



NEWS RELEASE

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New Report Addresses Colorado Teacher Attrition

[Denver, CO] We're losing more than teachers in our Colorado schools. Teacher attrition can also be blamed for the loss of millions of dollars, and is linked to poor student performance. In 2005, \$70 million in resources were used to replace teachers who left Colorado school districts. The attrition rate in an unsatisfactory performing school in Colorado was more than double that at an average performing school.

A new report from the Alliance for Quality Teaching (AQT) released today addresses teacher quality in Colorado and explores teacher attrition and diversity.

Citing the correlation of teacher attrition to student achievement, the growth of student diversity and a need for improved communication and data to support teacher quality, the Alliance issued five recommendations supported with a series of action steps for state and local leaders:

- 1. Increase the diversity of the teacher workforce**
- 2. Focus attention on teacher retention**
- 3. Create structured feedback loops between K-12 & teacher preparation institutions**
- 4. Establish a unique teacher identifier**
- 5. Conduct statewide surveys of teachers**

“We are pleased that the statewide teacher surveys have been given a boost by HB1384,” stated Alliance Executive Director Jacqueline Paone. “However, there is a great deal more to be done by all education stakeholders. Until we ALL make education a priority, gather the data we need to make effective decisions and TAKE ACTION, there will be children without the benefit of teaching quality.”

Other findings in the report:

- The chain of evidence to connect teachers with student achievement is complex and sensitive to many factors.
- As in many states, Colorado's system for developing and extending pedagogical knowledge is highly variable.
- Teacher experience matters and varies with different grade levels.
- Districts with lower than average salaries have higher attrition than those with higher than average salaries.
- The proportion of Latino students in Colorado is growing five times faster than the proportion of Latino teachers.

- In Denver, Colorado Springs District 11 and Grand Junction school districts about 1 in 6 teachers are 55 years old or older. These districts should expect high current or near future levels of attrition due to retirement.
- Aurora and Denver districts have relatively large numbers of both younger and older teachers. These districts have good reasons to expect higher levels of attrition for the next few years as the older cohorts of teachers retire.
- Mapleton had the largest increase in minority students and one of the largest increases in proportion of minority teachers in the state.
- The districts with declining numbers of minority teachers include Commerce City (Adams 14) which also had one of the largest increases in minority students.

For additional information, see the full report and Executive Summary available on the AQT Web site at www.qualityteaching.org.

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