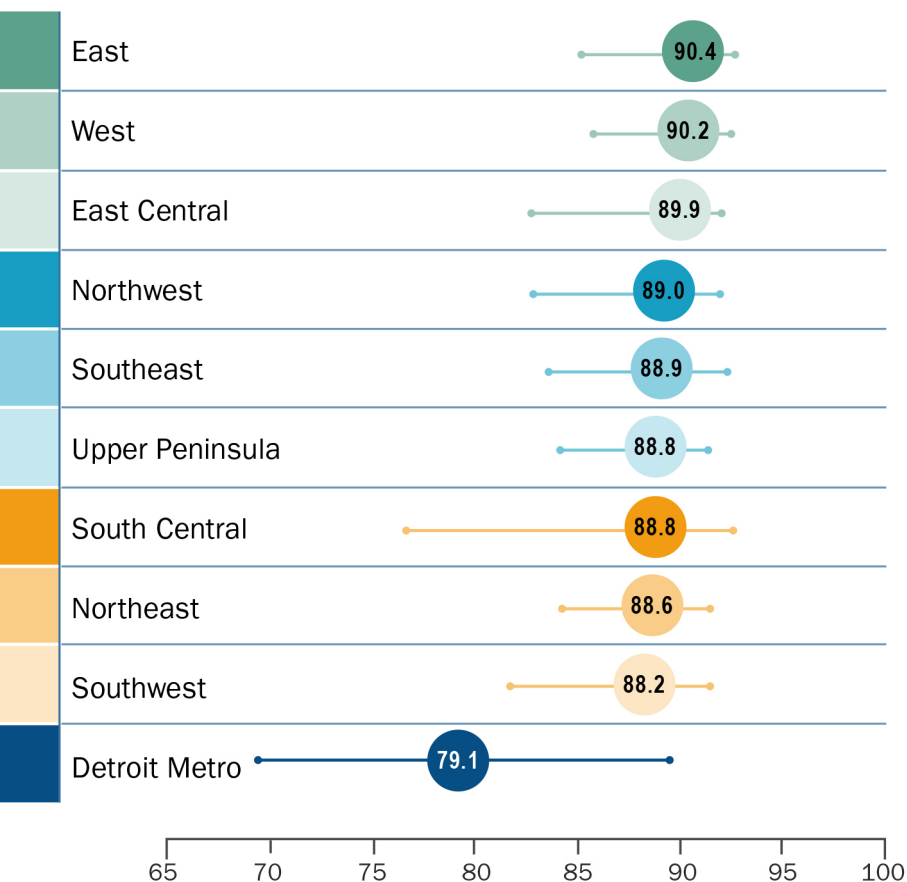
Michigan education leaders wanted to know how they could improve the retention of effective teachers to ensure that all students have equal access to high-quality teachers. The **Michigan Department of Education** partnered with **Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Midwest** to learn which supports are associated with teacher retention in Michigan.

The study examined rates of teacher retention in the same local education agency (agency)¹ from 2013/14 to 2018/19 and survey responses² from teachers with three to five years of experience **about the presence of 30 different supports in their agencies and their perceptions of those supports.** For more information about the study, view the full report [here](#).

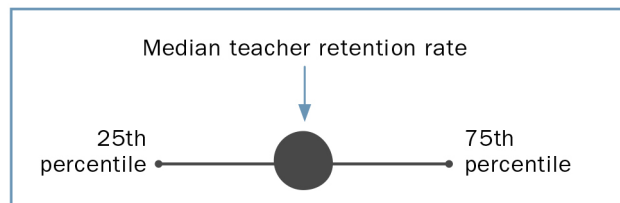


Teacher retention varied across agencies within each region, with retention lowest in the agencies in the Detroit metro area (2013/14–2018/19).

Michigan Economic Prosperity Region:



Key:



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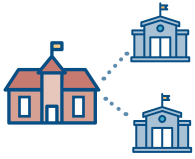
1 In Michigan, local education agencies include traditional school districts and public school academies (charter schools).

2 The survey's low response rate (12 percent) is a limitation of this study. The low response rate may have been due to the timing of the survey administration; the survey was launched during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many teachers were likely prioritizing interactive online instruction. Findings from analyses of survey data should not be viewed as representative of all agencies in Michigan (agencies with the lowest retention rates are underrepresented) or teachers who have taught for three to five years in the same agency (male teachers and teachers younger than 35 are underrepresented).

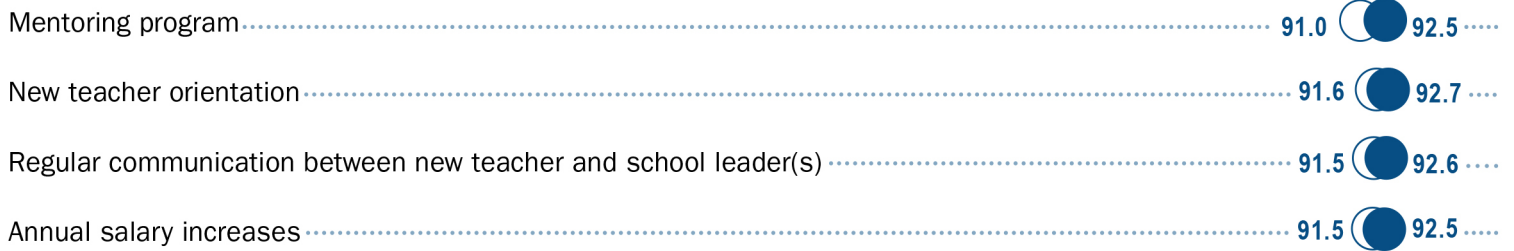


The study found that **most supports associated with teacher retention in traditional school districts were different from those associated with teacher retention in public school academies.**^{3,4}

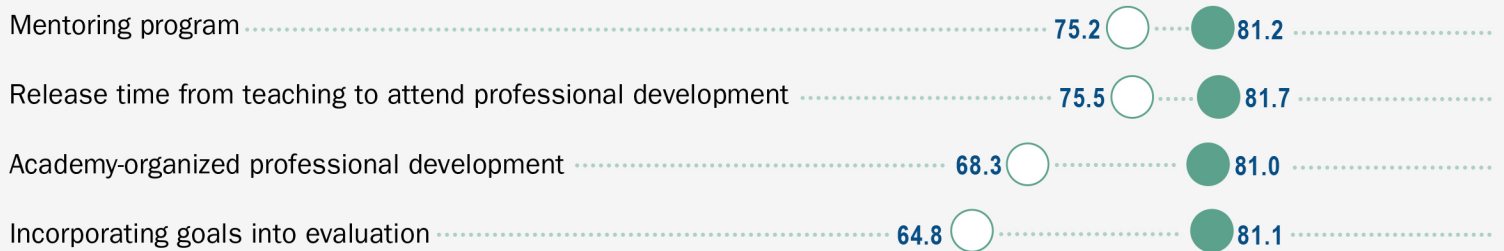
○ Retention rates in agencies **without the support** | ● Retention rates in agencies **with the support**



Traditional school districts with mentoring programs, new teacher orientation, regular communication between new teachers and school leaders, and annual salary increases had higher teacher retention rates than traditional school districts without these supports after adjusting for other factors.



Public school academies that provided mentoring programs, release time from teaching to attend professional development, academy-organized professional development, and that included teachers' personal goals in their evaluations had higher teacher retention rates than academies without these supports after adjusting for other factors.



Among **agencies that serve large percentages of students who are economically disadvantaged**, agencies that included teachers' personal goals in their evaluations and gave teachers annual salary increases had higher retention rates than agencies without these supports after adjusting for other factors.



What can education leaders in Michigan do to improve teacher retention?



CONSIDER strengthening supports for new teachers, such as assigning mentors to new teachers.



PRIORITIZE adjustments to teacher evaluation systems to support teachers in incorporating personal goals into the evaluation.



MONITOR the impact of the supports on teacher retention over time.



In addition, for public school academies, education leaders also might consider **prioritizing professional development and release time from teaching** to attend those sessions.

3 Michigan refers to charter schools as public school academies.

4 This study used a correlational design and therefore cannot determine whether the specific supports or perceptions of the types of supports caused teachers to stay in (or leave) their positions. However, these findings can help state and local education agencies in Michigan consider and prioritize promising supports for recruiting and retaining quality teachers.