



Report Highlights

Teacher Qualifications and Pay: Impact on Teacher Retention and Student Performance

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Why We Conducted This Audit

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, which is in line with the state's commitment to improving academic achievement and educational opportunities for all students. Over academic years (AY) 2018-19 through 2020-21, there were an average of 683,400 students attending public schools across the state. We evaluated how differences in teacher qualifications, pay, and other attributes across schools and districts in Louisiana impact teacher retention and student performance.

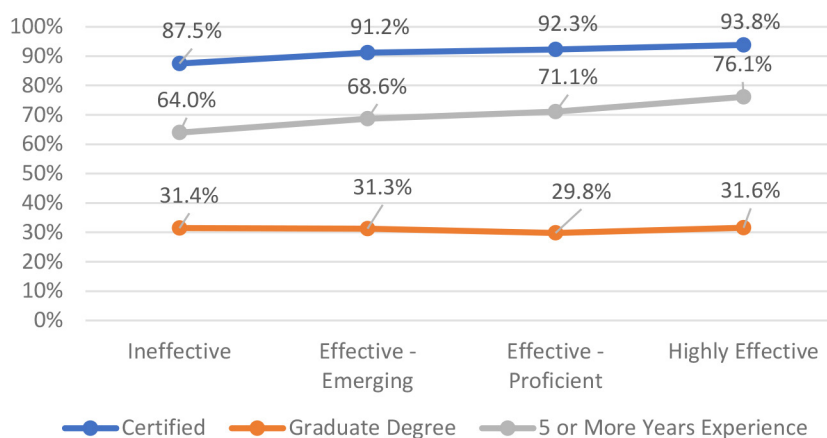
What We Found

Objective 1: What teacher qualifications are associated with higher teacher effectiveness in improving student academic performance?

- Teachers with more years of experience tend to be more effective, and improvements in teacher effectiveness tend to occur during a teacher's 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, the two highest ratings in LDE's value-added model, was 42.9%, which increases to 53.0% after four to five years, and remains generally the same after that.
- Certified teachers are more effective on average than uncertified teachers. Among uncertified teachers, 43.4% were rated effective proficient or highly effective compared to 51.3% of certified teachers.
- Teachers with graduate degrees are not necessarily more effective than teachers who have a bachelor's degree. Unlike certification and experience, teachers with more than a master's degree were less likely to be effective-proficient or highly effective than those teachers with just a bachelor's degree.

Certifications, Experience, and Graduate Degree Attainment by Effectiveness Academic Year 2018-19

Source: Prepared by legislative auditor's staff using data from LDE.



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What We Found (Cont.)

Objective 2: What types of schools or school districts have more experienced and certified teachers?

- Teachers in schools serving more economically disadvantaged students are less likely to be certified and have fewer years of experience.
- Teachers in schools in Orleans Parish are less likely to be certified and have fewer years of experience than teachers in schools in other cities or in less populated areas. The percent of teachers who are uncertified is 54.0% in Orleans Parish schools, versus 12.5% statewide.
- Lower rated schools also have fewer certified teachers and teachers with fewer years of experience on average. At A-rated schools, 5.7% of teachers are uncertified, while 23.8% of teachers at F-rated schools are uncertified.
- Teachers in charter schools are less likely to be certified and have fewer years of experience on average than teachers in traditional public schools. In traditional public schools, 92.1% of teachers are certified, while 50.3% of teachers in charter schools are certified.

Objective 3: How can the state better attract and retain an effective teaching workforce?

- The state may be able to improve retention by increasing teacher salaries. For each additional \$1,000 in salary, a teacher is 0.4 percentage points more likely to remain in Louisiana's public education workforce.
- The state may be able to improve retention if salaries in areas with high housing costs were higher. For each \$100 decrease in monthly rents in a given parish, a teacher is 0.2 percentage points more likely to remain in the state's teaching work force, holding all other factors constant.
- The state may be able to improve retention by providing retirement benefits to public school teachers who do not currently participate in the state's public retirement systems. We found that teachers who participated in public retirement systems were 2.3 percentage points more likely to continue working in the Louisiana public education workforce than teachers who did not participate.