*Welcome to LLA Reports, a podcast produced by the Louisiana Legislative Auditor’s office. This podcast is intended to be an oral representation of the written report it highlights and is primarily for the use of the Louisiana Legislature.*

This is Ed Seyler. I’m an Economist with LLA’s Performance Audit Services.

This episode of LLA Reports focuses on our new report titled “Teacher Qualifications and Pay: Impact on Teacher Retention and Student Performance.”

The purpose of this audit was to evaluate how differences in qualifications, pay, and other attributes affect teacher retention and student performance in Louisiana.

We conducted this audit because attracting and retaining a capable teaching workforce is an important part of providing quality education to the state’s K-12 student population.

We found that teachers with more years of experience tended to be more effective, and that improvements in their effectiveness generally occurred during the first five years of teaching.

The percentage of teachers in their first or second year of teaching who were rated as effective-proficient or highly effective was 42.9 percent. That percentage increased to 53 percent after four to five years, and generally remained at that level.

In addition, we found that certified teachers were more effective on average than uncertified teachers. The Louisiana Department of Education’s value-added model rated 51.3 percent of certified teachers effective-proficient or highly effective, compared to 43.4 percent of uncertified teachers.

However, teachers with graduate degrees were not necessarily more effective than teachers with a bachelor’s degree only.

We also found that teachers in schools with more economically disadvantaged students were less likely to be certified and had fewer years of experience.

For example, teachers in in Orleans Parish were less likely to be certified and had fewer years of experience than teachers in schools in other cities or in less populated areas. The percentage of uncertified teachers was 54 percent in Orleans Parish city schools, versus 12.5 percent statewide.

Lower rated schools also had fewer certified teachers. At A-rated schools, 5.7 percent of teachers were uncertified, while 23.8 percent of teachers at F-rated schools were uncertified.

Teachers in charter schools also were less likely to be certified and had fewer years of experience on average than teachers in traditional public schools.

We found that in traditional public schools, 92.1 percent of teachers were certified, compared to 50.3 percent of teachers in charter schools.

We also found that 10% of the state’s teaching workforce leaves each year and that the state could improve teacher retention by increasing salaries.

Our analysis showed that for each additional $1,000 in salary, a teacher would be four-tenths percentage points more likely to remain in the public education workforce.

The state also could improve teacher retention if salaries in areas with high housing costs were higher.

Our analysis showed that for each $100 decrease in monthly rents in a given parish, a teacher would be two-tenths percentage points more likely to remain in the public education workforce, holding all other factors constant.

To address these cost-of-living issues, we suggested that education policy makers consider ways to compensate for the differences.

We found, too, that Louisiana could improve teacher retention by providing retirement benefits to teachers who do not currently participate in the state’s public retirement system.

Our analysis showed that teachers who participated in public retirement systems were 2.3 percentage points more likely to continue working in the public education workforce than teachers who did not participate.

*We hope you found this podcast informative, and that you’ll follow future episodes of LLA Reports.*

*This podcast was created as part of the audit report just discussed and is intended primarily for the use of the Louisiana Legislature. Both the full report and the podcast can be found on the LLA’s website at* [*www.lla.la.gov*](http://www.lla.la.gov)*.*

*Thank you for listening.*