



A Portrait of Delaware's New Teachers

SUMMARY REPORT

December 2010

by
Jeffrey A. Raffel and Jennie C. Welch

sponsored by the
**Institute for Public Administration
University of Delaware**
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Delaware Department of Education



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**An Analysis of Teachers' Perceptions of Preparation,
Recruitment, Hiring, Professional Development,
and Working Conditions in their First Three Years
in the State's Public Schools**

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Preface

As the Director of the Institute for Public Administration at the University of Delaware, I am pleased to provide this report, *A Portrait of Delaware's New Teachers*. Funded by the Delaware Department of Education, this report provides an analysis of new teacher views toward their preparation, hiring, professional development, job satisfaction, and their likelihood of staying as Delaware teachers. In an era where we recognize the need for top-quality public schools and the very significant role that teachers play in student success, this report provides insights to policymakers in Delaware on where we stand on our ability to prepare, hire, develop, and retain our teachers. With Delaware receiving one of the first two federal Race to the Top grants, the state's ability to conduct these functions at the highest level will help to ensure the success of educational reforms and student achievement.

The Institute for Public Administration addresses the policy, planning, and management needs of its partners through the integration of applied research, professional development, and the education of tomorrow's leaders. In the best tradition of IPA's mission, this study should serve as an important foundation for addressing the human capital issues surrounding the Delaware public school teaching force.

Jerome R. Lewis

Director, Institute for Public Administration

Foreword

This report is a summary of the comprehensive report on new Delaware teachers, i.e., those in their first three years teaching in the state, surveyed in spring 2010. The comprehensive and much longer report, available on the University of Delaware's website (www.ipa.udel.edu/publications/education.html), provides the full scope of the survey data and analysis as well as all the tables and figures generated for the report. This summary report highlights the most significant data collected across all respondents, the major conclusions from the full report, and provides the most relevant figures and tables. Readers interested in greater detail, e.g., breakdowns by county, school level, gender, and year teaching in Delaware, are referred to the comprehensive report, where these are discussed as appropriate.

The authors thank Wayne Barton and the Delaware Department of Education for supporting this survey with funds and ideas. We thank those who contributed to developing the survey instrument with specific ideas and general support: Lillian Lowery (Delaware Secretary of Education); Judi Coffield (staff to the State Board of Education); Jack Polidori, Howard Weinberg, and Deborah Stevens (Delaware State Education Association); Liz Farley-Ripple, Carol Vukelich, Barbara Van Dornick, Laura Glass, Kathy Minke, and Nancy Brickhouse (University of Delaware School of Education); Jackie Wilson, Kelly Sherretz, and Emily Poag (Delaware Academy for School Leadership); Sandra Williamson (Wilmington University); Scott Reihm (Delaware Association for School Administrators); Suzie Harris (Delaware Charter Network); and Dori Jacobson (Rodel Foundation). Although we could not implement all of their ideas, we did give all suggestions full consideration and the ideas greatly improved the survey. We also thank Michael Rasmussen of Rodel and Mary Ellen Kotz of DOE for their insights.

We are grateful to the 515 teachers who took the time to respond to the questionnaire and to Stu Markham at DOE, who so ably posted the survey on DEEDS, no easy task. The first author is grateful to DASL for allowing Jennie Welch to spend this past summer and a part of the fall on this analysis and writing the report. IPA's Mark Deshon, as always, ably assisted with design and copy-editing, and Mary Joan McDuffie (Center for Community Research and Service) provided needed data and analysis technical help. IPA research assistant Becky Cox helped with copy-editing. We thank all these dedicated individuals.

While there were many individuals who helped to generate this report, the two authors take full responsibility for its content and hope that this analysis helps to enhance the quality of teaching in Delaware and beyond.

Jeffrey A. Raffel
December 2010

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Introduction

The significance of the role of teachers in impacting student achievement has recently received increased attention in the nation and in Delaware. The Obama administration's Race to the Top (RTTT) competition placed the effectiveness of teachers as one of its four pillars: "Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most." In his inaugural speech in 2008, Delaware Governor Jack Markell stated, "We will retain, recruit, and train the best teachers in America...."

Therefore, a survey of Delaware's new teachers in the 2009-2010 school year was viewed as a helpful validation of the annual Delaware personnel directors' survey, a replication of the new teacher survey of six years ago, and a pre-test before the state implemented new policies to enhance teacher recruitment and retention as part of its successful RTTT proposal.

The University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration (IPA) designed a survey for DOE to administer to all teachers who joined the Delaware teaching force in school districts and charter schools from fall 2007 through fall 2009 and who remained Delaware teachers in the spring of 2009. A second component of this study was an analysis of the first-year teachers who responded to the 2003-2004 survey. These teachers responses were related to whether or not they are still employed in Delaware public schools. The objective of this analysis was to further our understanding of factors related to teacher retention.

Method

The survey instrument was built upon the spring 2004 survey of first-year teachers conducted by IPA (Raffel and Beck, 2005). National surveys conducted by organizations such as the U.S. Census Bureau, MetLife, and Public Agenda were also reviewed for appropriate questions, as well as previous surveys conducted during the 1980s in Delaware. The survey questions were suggested/reviewed by representatives of the Delaware Department of Education (DOE), State Board of Education, Delaware State Education Association (DSEA), University of Delaware's School of Education and Delaware Academy for School Leadership, Wilmington University, the Delaware Association for School Administrators, the Charter School Network, and the Rodel Foundation (the organization that had been spearheading Vision 2010—Delaware's school-reform program). The survey included the following seven sections:

- Section A: Your First Delaware Teaching Position (job search, first position details)
- Section B: Support for Your Work (perceptions of preparation, concerns, mentoring)
- Section C: Professional Development and Increasing Teacher Effectiveness
- Section D: Satisfaction with Current Position
- Section E: Future Plans
- Section F: Previous Experience
- Section G: Demographic Information

DOE placed the survey on its DEEDS Web-based system and began notifying teachers on May 10, 2010. Delaware Secretary of Education, Dr. Lillian Lowery, sent the URL of the survey with an email cover note asking for full participation by all those in the system who began teaching in Delaware's public schools (traditional school districts and charters) in the 2007-2008, 2008-2009, and 2009-2010 school years. A second reminder letter was sent by email by Secretary Lowery on June 2, 2010, to those who had not completed the survey. DSEA supported this effort by including information about the survey in its newsletter and on its website. The survey was "closed" on June 14, 2010.

There were 515 respondents who completed all or some of the survey and 469 respondents who completed all sections of the survey. The response sample is considered to be N=515 or 39.8% of new teachers with a valid email address; however, the sample N does change by section. The sample is representative of the population across the key variables utilized in this analysis (e.g., gender, level of school).

The results are analyzed below, and supporting figures and tables are located in the appendix. The most frequent response is shaded in the tables. The survey instrument is reprinted in an appendix of the comprehensive report.

Teacher Satisfaction

Delaware's new teachers are generally satisfied with their positions and the many specific aspects of their positions (Tables 1 and 2, pp. 20, 21; Figure 1, p. 19). Their overall satisfaction levels are high; few new teachers can be identified as dissatisfied on many items. An index of teacher job satisfaction, which builds upon the responses to the 27 satisfaction items, was constructed. Almost one-third (31.5%) of the respondents were rated high on the satisfaction index, and over half (54.8%) moderate; only 13.8 percent could be placed in the low-satisfaction category. Reflecting this high-satisfaction level, almost all responded that they would become a teacher if they were to start again (53.9% "yes" and 26.1% "probably yes"), and almost three-quarters (71.2%) indicated they will remain teachers "as long as they are able."

While new teachers were generally satisfied or highly satisfied with their teaching positions, some of the 27 areas noted did receive at least 40 percent dissatisfied responses (Figure 2, p. 19): time on clerical duties and record-keeping and work after hours, salary, support from parents and students, availability of supplies, disciplinary policy and level of student misbehavior, and ability to influence decisions that affect them. New teachers were especially satisfied with their benefits, but few were highly satisfied with their salaries.

There has been a noticeable drop in teacher satisfaction over the past six years. When compared to the results of the previous survey, new teachers in 2010 are generally less satisfied than new teachers in 2004 (Table 3, p. 22). In fact, the only area in which the percentage of new teachers who were "very satisfied" increased was with benefits (an increase of almost 10%). In all other areas the percentage of "very satisfied" teachers decreased. Areas in which this decline was greater than 15 percent include teacher's relationship with their mentor, class size, level of teacher autonomy, additional duties, and career advancement opportunities. In 2004, 90 percent of new teachers answered "definitely" or "probably yes" to becoming a teacher again, while in 2010 this percentage was 10 percent lower.

While there are aspects of the profession and the position that new teachers in Delaware find to be less satisfactory than do national respondents, overall, a higher percentage of Delaware's new teachers seem to be satisfied with their current position than are national respondents. When asked in the 2009 MetLife national teacher survey how they would rate their overall satisfaction with their school, a slight majority of respondents said "good," "very good," or "excellent." In Delaware, about 90 percent of new teachers were "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied," with the majority responding that they were "very satisfied." The MetLife survey asked national teacher respondents how satisfied they were with teaching as a

career; the percentage of positive responses in Delaware in 2010 (over 90%) mirrored that in the national sample.

The percentage of dissatisfied teachers decreased with years teaching in Delaware, certainly a positive finding. This could be because dissatisfied teachers have already left, leading to a lower percentage of dissatisfied teachers in the third year than in their first year, or it could be because longer tenured teachers are moved to what they perceive as “better” or more appropriate positions. It is also possible that as teachers learn their positions, their satisfaction increases.

There are many possible reasons for the decline over time in teacher satisfaction. Most obviously, the entire nation, indeed the world, has suffered through a difficult economic period, and faith and satisfaction with many institutions and situations has declined. In addition, the survey was conducted at a time of high anxiety, as districts were forced to announce reductions in force (RIFs) to address budget difficulties. We should not be sanguine about this decline, but neither should we forget the overall high level of teacher satisfaction reported in these results. Several of the areas of greatest decline in satisfaction could be addressed, beginning with the Delaware New Teacher Mentoring and Induction Program. The decline in satisfaction with the level of autonomy could be related to increased accountability pressures and could signal the need for all schools to ensure teacher participation in response to assessment results and for districts to ensure adequate teacher input in policy changes. The movement toward a formal teacher-leadership path will hopefully address the decline in satisfaction with advancement opportunities.

Teacher Recruitment and Hiring

The survey results confirmed several trends previously noted in the analysis of the results of the annual personnel directors' survey (Raffel and Alemayehu, 2010) and studies in other states. Delaware's new teachers are most likely to have searched for positions using Web-based technology, but word of mouth and interpersonal networks still play a major role in the recruitment process (Figure 3 and Table 4). Formal mechanisms such as recruitment fairs have declined in significance as Web-based sources have increased.

New teachers report that many factors led to their decision to look for and accept a position in Delaware (Table 5, p. 24). Ranked high among these reasons is "location," and the major location factors include "close to family," a result consistent with surveys of teachers conducted in several other states (Table 6, p. 25). A majority of new teachers also indicated that the type of position and teaching conditions were significant reasons for their accepting the Delaware position. Almost all new teachers also indicated that they have accepted their first job offer. Indeed, almost 90 percent accepted their first offer of a teaching position, and over 40 percent indicated it was a "very important" reason in their decision.

Unfortunately, a majority of teachers (54.6%) are still being hired late (August or later), and about 40 percent report starting on temporary contracts (Figure 4, p. 24). Indeed, almost all of those who reported missing their school or district's orientation were late hires. While almost all met the school principal and two-thirds met at least one other teacher at the school, a majority did not tour the school before the school year began. This may make it less likely they will feel ready for school and that the teacher-school match will be a good one.

Their first position is the preferred assignment for the vast majority of teachers, but about one-quarter of new teachers are either teaching in a non-preferred grade or teaching a non-preferred subject.

The influence of Future Educators of America Club on respondents in high school was minimal. Only one-fifth of the respondents reported having a Future Educators of America (FEA) Club in their school, and of those who responded "yes," only one-third said that they had been members. We examined these respondents more closely to determine their locale and if they were more satisfied with their teaching positions. Two-thirds of these teachers had attended high school in Delaware. Their level of satisfaction was about equal to that of those teachers who had not participated in FEA clubs. So these clubs have, at best, a modest effect on teacher recruitment and do not seem to increase early-career satisfaction with teaching.

These findings suggest that while Web-based mechanisms are gaining in significance for teacher job searches and formal mechanisms are decreasing, interpersonal networks and word of

mouth still play a major role in teacher recruitment and should not be neglected as the state improves its Web-based efforts. The significance of the role of first offers reinforces the priority of making earlier position offers to teacher applicants, especially when competition from other states heats up again.

Teacher Preparation, Induction, and Professional Development

The survey results present a mixed picture of the initiation of teaching careers in Delaware. On the plus side, teachers enter teaching feeling “very well prepared” on a variety of dimensions (Table 7, p. 25). We calculated that three-quarters of teachers felt well prepared overall. Specifically, we placed respondents into the following categories: Extremely high (24.8%); high (48%); moderate (24%) and low (3.2%). The majority of respondents only felt “somewhat prepared” to assess students and use state assessments for improving instruction, teach students with special needs, and teach students with limited English proficiency. These same questions also had the top three highest percentages in the “not at all” prepared column. While there were no categories in which the majority of respondents indicated that they were “very well prepared,” over 40 percent of respondents felt “very well prepared” to reflect on their teaching to improve their practices and work with other teachers as a member of a grade-level team, department, or professional learning community. Although, generally, teachers felt “well prepared” to teach in their first year, high school teachers were much less likely to feel prepared to teach than those at lower school levels, especially on the dimensions of teaching students with limited English proficiency, assessing students and using state assessments for improving instruction, teaching students with special needs, and using data to create and adapt instructional methods (Table 8, p. 26). Overall, while 26 percent of elementary teachers and 28 percent of middle school teachers were in the “highly prepared” category, only 19 percent of high school teachers were in this category.

Teachers from outside of Delaware were more likely to feel prepared to teach in Delaware than those with Delaware post-secondary transcripts. Specifically, while 39.9 percent of those with out-of-state transcripts were in the extremely high–preparation category, less than half (18.4%) as many in-state teachers placed as high. This is a finding requiring immediate attention.

Three-quarters of respondents viewed other teachers in their school as “very helpful” in addressing their major concern in the first year of teaching, and almost half viewed their mentor at the same level (Table 9, p. 27). However, this was a significant decline from over 60 percent in 2004 (Table 10, p. 28). The Delaware New Teacher Mentoring and Induction Program, at least in the eyes of new teachers, has declined in helpfulness, with teachers most appreciating their mentors but not feeling as positive about the program overall. According to this survey, a majority felt their mentors were “somewhat helpful” or “very helpful” (19.3%), but one-quarter (26.4%) did not find their mentors helpful. In 2005 more than twice as many

respondents judged their mentor as “very helpful” (Figure 5, p. 29).¹ On a more positive note, the perceived level of preparation among Delaware’s new teachers was higher than among the experienced teachers in the MetLife survey (Figure 6, p. 29).

While in 2004 the most frequent choice for further professional development was classroom management, the most frequent choice in 2010 was using a variety of instructional methods.

There has been a substantial decline in the percentage of teachers who plan to return to graduate school in the next five years (38.6% answering “very likely,” down from over 60% in the highest category in 2004), but three-quarters of respondents answered that they had either already begun the National Board Certification process or that it was “likely” or “very likely” (Table 11, p. 31) that they would. This suggests that teachers want the recognition but may not have a good means to reach it.

The survey results have thus suggested a number of questions related to improving teacher preparation and induction: Why do teachers from outside the state feel better prepared than those from Delaware? Is it program-related, different curriculum, years of previous experience, those moving further for a position being or feeling better prepared, or more rigorous selection of those not prepared in Delaware? Why has the mentoring-and-induction program lost ground, and can this be reversed? Why the precipitous decline in plans for graduate school? Is it the new pay-incentive system, the economy and the perceived cost of graduate school, added time pressures, or a feeling that graduate courses are not helpful?

¹ The mentoring program has been constrained by a number of changes over the past six years, including major budget cuts (from \$800,000 in 2005 to \$300,000 in 2008) and an extension of the remaining funds to charter schools and school-administrator mentoring. Additionally, the program has lost many experienced lead mentors to new teacher leader positions (instructional coaches), administrative positions, and retirement. This has led to some mentors serving multiple mentees. While funds and expertise were reduced, demands on teachers and the program were increased due to accountability pressures and the opening of reorganized city and new charter schools with many new but few veteran teachers. Finally efforts to respond to an evaluation of the program to reduce time demands on new teachers reduced face-to-face contact with mentors. The bottom line is “We have not been able to offer the same materials, resources, and human support we were able to offer in 2004.” (emails from the administrator of the program, DOE, Mary Ellen Kotz to the first author on 10/28/10 and 10/31/10).

Teacher Retention

A surprising finding of the survey was that an increase in teacher certainty of returning to their current position has occurred over the past six years (Figure 7, p. 30). One possible explanation, supported by the personnel directors' survey, is that because there are fewer opportunities available, teachers are less likely to be thinking of leaving their current position. In hard times people are more likely to retain their positions, concerned about the uncertainty of the job market.

The more years of experience the respondent had with teaching in Delaware, the more likely they were to respond that it was "very likely" they would return to the same school in the following year (Table 12, p. 31). While overall 76.1 percent viewed a return to their current school as "very likely," this increased from first-year teachers (69.9%) to second-year teachers (72.2%) to third-year teachers (82.6%). This could be, in part, due to the fact that the teachers feel they have "found their niche" after several years in the state, or it could be related to the fact that teachers with less time teaching in the state may be more nervous about the future of their position at their school.

What is evident both from the New Teacher Survey conducted in Delaware and several national surveys is that the majority of teachers have intentions of staying in the profession for the long-term (Figure 8, p. 30). Almost three-quarters of Delaware's new teachers (71.2%) indicated they planned to stay in the profession "for as long as they were able," and these numbers are reflective of national surveys as well. A national survey that isolated Generation-Y teachers (ages 18-32 at the time of the survey) found that just over two-thirds of respondents planned to stay in teaching for more than ten years.

Previous trends have indicated that we lose about 10 percent of new teachers each year. If we lost the five percent of teachers who said they expected to remain teaching in their school until a more desirable job comes along and half of the undecided teachers (10% of the respondents), this would mean our sample of new teachers in 2010 would decrease at a rate we have seen in previous years in Delaware.

Policy Alternatives

Delaware's teachers are open to new alternatives aimed at increasing teacher effectiveness, including, for example, higher pay for teachers in critical-needs areas and in hard-to-staff schools, but they are not positive about every reform (Table 13, p. 32). For example, they oppose merit pay for individual teachers. Delaware's new teachers are not only open to policy alternatives that would differentiate pay based on critical needs teaching and teaching in difficult areas, over 38 percent support making it easier to terminate ineffective teachers. They do not favor individualized merit pay but are supportive of incentives for schools for student success. They also are not positive about limiting teachers' ability to "jump" contracts after July 1.

While we do not have survey results from more experienced Delaware teachers, the personnel directors' responses provide an interesting contrast to the responses of new teachers (Table 14, p. 33). It is interesting to note that three-quarters of district personnel directors felt that making it easier to terminate ineffective teachers would be "very helpful," while the percentage of teachers who feel this would be very effective is, predictably, much lower—just over one-third. Three-quarters of personnel directors were also heavily in favor of expanding data-proven teacher-education programs at universities in Delaware in critical needs areas, while significantly fewer teachers, only one-third, felt this would be a very effective action.

On the other hand, there were numerous actions about which teachers were more likely to judge as very effective as compared to personnel directors. Teachers were much more supportive (over a 15 percent difference) of many policy changes. Specifically, new teachers were more favorable to providing a statewide website for recruitment, evaluating and supporting Teach for America, improving the Delaware New Teacher Mentoring Program, providing hiring incentives for teachers in critical-needs areas, implementing performance incentives for school-wide growth, providing higher salaries to teachers in hard-to-staff and challenging schools, and increasing teacher salaries so they are comparable to other professional positions.

In sum, new teachers appear to be much more open to ideas for reform, with some exceptions, than the district personnel directors. The support of new teachers will be critical as the changes tied to RTTT are rolled out, including a statewide website for hiring, hiring incentives for teachers in critical needs areas and hard-to-staff schools, and expanding Teach for America alternative routes programs. This may have implications as well for the representation offered by DSEA if indeed new teacher views are different from those of veterans. The question may be whether the openness of new teachers to new ideas will be retained as RTTT implementation begins, for agreement in principle often falls prey to implementation problems, which then lead

to a more skeptical view of “reforms.” But, at this point, Delaware’s new teachers are generally feeling well-prepared, satisfied with almost all aspects of their work, committed to teaching, planning on remaining in Delaware schools if at all possible, and open to many new policy alternatives to increase teaching effectiveness.

The 2003–2004 New-Teacher Survey and Retention Follow-Up

This section summarizes an analysis of the previous new-teacher survey and subsequent retention data. Nine hundred thirty-two new teachers were eligible to answer the New Teacher Survey during the 2003-2004 school year. An eligible teacher was one who had been hired on a contract for the 2003-2004 school year and was still on contract in April 2004. Of the eligible population, 470 (50.4%) new teachers answered the survey in spring 2004, and the data from this survey were published in the 2005 Teacher Retention report (Raffel and Beck, 2005). Five years after the survey was administered, the Delaware Department of Education requested a follow up on the status of the teachers in Delaware who participated in the 2003-2004 New Teacher Survey. In conjunction with the University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration and the Delaware Department of Education, the employment status of each survey participant as of October 2009 was located in the state database. The analysis below is based on this sample of new teachers who, six years later, still teach (or, in a few cases, are administrators) in Delaware.

To better understand what factors affect long-term retention, we looked at several questions from the 2004 survey and cross-tabulated responses with current employment status. These variables include survey responses from new teachers in 2004, which were cross-tabulated with the respondents' employment status after six years. Overall, the six-year retention rate of the 2003-2004 school year sample is 69.3%. (Those who remain in Delaware public schools do include a handful who have moved from teaching to administrative positions.)

Teachers' reported plans for the following school year (spring 2004) were highly related to whether or not they were still teaching in Delaware five years later. Teachers who did not find mentoring at all beneficial were somewhat more likely to leave teaching in Delaware than teachers who reported a lot of benefit from mentoring. Over one-third (33.3%) of teachers who did not find mentoring at all beneficial left teaching in Delaware after five years, compared to 28.3 percent who found mentoring very beneficial. Teachers in 2004 were also asked about how their first position compared with their expectations. Almost half (43.2%) of teachers who responded that their position was "worse than expected" left their school after five years. On the other hand, one-third (31.6%) of teachers who responded that their positions were "as expected," and a similar proportion (29.1%) of teachers who said their positions were "better than expected," left their school five years later. Therefore, we can conclude that teacher retention is related to whether or not a teacher's position met their expectations. Teachers on temporary contracts were more likely to leave teaching in Delaware, compared to teachers on permanent contracts. Over one-third of teachers on temporary contracts (38.0%) left teaching in Delaware after five years, compared to a little more than a one-fourth (27.3%) of teachers

who held permanent contracts. The higher retention rate of teachers on permanent contracts is no surprise, given the uncertainty about their position that temporary-contract teachers express. It is also possible that a few teachers only wanted to teach in a short-term situation and accepted temporary positions with a short tenure in mind.

Younger new teachers (under the age of 26) and teachers over the age of 54 were more likely to leave teaching in Delaware than middle-age teachers. Almost 36 percent (35.8%) of teachers younger than 26 left, and another 31.8 percent of teachers between the ages of 26 and 35 left teaching in Delaware during the five years. In comparison, only 22.4 percent of teachers between 36 to 45 years old left teaching, and 28.3 percent of teachers between 45 to 54 years old left teaching in Delaware during the five years. Although the number of new teachers in the oldest age bracket was small (N=10), 60 percent of teachers 55 to 64 years old left teaching in Delaware, indicating retirement as a factor in retention, even for teachers new to Delaware.

More first-year teachers teaching middle and high school left their teaching positions in Delaware schools after the first five years than teachers in the earlier grade levels. One third of teachers teaching in middle and high school left teaching, compared to one-quarter of teachers teaching kindergarten through fifth grade and 29 percent teaching pre-kindergarten and other.

Teachers were also asked about how they were prepared for their teaching positions in Delaware. Of the various teacher preparation types (bachelor's, masters, fifth-year program, or Alternative Routes to Certification), the group of teachers most likely to leave Delaware public schools after five years were teachers who had become certified through ARTC (39.5%). The teachers least likely to leave were those who had become certified through a fifth-year program (27.4%). Almost two out of every five teachers who were trained in a master's program left during the five year period, and 32.2 percent of teachers who trained in a bachelor's program left.

In summary, although differences were not great, the attrition of first-year teachers from spring 2004 to fall 2009 was related to temporary contract status, whether the expectations of their teaching position were met, how teachers trained to become teachers, subject or grade level, age, and how much teachers felt they benefited from the mentoring program. Using logistic regression (a sophisticated, multivariate statistical-analysis procedure) to determine how these variables interrelated, we found that age, contract type, and mentoring views were related to attrition.

It is critical that these findings be considered when evaluating the 2010 survey results. For example, the decline in satisfaction with the mentoring program is a "red flag" for retention. As the 2004 results demonstrate, teachers who said they did not find mentoring at all beneficial were somewhat more likely to leave teaching in Delaware than teachers who reported some

benefit from mentoring. As the 2010 survey results demonstrate, there has been a substantial decline in new teacher satisfaction with the mentoring program; the portion of new teachers saying the mentoring program was very helpful declined to 20.1 percent. What this means for the retention of these new teachers remains to be seen; however, efforts to improve this program could prove helpful in retaining teachers.

While temporary contracts are sometimes unavoidable, results from the 2004 survey indicate that by fall 2009 teachers on temporary contracts were more likely to leave teaching in Delaware, compared to teachers on permanent contracts. Therefore, the rise in the percentage of respondents who were hired on a temporary contract, although small, is not a positive trend for the state when thinking about teacher retention.

Conclusions

The spring 2010 survey of Delaware's new teachers indicated many positive findings—high teacher satisfaction both overall and with many particular aspects of their positions, teachers feeling well prepared for their first year teaching in Delaware, teachers expressing the likelihood of remaining in Delaware in the foreseeable future and in their career as long as they are able, and a general openness to many new initiatives proposed to increase teacher effectiveness in the state (including higher pay for teachers in critical-needs areas and hard-to-staff schools, along with school-based incentives for student success). The survey also identified many specific positives and negatives for new teachers. Among the positives were high teacher satisfaction with their benefits; among the negatives were a drop in satisfaction with mentoring and continued dissatisfaction with time spent on clerical duties, work after hours, discipline, influence, and salary. When compared to those surveyed nationally, Delaware's new teachers appear quite positive. The survey also suggested where teachers would prefer additional professional development and where they felt less prepared.

This analysis also validated the annual personnel directors' survey by finding that a majority of teachers reported being hired in August or later, 40 percent beginning on temporary contracts, and a large percentage utilizing Web-based means to search for a position (although the role of interpersonal networks remained a significant factor). In addition the results indicated the importance of first job offers to new teachers and reaffirmed the major role location plays in teacher job searches along with the type of the position (grade and school level) and teaching conditions. Although no one variable had an overwhelming relation, the multivariate analysis of the 2004 new teacher survey in conjunction with teacher-retention information in 2010 indicated that teachers on temporary contracts and those less positive about their mentoring experience were more likely to leave the Delaware public schools than were their counterparts.

These results suggest several challenging policy questions for the future. How can the state reduce late hiring and the associated temporary contracts, which appear to result in greater teacher attrition? How can the state maintain positive teacher views toward many aspects of teaching while addressing those that are far less positive? How can the state reverse the drop in satisfaction with the Delaware New Teacher Mentoring and Induction program at a time of increasing demands on the program and more limited resources?

Several questions for further exploration were generated by the results. Why do teachers who have been trained in-state and for high school feel less prepared for their positions than do their counterparts? Why the drop in teachers planning to attend graduate school, and what impact may this have on teacher professional development? Why the decrease in satisfaction levels with many aspects of teaching as well as overall satisfaction over the past six years—are

these the result of the economic troubles affecting the nation or school-based changes in the state?

As Delaware “races to the top,” answers to all these questions will be hurdles to leap over, but there is no doubt that effective teachers will be the “legs” that will power us to reach the goal.

References

Raffel, Jeffrey A. and Amanda S. Beck (2005) *An Analysis of the Views of Delaware's New Teachers*. Report for the Delaware Department of Education, Newark, DE: Institute for Public Administration (July).

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Raffel, Jeffrey A. and Jennie Welch (2010) *A Portrait of Delaware's New Teachers: An Analysis of Teachers' Perceptions of Preparation, Recruitment, Hiring, Professional Development, and Working Conditions in their First Three Years in the State's Public Schools*. Report for the Delaware Department of Education, Newark, DE: Institute for Public Administration (December).

Appendices: Figures and Tables

Figure 1
Satisfaction Measures with > 50 Percent "Very Satisfied"

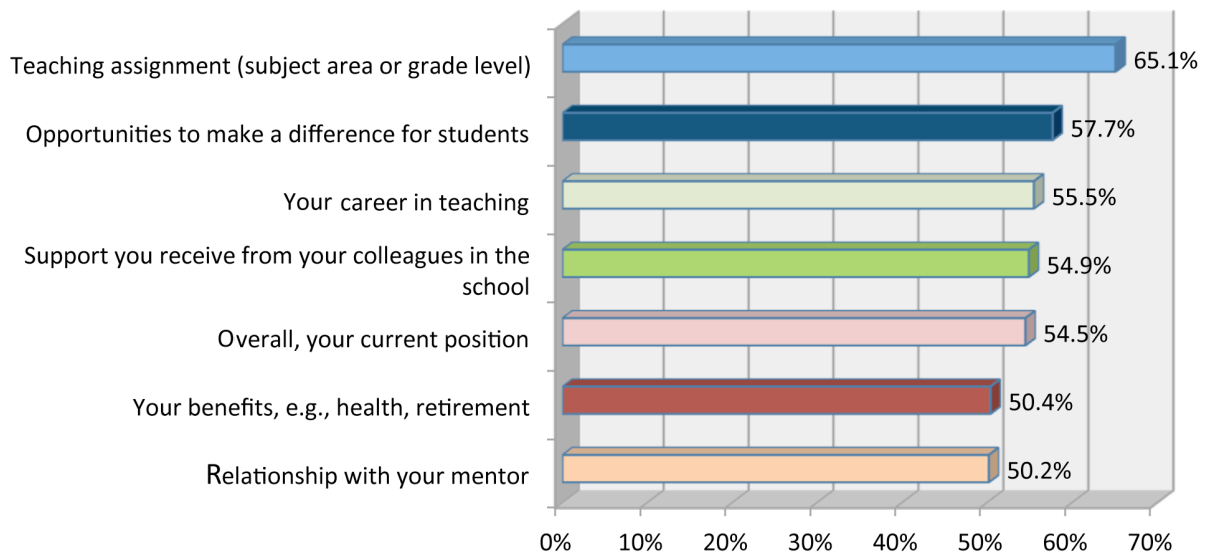


Figure 2
Satisfaction Measures with > 40 percent
"Very" or "Somewhat" Dissatisfied

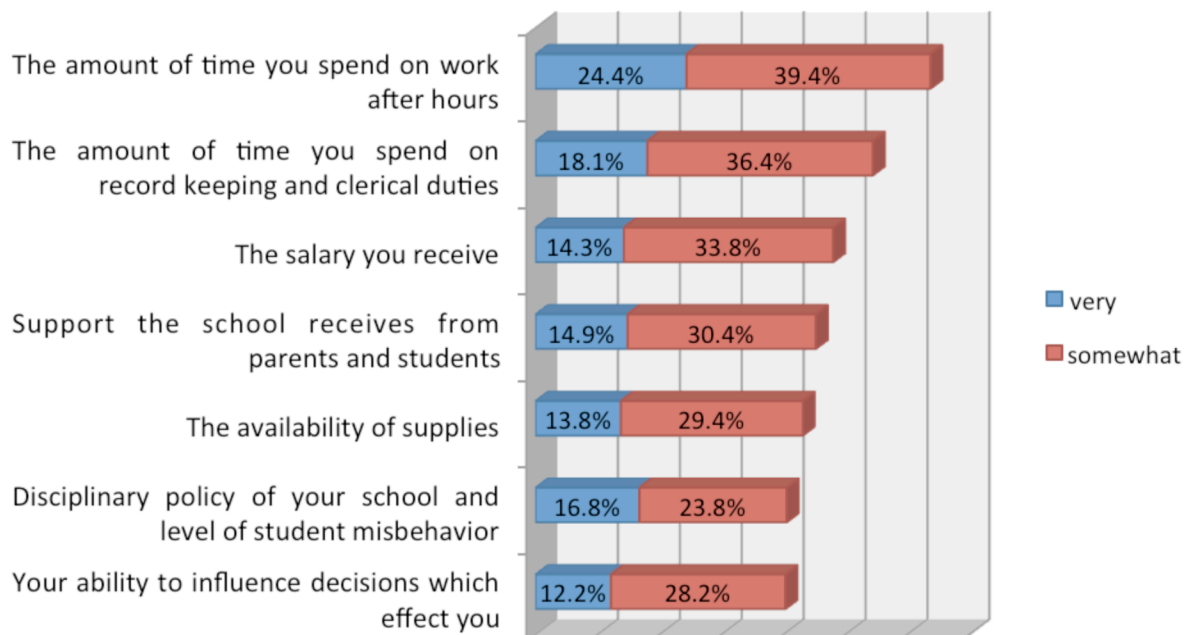


Table 1

Satisfaction Measures (opportunities, feelings about work) (N = 475)	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	No Response
Opportunities to make a difference for students	57.7%	33.7%	6.3%	1.3%	1.1%
Safety of the school environment	49.7%	32.6%	13.1%	3.8%	0.8%
Procedures for teacher performance evaluations	27.8%	53.7%	12.0%	5.3%	1.3%
The level of autonomy you have	21.9%	56.8%	16.4%	2.9%	1.9%
Job security	20.0%	47.2%	16.8%	15.2%	0.8%
The appreciation you receive and the prestige associated with your profession	19.8%	47.2%	21.5%	10.5%	1.1%
Your career advancement opportunities	17.3%	54.1%	21.9%	5.1%	1.7%
Performance of students in your school on state assessments	14.5%	45.1%	26.9%	11.4%	2.1%
Your ability to influence decisions that affect you	13.7%	44.4%	28.2%	12.2%	1.5%
The amount of time you spend on work after hours	8.2%	26.5%	39.4%	24.4%	1.5%
The amount of time you spend on record keeping and clerical duties	7.2%	36.4%	36.4%	18.1%	1.9%

Table 2

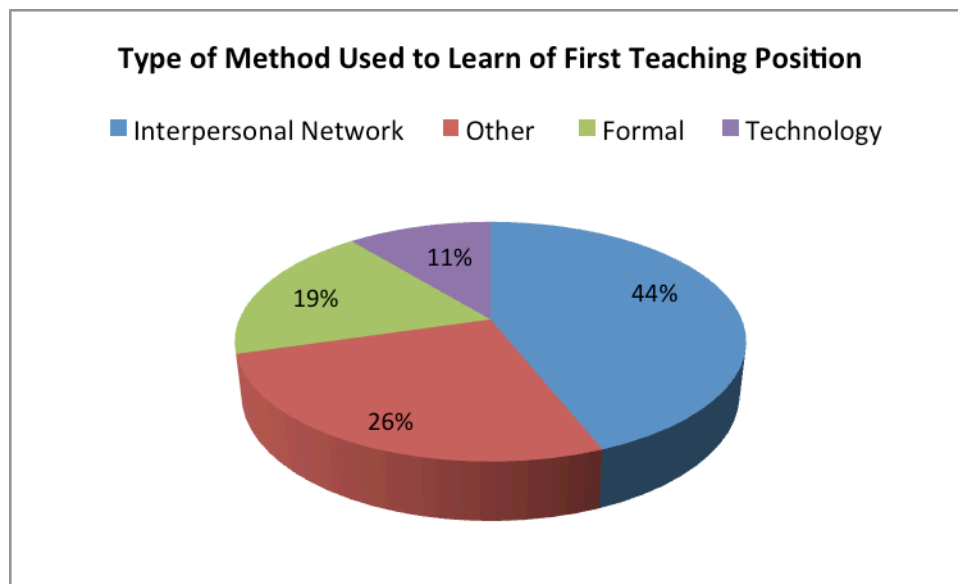
Satisfaction Measures (physical attributes of school, relationships, salary/benefits, and overall satisfaction) (N =470)	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	No Response
Teaching assignment (subject area or grade level)	65.1%	28.5%	4.5%	1.1%	0.9%
Your career in teaching	55.5%	37.0%	4.9%	1.7%	0.9%
Support you receive from your colleagues in the school	54.9%	33.4%	8.7%	1.7%	1.3%
Overall, your current position	54.5%	34.9%	7.2%	1.9%	1.5%
Your benefits, e.g., health, retirement	50.4%	43.2%	4.9%	0.6%	0.9%
Relationship with your mentor	50.2%	26.4%	7.0%	7.9%	8.5%
Support from your school administrator	43.8%	34.5%	13.8%	7.0%	0.9%
School Climate	36.2%	39.6%	17.4%	5.5%	1.3%
The physical quality of your school	33.2%	38.3%	20.4%	7.4%	0.6%
Opportunities for quality professional development	32.6%	41.9%	19.1%	5.1%	1.3%
Number of students in your class or classes	24.9%	41.3%	24.5%	8.5%	0.9%
Disciplinary policy of your school and level of student misbehavior	23.8%	34.5%	23.8%	16.8%	1.1%
Your additional duties	21.1%	51.1%	20.9%	4.7%	2.3%
The availability of supplies	16.8%	38.9%	29.4%	13.8%	1.1%
Support the school receives from parents and students	15.5%	37.0%	30.4%	14.9%	2.1%
The salary you receive	7.9%	43.6%	33.8%	14.3%	0.4%

Table 3

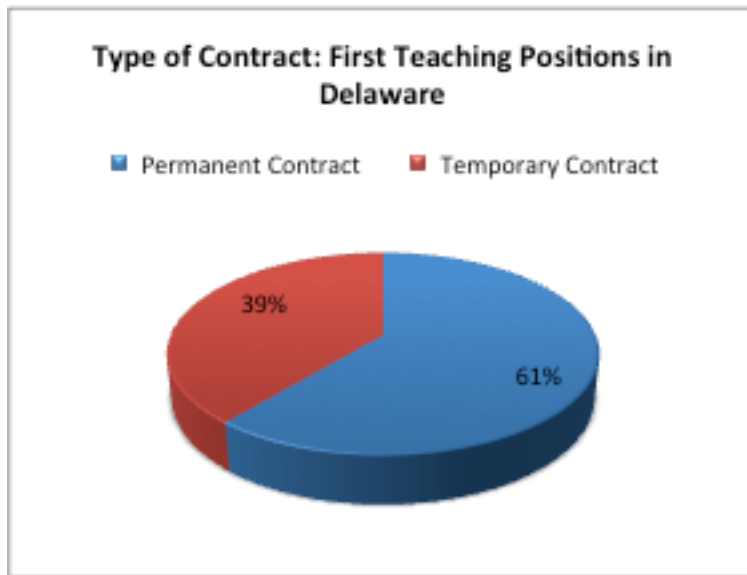
Satisfaction Comparison Over Time	2004 Results	2010 Results	Difference
Relationship with mentor	73.0%	50.2%	-22.8%
Opportunities to make a difference for students	66.6%	57.7%	-8.9%
Your current career	65.7%	55.5%	-10.2%
Support of colleagues within school	60.1%	54.9%	-5.2%
Number of students in your classes	45.3%	24.9%	-20.4%
Level of autonomy you have	41.8%	21.9%	-19.9%
School climate	43.6%	36.2%	-7.4%
Benefits	41.7%	50.4%	8.7%
Your additional duties	36.2%	21.1%	-15.1%
Disciplinary policy at your school	35.9%	23.8%	-12.1%
Physical quality of your work site	34.4%	33.2%	-1.2%
Career advancement opportunities	33.8%	17.3%	-16.5%
Appreciation and prestige associated with job	29.6%	19.8%	-9.8%
Support of parents in the school	22.7%	15.5%	-7.2%
Ability to influence decisions	19.0%	13.7%	-5.3%
Availability of supplies	17.8%	16.8%	-1.0%
Amount of time spent on work after hours	16.3%	8.2%	-8.1%
The salary you receive	14.4%	7.9%	-6.5%
Amount of time spent on recordkeeping and clerical duties	13.5%	7.2%	-6.3%

Table 4

Job Search Tools Used (N = 515)	Great Use	Some Use	No Use	No Response
School district website	64.5%	24.3%	7.6%	3.7%
Word of mouth	36.1%	35.0%	21.2%	7.8%
Teach Delaware website	24.7%	34.4%	35.6%	7.4%
Friend in area	22.9%	28.7%	37.9%	10.5%
Student teaching contracts	21.6%	21.0%	47.8%	9.7%
University of Delaware Recruitment Fair (Project Search)	20.6%	15.7%	53.6%	10.1%
Principal/school administrator	17.3%	27.2%	46.2%	9.3%
Your college or university job placement service	8.2%	16.5%	63.9%	11.5%
Print ads	7.6%	26.0%	56.1%	10.3%
Recruitment trips/fairs in neighboring states (NJ, MD, PA)	3.9%	9.7%	75.0%	11.5%
Teach for America Program	3.1%	4.1%	81.2%	11.7%
Recruitment trips/fairs in other states	2.9%	4.9%	80.0%	12.2%

Figure 3²

² "Other" refers primarily to "district website."

Figure 4**Table 5**

Importance Level of Factors Affecting Acceptance of Position (N =514)	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not at all Important	No Response
Location	53.7%	35.2%	10.3%	0.8%
Specifics of position such as subject area or grade	52.3%	33.5%	12.6%	1.6%
Teaching conditions	52.3%	36.2%	9.9%	1.6%
Benefits	45.5%	43.2%	10.3%	1.0%
School leadership	44.6%	39.1%	15.4%	11.0%
First contract offered	40.5%	34.6%	22.6%	2.3%
School program or mission	36.4%	44.9%	17.1%	1.6%
Prior experience with school or district	28.6%	23.0%	46.3%	2.1%
Salary	27.2%	56.4%	15.2%	1.2%
Friends teaching in school/district	9.5%	24.3%	64.0%	2.1%
Other	5.1%	1.8%	29.2%	64.0%

Table 6

Most Important Location Factors (N = 514)	Percent
Near family	47.3%
Familiar with area	21.3%
Other	15.6%
Near spouse's job	8.6%
Near amenities	2.4%
Near childhood home	2.4%
Near higher education institution	2.4%

Table 7

Teacher Preparedness (N = 492)	Very Well Prepared	Well Prepared	Somewhat Prepared	Not at all Prepared	No Response
Reflect on your teaching to improve your practice	40.7%	44.1%	14.0%	1.0%	0.2%
Work with other teachers as a member of a grade level team, department, or professional learning community	40.2%	42.3%	15.0%	2.2%	0.2%
Teach your subject matter	36.2%	41.3%	19.3%	3.0%	0.2%
Handle a range of management or discipline situations	30.5%	37.8%	26.6%	4.9%	0.2%
Communicate with parents about how their children are doing in school	30.1%	41.5%	25.2%	2.4%	0.8%
Plan activities that are sensitive to issues of class, gender, race, ethnicity, family composition, and age	30.1%	42.1%	23.2%	4.1%	0.6%
Use a variety of instructional methods	29.9%	40.4%	26.2%	2.4%	1.0%
Select and adapt curriculum and instructional materials	24.8%	41.3%	28.6%	4.7%	0.6%
Use computers/technology in classroom instruction	24.8%	35.6%	33.9%	5.5%	0.2%
Teach students with special needs (e.g., disabilities, special education)	20.1%	30.5%	38.2%	10.8%	0.4%
Use data to create/adapt instructional methods	19.7%	36.4%	35.6%	8.1%	0.2%
Assess students and use state assessments for improving instruction	14.6%	35.4%	38.8%	10.6%	0.6%
Teach students with limited English proficiency (LEP)/English-language learners (ELL)	6.7%	17.1%	44.5%	31.1%	0.6%

Table 8

Preparedness Items by School Level (N = 492)	Percent of High School Teachers "Not at all prepared"	Percent of Elementary Teachers "Not at all prepared"	Percent of Middle Teachers "Not at all prepared"	Difference between High School and Elementary	Difference between High School and Middle
Teach students with limited English proficiency	36.5%	24.2%	37.8%	12.3%	-1.3%
Assess students and use state assessments for improving instruction	20.4%	4.3%	10.2%	16.1%	10.2%
Teach students with special needs	15.0%	7.0%	10.2%	8.0%	4.8%
Use data to create/adapt instructional methods	14.4%	4.3%	7.1%	10.1%	7.3%
Select and adapt curriculum	7.8%	1.6%	6.1%	6.2%	1.7%
Plan activities that are sensitive to issues of class, gender, race, ethnicity, family composition, and age	7.2%	2.2%	3.1%	5.0%	4.1%
Handle a range of classroom management or discipline situations	5.8%	5.9%	3.1%	-0.1%	2.7%
Use a variety of instructional methods	5.4%	0.0%	2.0%	5.4%	3.4%
Use computers/technology in classroom instruction	5.4%	3.2%	8.2%	2.2%	-2.8%
Teach Your Subject Matter	4.8%	1.6%	3.1%	3.2%	1.7%
Work with other teachers as a member of a grade level, team, department, or professional learning community	4.8%	1.6%	0.0%	3.2%	4.8%
Communicate with parents about how their children are doing in school	3.6%	2.2%	2.0%	1.4%	1.6%
Reflect on your teaching to improve your practice	1.8%	0.5%	0.0%	1.3%	1.8%

Table 9

Helpfulness of Factors Used to Address First-Year Teaching Areas of Concern (N = 492)	Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Not Helpful	Didn't Attend/Does Not Apply	No Response
Another teacher in your school	72.6%	23.4%	2.2%	1.8%	0.0%
Mentor	42.1%	31.7%	16.3%	9.6%	0.4%
Administrator in your school	40.7%	43.5%	14.0%	1.4%	0.4%
School support such as dept. chair, subject area specialist, team leader	38.8%	41.7%	15.0%	4.5%	0.0%
University or college courses taken during school year	26.8%	36.4%	9.6%	27.2%	0.0%
District support such as curriculum specialists, teacher cadre, resource teacher	23.8%	46.3%	19.3%	10.2%	0.4%
Teacher workshops	20.9%	51.8%	18.3%	8.7%	0.2%
Delaware New Teacher Mentoring/Induction Program	13.2%	41.9%	37.2%	7.5%	0.2%

Table 10

Form of Support	2004 "Very Helpful"	2010 "Very Helpful"	Difference
Another teacher in your school	71.6%	72.6%	1.0%
Mentor	62.2%	42.1%	-20.1%
Administrator in your school	51.5%	40.7%	-10.8%
School support such as department chair, subject-area specialist, team leader	43.4%	38.8%	-4.6%
University or college courses taken during school year	No Comparison	26.8%	NA
District support such as curriculum specialists, teacher cadre, resource teacher	36.0%	23.8%	-12.2%
Teacher workshops	27.3%	20.9%	-6.4%
Delaware New Teacher Mentoring/Induction Program	No comparison	13.2%	NA

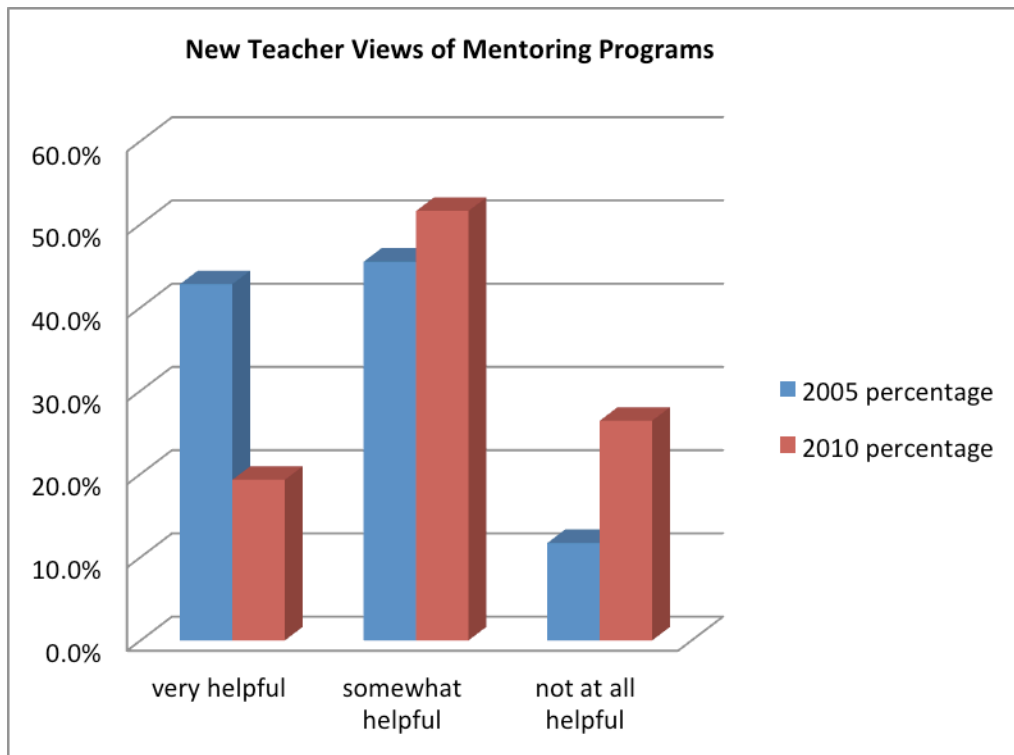
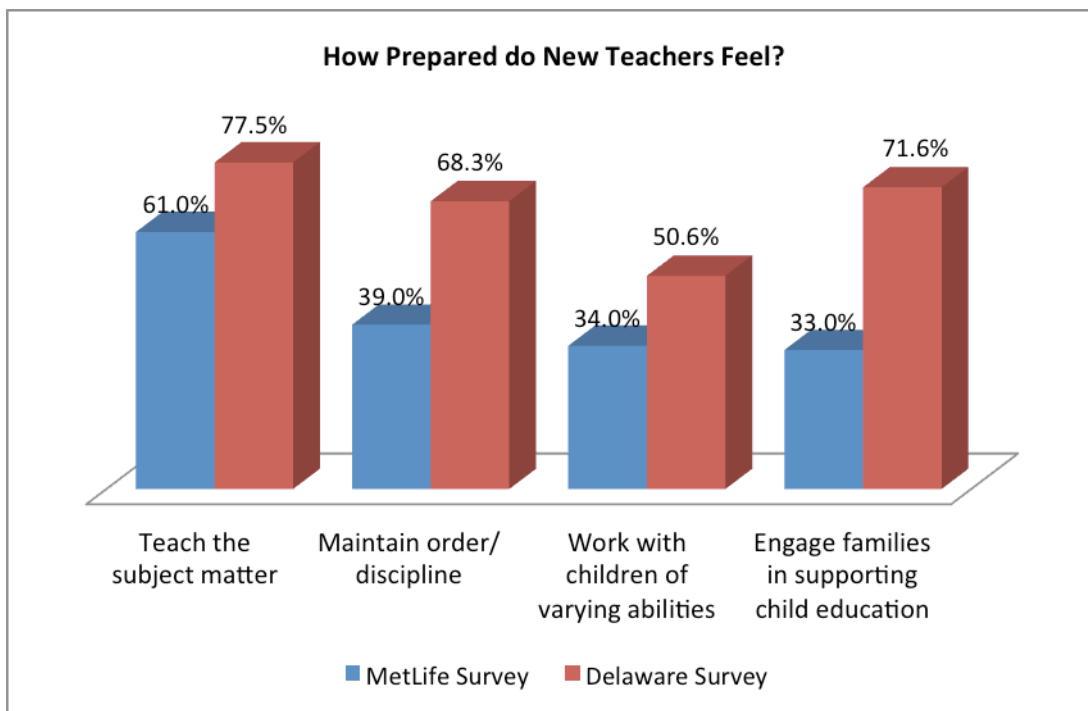
Figure 5**Figure 6**

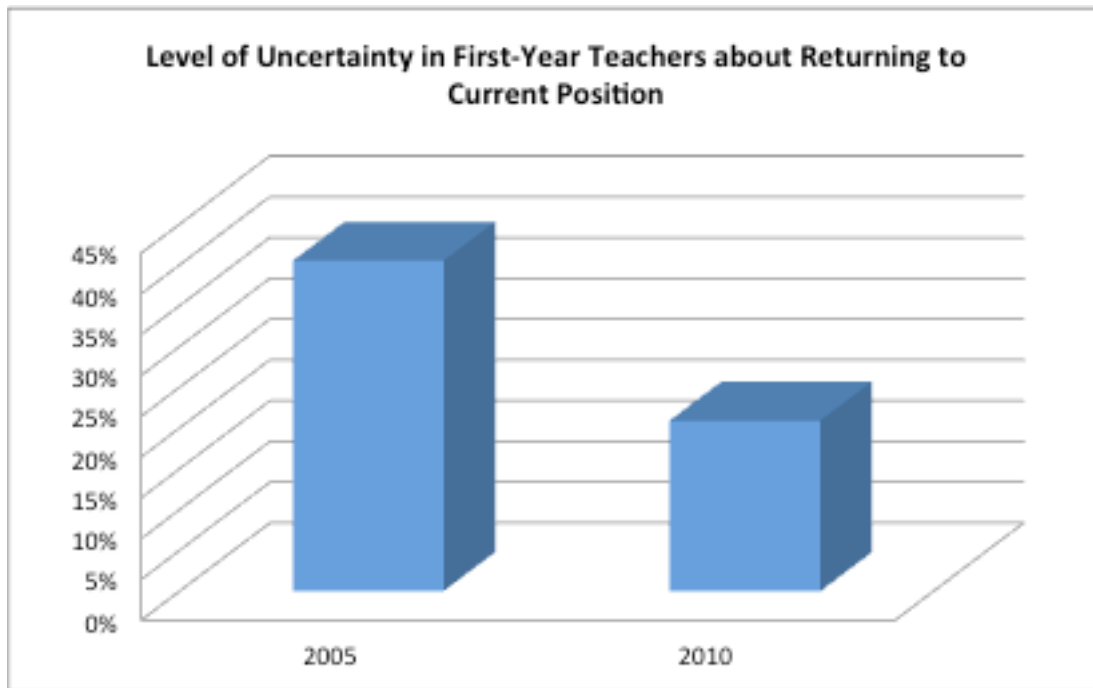
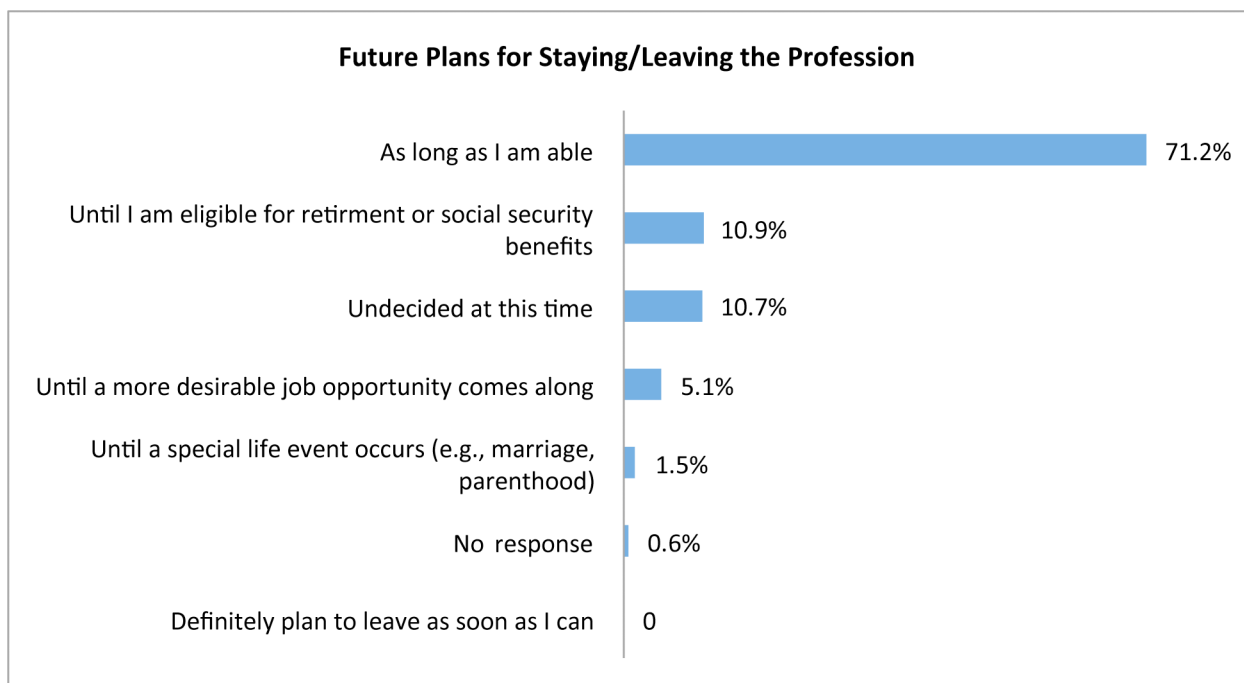
Figure 7**Figure 8**

Table 11

Likelihood of Action to Occur Within the Next Five Years	2005 Report	2010 First Year Teachers	2010 All Respondents	Difference between 2005 Report and All	Difference between 2005 Report and 2010 1st Years
Return to graduate/professional school	60.7%	35.2%	38.6%	-22.1%	-25.5%
Become a public school teacher in another state	11.2%	8.2%	6.4%	-4.8%	-3.0%
Become a counselor or administrator	8.2%	6.2%	6.9%	-1.3%	-2.0%
Leave the job market because of family responsibilities	2.5%	1.0%	0.6%	-1.9%	-1.5%
Become a private school teacher	1.9%	2.0%	1.3%	-0.6%	0.1%
Be employed full-time in a government or non-profit or private sector	1.9%	1.0%	0.9%	-1.0%	-0.9%

Table 12

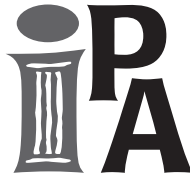
Future Role(s) in Five Years (N =469)	1st Year Teachers Answering "Very" or "Somewhat Likely" (N =196)	2nd Year Teachers Answering "Very" or "Somewhat Likely" (N = 149)	3rd Year Teachers Answering "Very" or "Somewhat Likely" (N =109)
Become a public school teacher in another state	36.8%	29.6%	13.8%
Become a school or district administrator	17.9%	18.1%	19.2%
Become an education specialist such as a guidance counselor, school psychologist, or counselor	12.8%	14.7%	12.8%
Become a private school teacher	17.3%	10.1%	4.6%
Become a charter school teacher	27.0%	16.8%	10.1%
Be employed full-time in the private, government, or non-profit sector	11.2%	11.4%	7.3%
Leave the job market because of family responsibilities	8.1%	6.7%	2.8%
Return to graduate professional school	65.8%	69.8%	76.1%

Table 13

Support for Actions to Increase Teacher Effectiveness (N =480)	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Too Effective	Not Effective At All	No Response
Increase teacher salaries to levels similar to other professional jobs	70.6%	22.1%	4.4%	1.5%	1.5%
Provide higher salaries for teachers in hard-to-staff or challenging schools	52.9%	34.2%	8.3%	2.9%	1.7%
Provide substantial hiring incentives for highly effective teachers choosing to work in critical areas such as math and science	44.8%	39.0%	11.5%	2.1%	2.7%
Encourage a model of distributed or shared leadership where teachers are provided opportunities to lead professional development, participate in decision-making, and work with colleagues to improve instructional strategies	44.6%	47.5%	5.2%	1.0%	1.7%
Implement performance incentives for schools that show school-wide growth and allow teachers to assist in deciding how funding should be sent	43.3%	41.7%	9.0%	4.4%	1.7%
Improve the Delaware New Teacher Mentoring/Induction Program	39.8%	46.5%	8.8%	2.9%	2.1%
Make it easier to terminate ineffective teachers	38.5%	41.5%	15.0%	13.5%	1.5%
Provide a statewide website dedicated to the recruitment of all education personnel, with a common teacher-application form accepted by all districts and charter schools	36.3%	46.3%	13.3%	2.7%	1.5%
Provide school leaders with additional training and continuing expert coaching on performing teacher evaluations	35.2%	51.0%	10.6%	1.3%	1.9%
Expand data-proven teacher education programs at universities in Delaware in critical needs areas	34.8%	49.2%	12.7%	2.3%	1.0%
Utilize the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System to ensure teachers receive real-time feedback on student achievement and provide a data coach to enable teachers to use that data to inform their planning and instruction	34.8%	49.0%	10.6%	3.5%	2.1%
Provide a teacher-leadership position in every school to offer day-to-day feedback and support to other teachers	34.4%	45.2%	15.0%	4.4%	1.0%
Expand the Alternative Routes to Certification program in Delaware	24.2%	43.1%	19.6%	9.0%	4.2%
Evaluate and support the newly implemented Teach for America program in Delaware	14.4%	52.1%	19.8%	11.0%	2.7%
Tie teacher rewards to their student's performance	10.2%	28.3%	27.3%	31.5%	2.7%
Not allow newly hired teachers to "jump" contracts within the state after July 1	7.5%	36.0%	30.0%	19.6%	6.9%

Table 14

Helpfulness and Effectiveness of Actions Taken to Retain, Recruit, and Train Teachers	Percent of Personnel Directors to View Actions as "Very Helpful"	Percent of Teachers to View Actions as "Very Effective"	Difference
Provide a statewide website dedicated to the recruitment of all education personnel, with a common teacher application form accepted by all districts and charter schools	26.3%	36.3%	10.0%
Provide a teacher leadership position in every school to offer day-to-day feedback and support to other teachers	26.3%	34.4%	8.1%
Expand data-proven teacher education programs at universities in Delaware in critical needs areas	73.7%	34.8%	-38.9%
Evaluate and support the newly implemented Teach for America program in Delaware	0.0%	14.4%	14.4%
Improve the Delaware New Teacher Mentoring/Induction Program	15.8%	39.8%	24.0%
Not allow newly hired teachers to "jump" contracts within the state after July 1	15.8%	7.5%	-8.3%
Expand the Alternative Routes to Certification program in Delaware	15.8%	24.2%	8.4%
Provide school leaders with additional training and continuing expert coaching on performing teacher evaluations	42.1%	35.2%	-6.9%
Utilize the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System to ensure teachers receive real-time feedback on student achievement and provide a data coach to enable teachers to use that data to inform their planning and instruction	36.8%	34.8%	-2.0%
Provide substantial hiring incentives for highly effective teachers choosing to work in critical areas such as math and science	26.3%	44.8%	18.5%
Implement performance incentives for schools that show school-wide growth and allow teachers to assist in deciding how funding should be sent	26.3%	43.3%	17.0%
Tie teacher rewards to their student's performance	10.5%	10.2%	-0.3%
Increase teacher salaries to levels similar to other professional jobs	47.4%	70.6%	23.2%
Provide higher salaries for teachers in hard-to-staff or challenging schools	21.1%	52.9%	31.8%
Make it easier to terminate ineffective teachers	73.7%	38.5%	-35.2%
Encourage a model of distributed or shared leadership where teachers are provided opportunities to lead professional development, participate in decision-making, and work with colleagues to improve instructional strategies	42.1%	44.6%	2.5%



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