

ESSENTIALS

■ PERFORMANCE FACTORS

School Organizational Contexts, Teacher Turnover, and Student Achievement: Evidence From Panel Data

American Educational Research Journal, October 2016

Researchers from Brown and Harvard universities sought to determine whether strengthening organizational contexts in schools decreases teacher turnover and increases student achievement. Using data from the New



York City Department of Education's School Survey, they identified distinct dimensions of middle schools' organizational contexts

using teachers' responses to the annual School Survey and estimated the relationship between these measures, teacher turnover, and student achievement. They found that improvements in school leadership,

academic expectations, teacher relationships, and school safety are all independently associated with corresponding reductions in teacher turnover. Increases in school safety and academic expectations also correspond with student achievement gains.

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.3102/0002831216667478>

■ TEACHER PREP

Landscapes in Teacher Prep: Undergraduate Elementary Ed
National Council on Teacher Quality, December 2016

The National Council on Teacher Quality report examines



875 traditional undergraduate programs that prepare elementary school teachers and finds widely

variable levels of quality. While programs showed positive signs of growth in teaching reading, selectivity, and content, many programs still have a long way to go in teaching elementary math, science, and other STEM content; raising their standards for admissions; establishing student teaching as a useful experience with structured feedback in key elements of classroom management; and becoming more selective about the qualifications of cooperating teachers who mentor student teachers.

www.nctq.org/teacherPrep/findings/landscapes.do

■ TENURE TROUBLES

Undue Process: Why Bad Teachers in Twenty-Five Diverse Districts Rarely Get Fired
Thomas B. Fordham Institute, December 2016

While studies show that teacher quality is the most important school-based determinant of student learning, significant barriers to dismissing ineffective teachers remain. Fordham researchers analyzed the difficulty of dismissing ineffective teachers in 25 diverse districts. Their findings show that, across the country, most districts and states continue to confer lifetime tenure on teachers, weak teachers still take years to dismiss if they achieve tenured status, and any attempt to dismiss an ineffective veteran teacher remains vulnerable to costly challenges at every stage in the process.

Consequently, in most districts and schools, dismissing an ineffective veteran teacher remains far harder than is healthy for children, schools, taxpayers — and the teaching profession itself.



<https://edexcellence.net/publications/undue-process>

■ INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY

Advancing Educational Technology in Teacher Preparation: Policy Brief
U.S. Department of Education, December 2016

This policy brief identifies key challenges and solutions to the effective integration of technology in teacher preparation, provides guiding principles on how to move the field toward effective integration of technology in teacher preparation programs, and identifies areas of opportunity and collaboration for stakeholders across the field. The four guiding principles are:



- Focus on the active use of technology to enable learning and teaching;
- Build sustainable, program-wide systems of professional learning for higher education instructors;
- Ensure preservice teachers' experiences with educational technology are program-deep and program-wide; and
- Align efforts with research-based standards, frameworks, and credentials recognized across the field.

<http://tech.ed.gov/files/2016/12/Ed-Tech-in-Teacher-Preparation-Brief.pdf>