



# Hiring, Assignment, and Transfer in Chicago Public Schools

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Report from The New Teacher Project | July 2007



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## Summary of Findings

1. CPS generates a large, strong applicant pool and is successful at hiring diverse candidates and candidates with core content knowledge. A late hiring timeline, however, is causing CPS to lose quality teachers who want to work in Chicago.
2. Teachers and principals across levels of school poverty agree that the current transfer and reassignment processes are effective.
3. While the number of reassigned teachers is small, current CPS policy requires reassignment to be based on seniority rather than teacher quality or school fit, which leaves top performers vulnerable to being displaced and compromises the efforts of principals to maintain effective instructional teams.
4. The current CPS teacher performance evaluation system does not distinguish strong performers and is ineffective at identifying poor performers and exiting them from Chicago schools.



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## About The New Teacher Project

- The New Teacher Project (TNTP) is a national non-profit organization, founded in 1997.
- Our clients are school districts, state education agencies, colleges and universities, and other educational entities.
- TNTP partners with its clients to:
  - Increase the number of outstanding individuals who become public school teachers; and
  - Create environments for all educators that maximize their impact on student achievement.
- TNTP's clients, past and present, include school districts in cities such as Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago, Houston, Memphis, Miami, Oakland, Philadelphia, New York and Washington, DC; and states such as Alaska, Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas and Virginia.

### Our totals to date

23,000

Teachers recruited, prepared and/or certified

40

Programs established

23

States in which TNTP has worked

200+

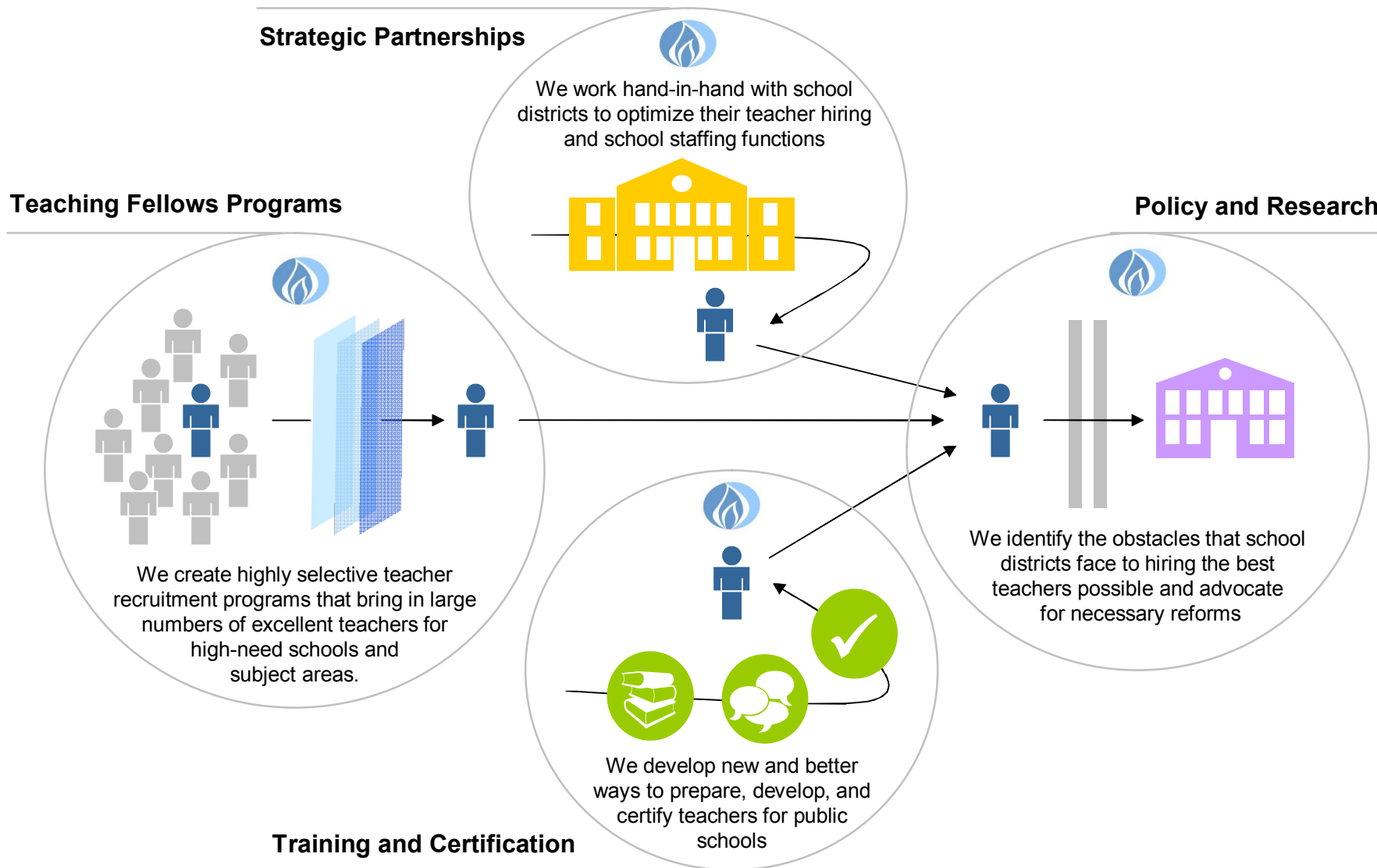
School districts with which TNTP has partnered

2,920,000

Students taught by TNTP-recruited/trained teachers (estimated)



# TNTP is unique in addressing the full range of factors involved in finding the highest-quality teachers possible.





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## Background – TNTP and CPS

TNTP partnered with Chicago Public Schools and the Joyce Foundation in the winter of 2006-2007 to analyze the extent to which current staffing rules and processes support effective school staffing.

TNTP has performed similar analyses in other districts nationwide and published findings from those districts in a 2005 report titled *Unintended Consequences: The Case for Reforming Urban Teachers Union Contracts*.



## Background – Methodology\*

- 1 TNTP reviewed the CPS Teachers Contract and provided a memorandum including our analysis of the relevant provisions and preliminary hypotheses.
- 2 TNTP investigated the impact of CPS staffing rules through several avenues, including:
  - Analysis of Human Resources transaction data
  - Surveys of:
    - 464 principals (80% of all principals)
    - 1446 current teachers (29% of random sample)
    - 434 teacher applicants (20% of random sample)
  - Interviews with principals and central staff

\* For more detailed information about methodology, see Appendix A.





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# #1

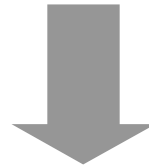
## **Recruitment and Hiring**

*CPS generates a large, strong applicant pool and is successful at hiring diverse candidates and candidates with core content knowledge. A late hiring timeline, however, is causing CPS to lose quality teachers who want to work in Chicago.*



**CPS has an applicant pool which appears to be relatively strong and sufficient in size and scope.**

From 2004 to 2006, CPS received an average of 10,786 applications per year and hired about 17% of candidates.



**36%**

**36% of applicants have a Masters degree**

**72%**

**72% of principals were satisfied with the QUALITY of 76% or more of teachers new to CPS**

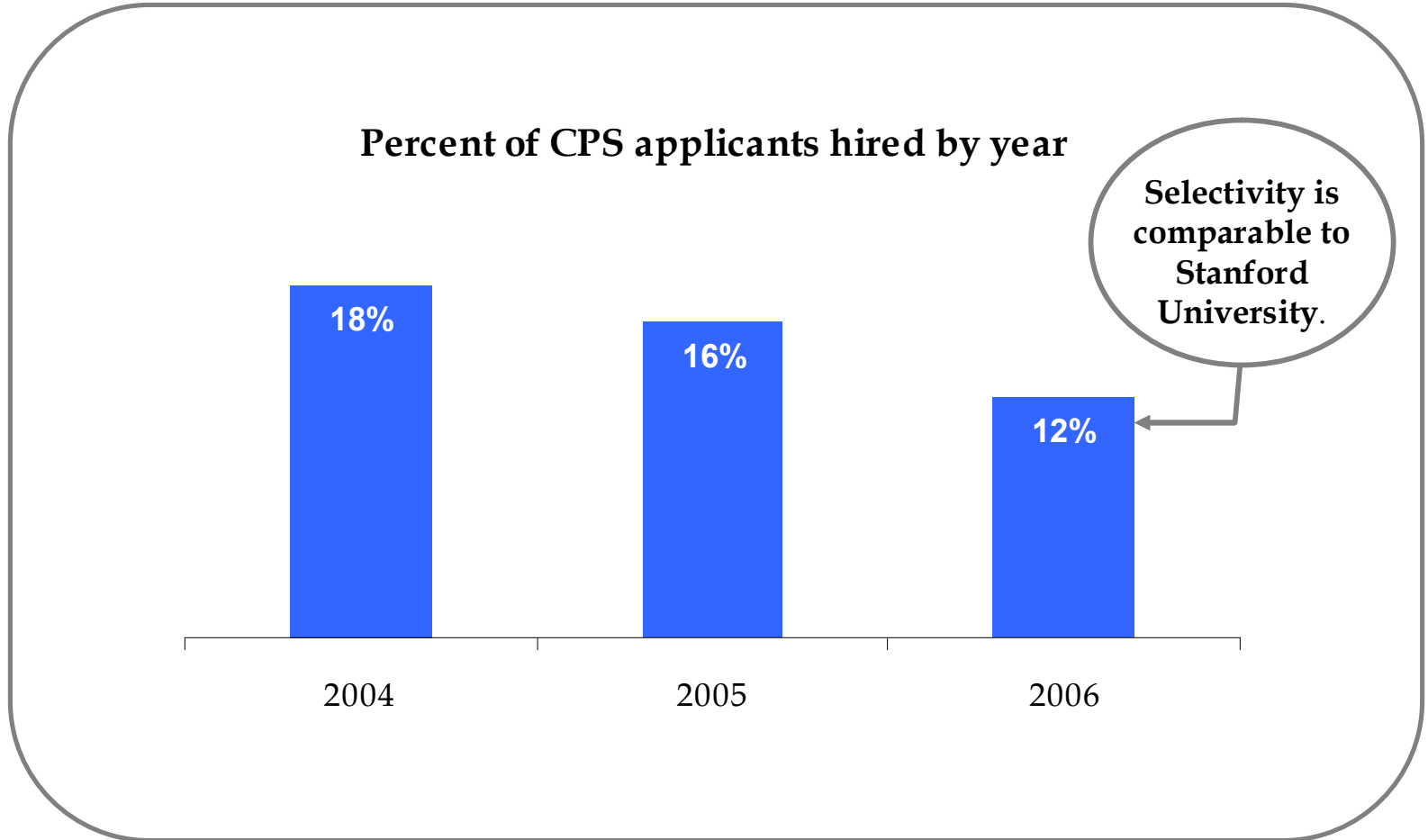
**3.3**

**Average GPA of candidates was 3.3**

Source: CPS HR Data



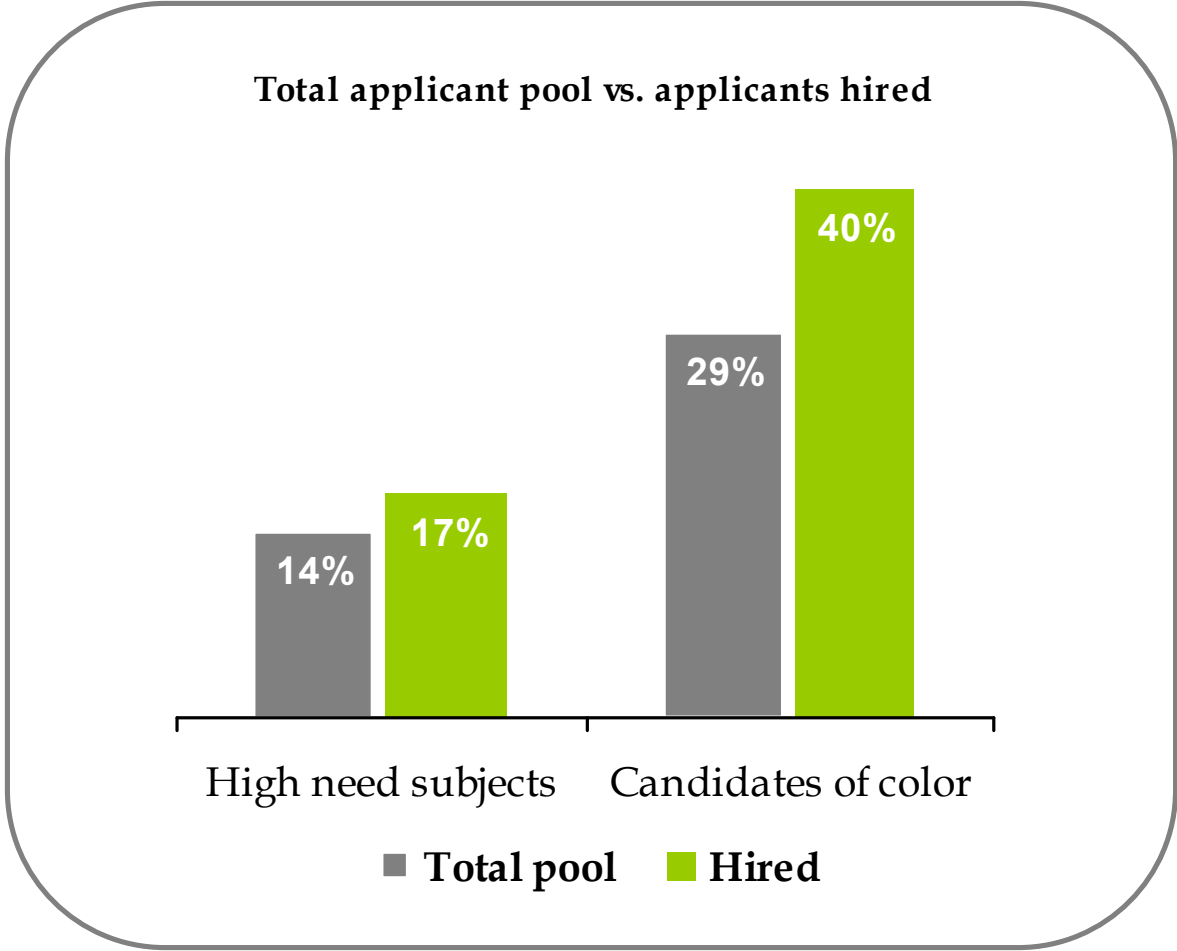
Over the last three hiring seasons, CPS has become substantially more selective, now hiring just 12% of all applicants.



Source: CPS HR Data



Hiring data show that CPS is successfully hiring a disproportionate number of candidates eligible for high need subjects and candidates of color.

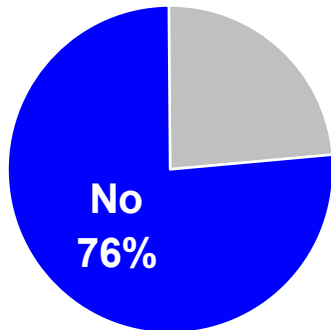


\*High-need includes bilingual education, science, math Source: CPS HR Data

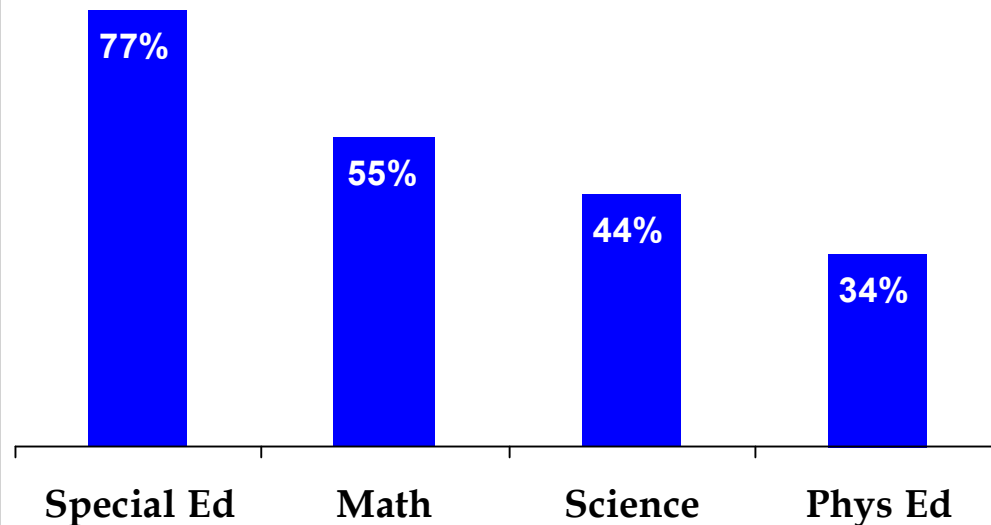


**While CPS is maximizing its current pool, according to principals, the pool is much too small in terms of high need subject candidates, particularly in special education.**

**Does the pool of available new hires include enough teachers in high need subject areas?**



**Which subject areas could use more teacher applicants?**

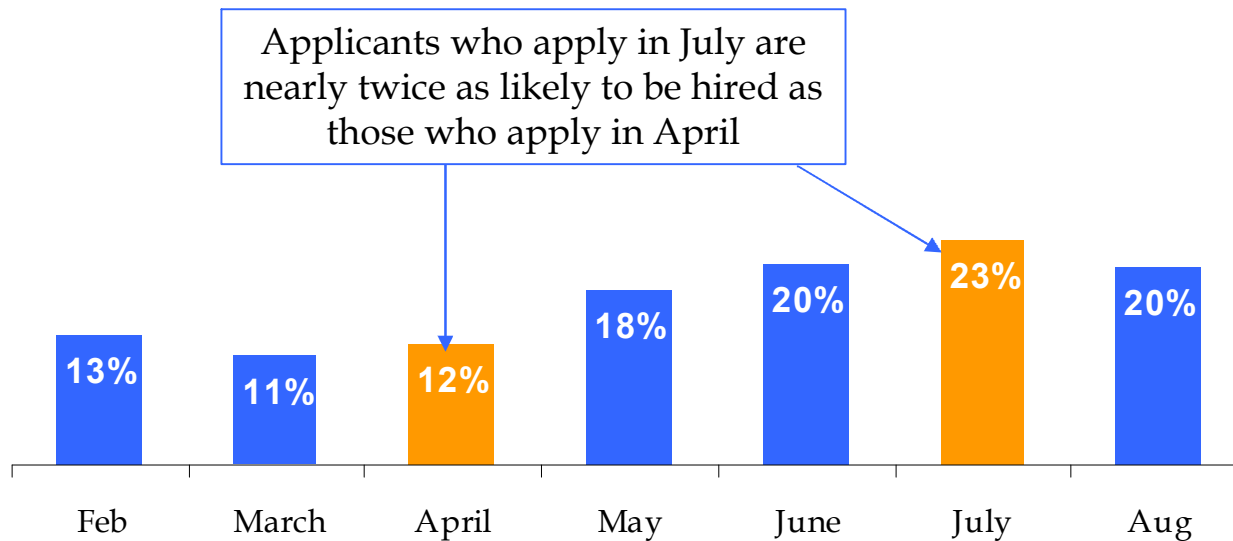


Source: TNTP survey conducted in February – March 2007 of 464 CPS Principals



## Chicago hires disproportionately from the pool of late applicants and misses out on many earlier applicants.

### Percent of Applicants Hired by Application Month



Source: TNTP survey conducted in 2007 of 435 Chicago Public Schools teacher applicants, 74 of whom were withdrawers. Application month = month resume received

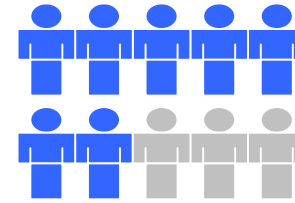
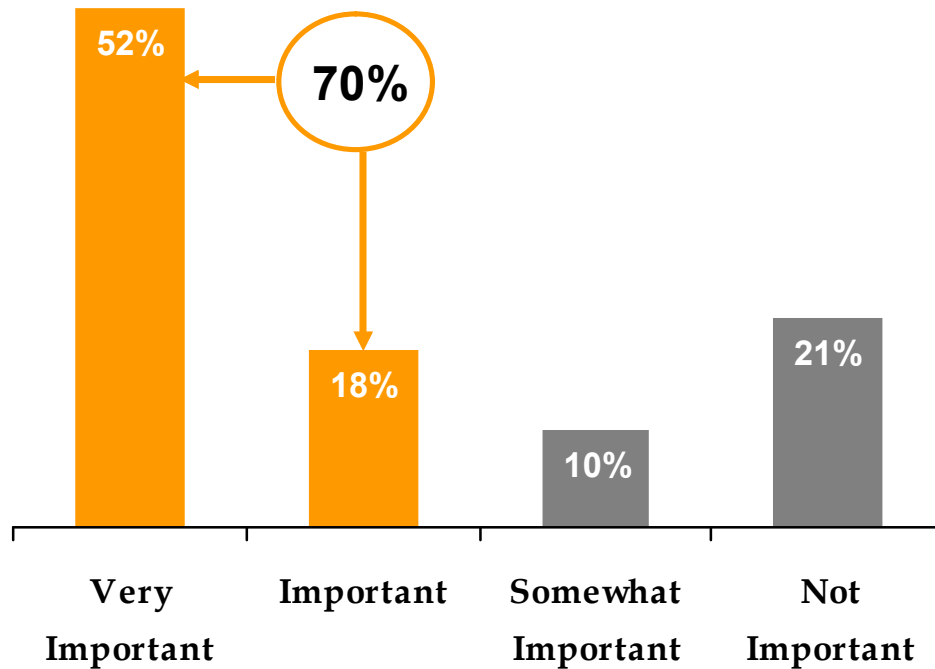


**Overall, late applicants (June or later) are 50% more likely to be hired by CPS.**



## The late hiring timeline is causing CPS to lose qualified applicants who are hired elsewhere.

Importance of timeline in applicant withdrawal



7 out of 10 withdrawers said that receiving another job offer was a factor in their decision to leave the CPS hiring process.

**82%**

82% of candidates who withdrew reported that they may have accepted a CPS position if they had been offered it at the same time as their other offer.

Source: TNTP survey conducted in 2007 of 435 Chicago Public Schools teacher applicants, 74 of whom were withdrawers.

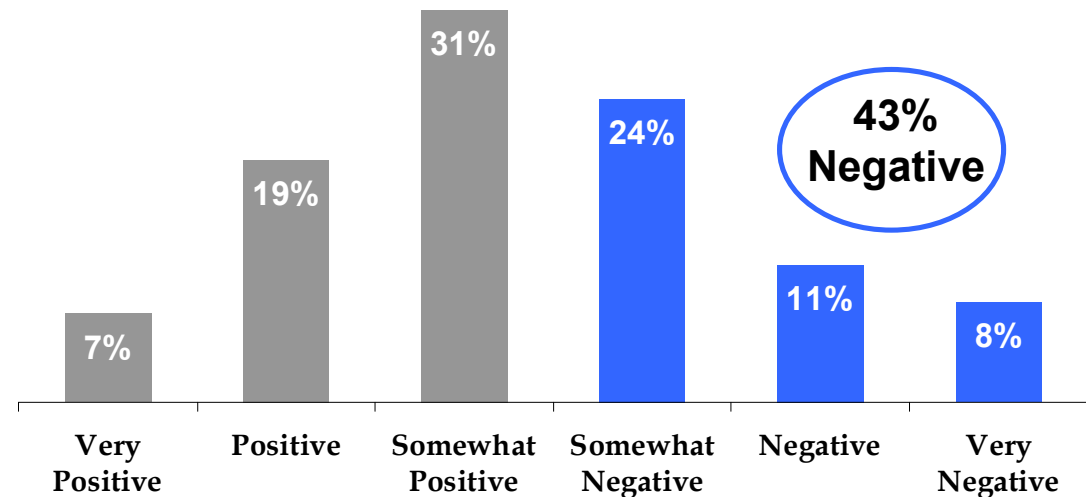


## Many candidates end up with a negative impression of CPS and their experience as teacher applicants.

**52%**

52% of CPS applicant withdrawers reported that “frustration with the CPS hiring process” was a factor in their decision to leave the CPS hiring process.

“How would you describe your overall impression of the Chicago Public Schools district?”



“My problems were with the way I was passed from one person to another. When I would ask a question I was never answered. Or, it took 3-4 weeks for anyone to get back to me.” -CPS physical education candidate, currently working in a public school in Chicago’s suburbs

Source: TNTP survey conducted in 2007 of 435 Chicago Public Schools teacher applicants, 74 of whom were withdrawers.





**As a result of late hiring, CPS loses out on top quality candidates in high need subject areas while hiring others with lesser credentials.**

### Hired ✓

- BA in Psychology from Univ of IL-Circle, 2.8 GPA; applied to CPS in August 2006. Now teaching math.
- BS in Management from Northern IL Univ, 2.6 GPA; applied to CPS in July 2005. Now teaching math.

### Not Hired ✗

- BA in Mathematics from Northwestern, 3.8 GPA. MA in Teaching from Univ of IL, 3.91 GPA. Applied to CPS in February 2006.
- BA in Mathematics from University of Illinois, 3.8 GPA; applied to CPS in March 2006.
- BA in Mathematics from Wesleyan University, 3.9 GPA; applied to CPS in March 2005.

Source: CPS hiring data



## Recruitment and Hiring Summary

### Good news

- CPS is moving in the right direction
- The applicant pool is large and CPS can be very selective
- CPS is maximizing its pool of high need candidates and candidate of color

### Can be better

- Hiring timeline is too late and causes CPS to lose interested, viable candidates while hiring weaker candidates
- Many candidates are frustrated by CPS communication and hiring timelines
- The applicant pool is insufficient for high need subjects, particularly special ed



### Recommendations\*

- Set a district-wide goal of hiring 80% of new hires to school-level positions by the end of June
- Develop a strategic plan for communicating with applicants to ensure a high-quality experience
- Lobby to change Illinois special ed regulations for alternative certification in order to increase the size of the pool
- Introduce financial incentives for principals to hire earlier
- Build a searchable online application that allows principals to see detailed information about candidates as soon as they apply - and to reach out to them directly

\*More detailed recommendations provided in the Recommendations section at the end of this report.



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## #2

### **Transfer and Hiring Rules**

*Teachers and principals across all levels of school poverty agree that the current transfer and reassignment processes are effective. There is some dissatisfaction among teachers with HR communication around transfer. Principals do not always use the online vacancy system or find it very helpful.*



## Teacher hiring, transfer, and assignment policies for Chicago Public Schools are among the most progressive TNTP has studied.

	<u>Common Practice</u>	<u>Chicago Public Schools</u>
<b>Transfers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transfers granted based on teacher seniority regardless of principal consent. Teachers unable to interview for specific positions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply for transfers to specific schools and the principal can interview and select any transfer candidate - or an external candidate</li> </ul>
<b>Reassigned teachers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not search for or interview for positions and are forced on schools that have no opportunity to interview or refuse.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look for a new position alongside transfer candidates. Unplaced tenured teachers enter the reserve pool for up to one school year before being released.</li> </ul>
<b>New Teachers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hired late in the summer, only after internal transfers are complete. Can be bumped from positions by more senior teachers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no reposting or bumping. Principals are free to select new hires as soon as their budgets are available.</li> </ul>

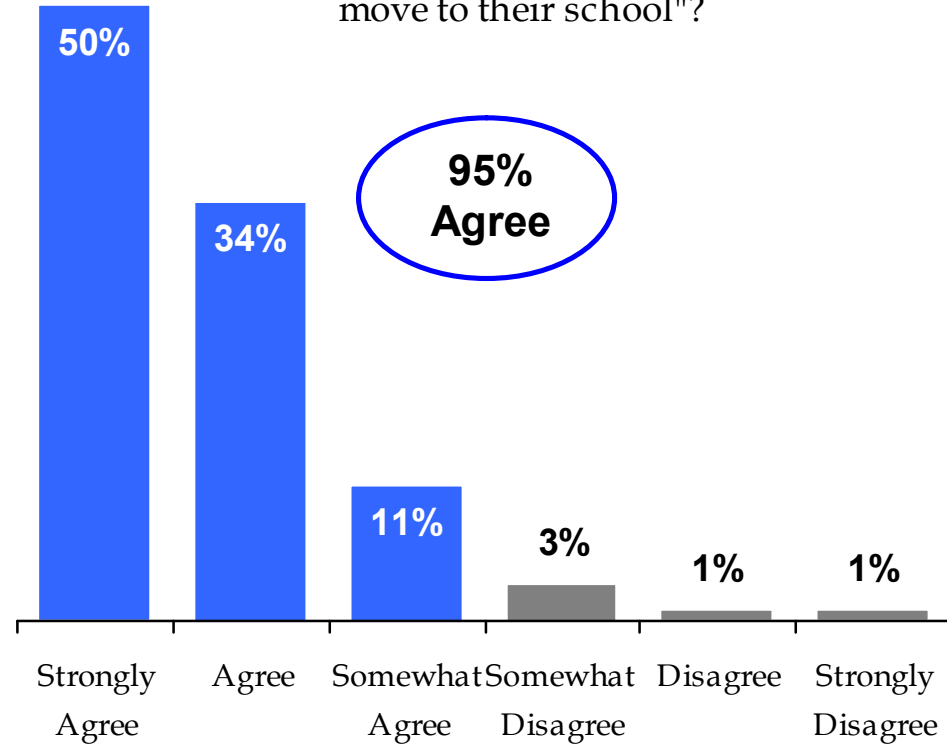


## Teachers enthusiastically support Chicago's core concept of mutual consent in the hiring process.

**90%**

90% of transferring teachers agree that the process resulted in a match that both they and their new principals feel good about.

How much do you agree with the following statement: "It was important to me when interviewing that principals wanted me to move to their school"?



Source: TNTP survey conducted in March 2007 of 1446 CPS teachers.



## Teachers report overwhelmingly that the transfer process is effective for them.

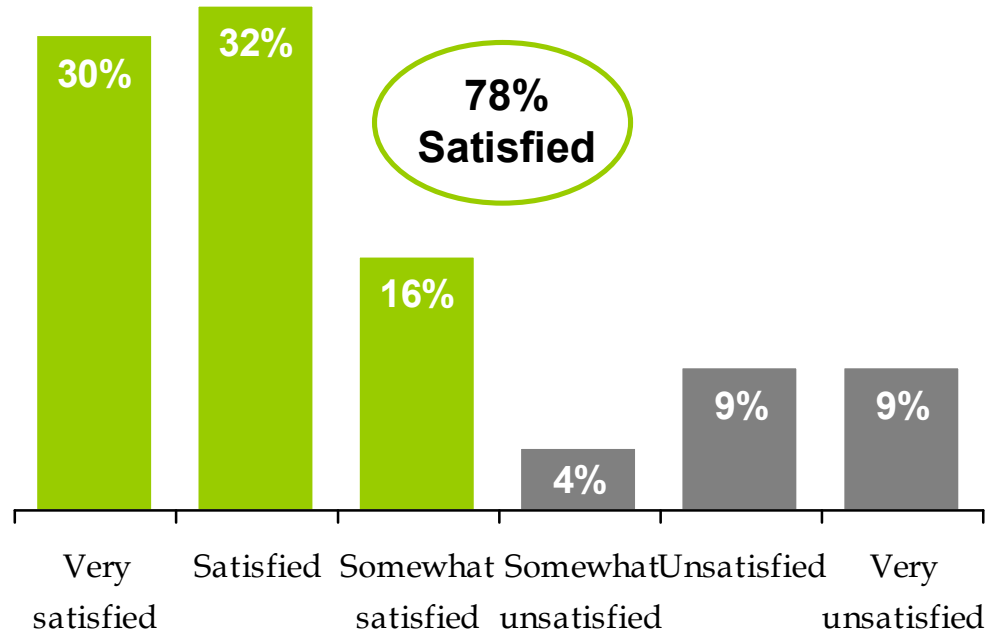
**90%**

90% of incumbent teachers who participated in the placement process say principals evaluated their candidacy fairly.

**81%**

81% of transfer candidates report receiving at least one job offer from a new school.

Teacher satisfaction with the transfer process - including reassigned teachers and those who failed in their attempt to transfer










Source: TNTP survey conducted in March 2007 of 1446 CPS teachers.



## Teachers across all levels of seniority have similar experiences in the transfer process.

There are no statistically significant differences by seniority or tenure among teachers on *any* of the following variables:

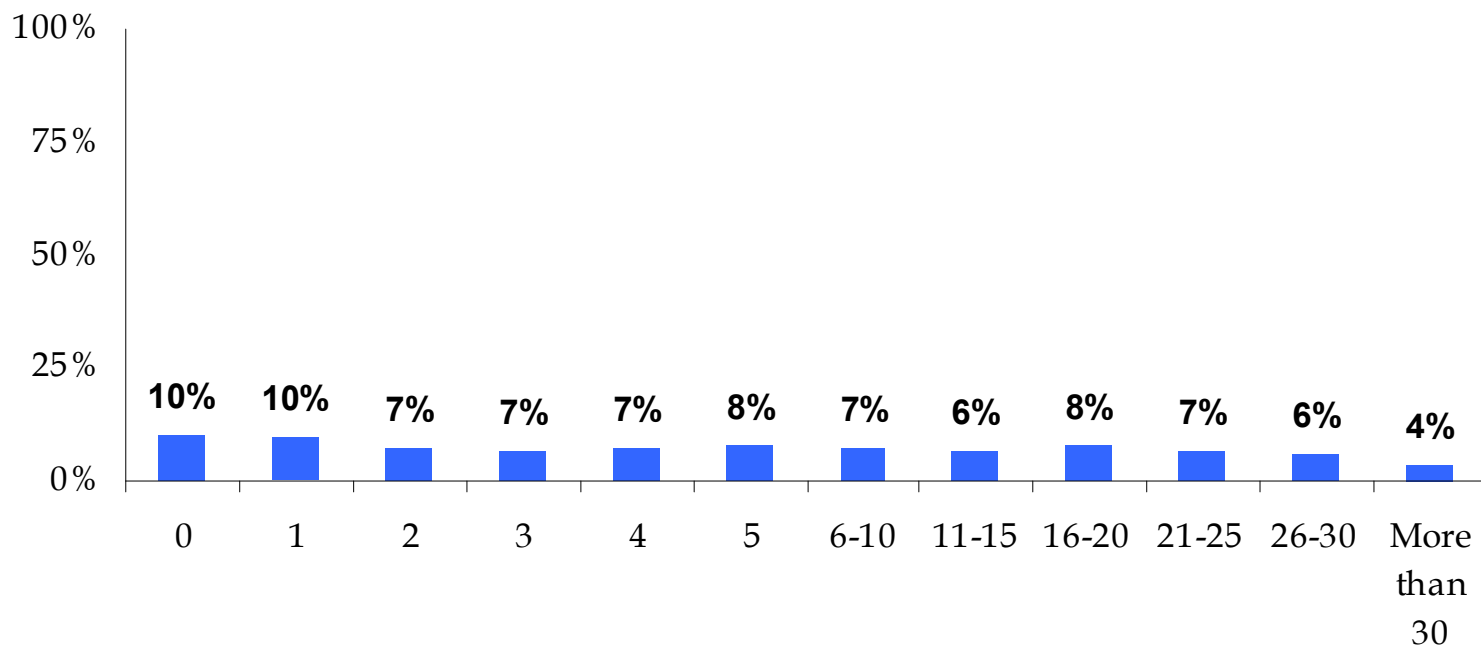
-  Opportunity to get to know schools
-  Believing principal(s) evaluated them fairly
-  Number of offers received
-  Securing a new position
-  Believing the process results in a good fit between teaching style and school
-  Believing the process results in a match both principal and teacher feel good about
-  Overall satisfaction with the transfer process

Source: TNTP survey conducted in March 2007 of 1446 CPS teachers.



**Teacher mobility rates across seniority levels are fairly consistent, though very novice teachers move more often because they are more likely to be non-renewed or reassigned.**

**Percent of CPS teachers who transferred schools after the 2004 school year, by years of seniority**



Source: TNTP survey conducted in March 2007 of 1446 CPS teachers.

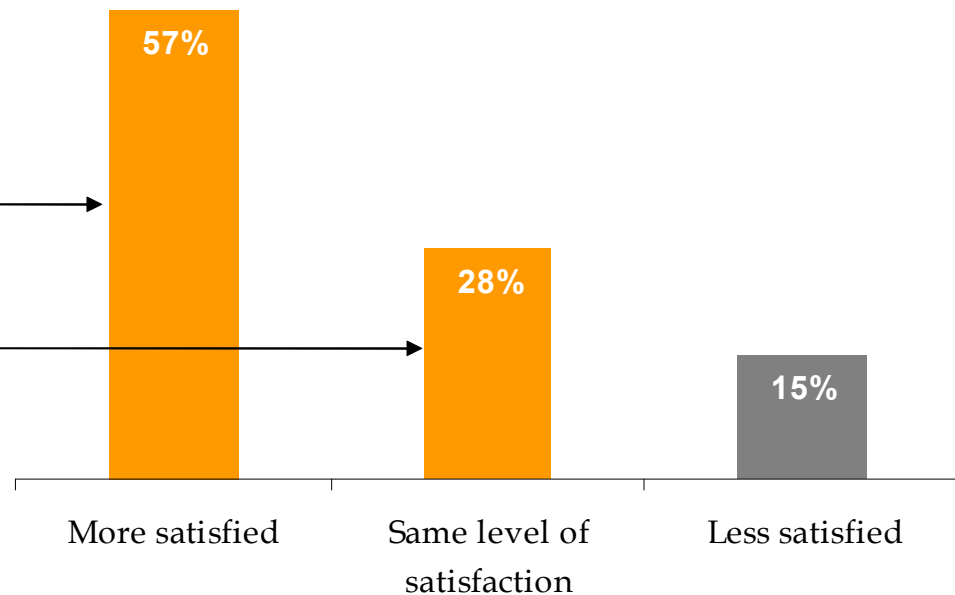




**CPS teachers who moved schools (including voluntary transfers and reassignments) were at least as satisfied with their new position as their old one.**

85% of CPS teachers who changed schools reported that they liked their new school as well as or better than their previous school.

Satisfaction with new position compared to previous position among transferring and re-assigned CPS teachers

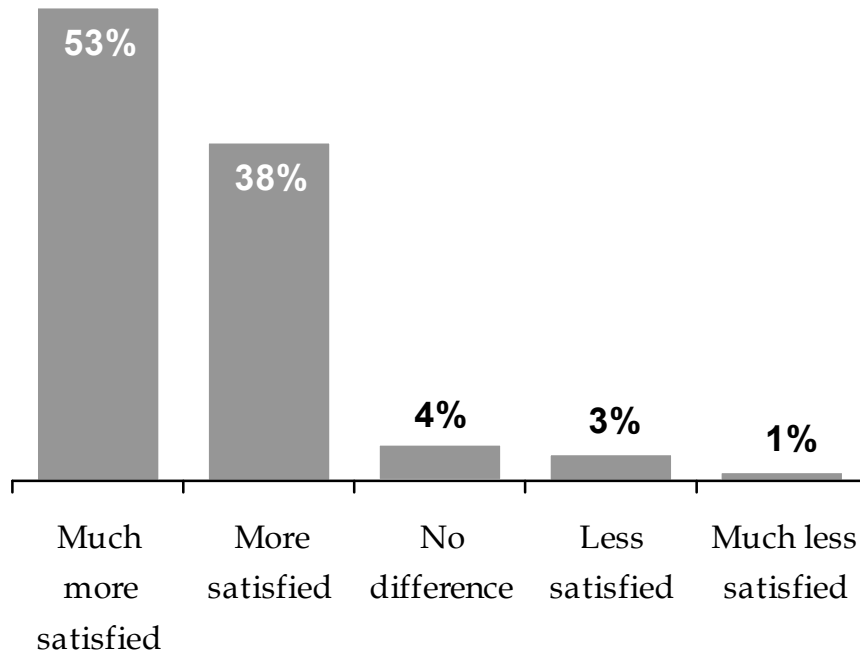


Source: TNTP survey conducted in March 2007 of 1446 CPS teachers.



## Principals support the current process just as strongly as teachers.

Veteran principals' satisfaction with the hiring, transfer, and dismissal rules under the current contract compared to the previous contract



92%

92% of principals agreed with the statement: "The transfer process allows me to hire the teachers that create the best possible instructional team for my school."

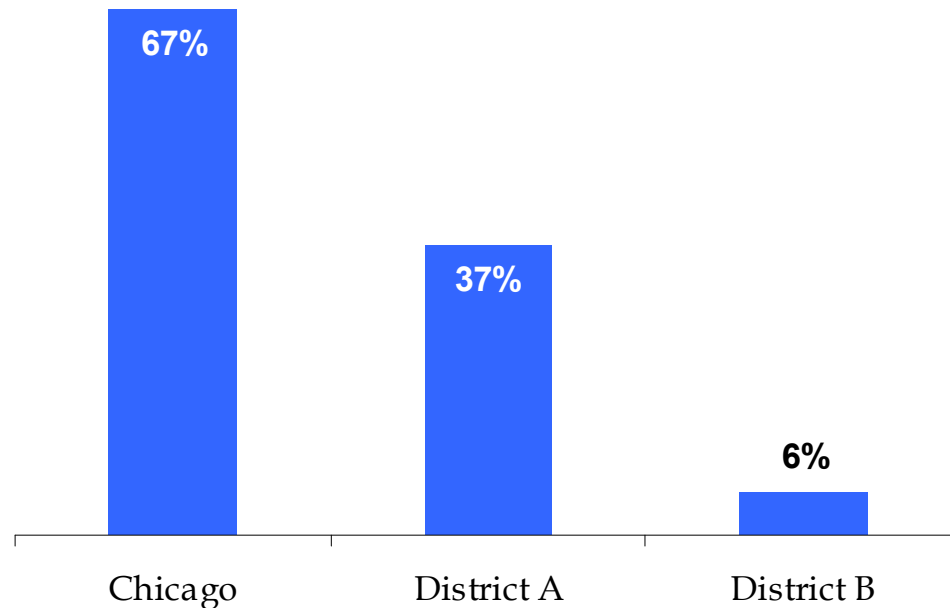
**90%** of principals are satisfied overall with the Chicago Public Schools teacher transfer process.

Source: TNTP survey conducted in February - March 2007 of 464 CPS principals  
\*Veteran principals have 5 or more years experience



## Chicago principals are dramatically more satisfied with the transfer process than principals in peer urban districts.

Percent of principals responding “Very satisfied” or “satisfied” to question: “Overall, how satisfied are you with the transfer process?”



Source: TNTP surveys of principals in Chicago and two other large urban districts in winter 2007.



## Principals of schools across levels of student poverty are similarly satisfied with hiring rules.

Satisfaction with...	Higher poverty schools*	Lower poverty schools
... level of discretion for new hires	95%	93%
... level of discretion for internal transfer hires	85%	93%
... level of discretion for reserve pool hires	79%	71%
... hiring process for external hires	97%	98%
... hiring timeline	92%	99%
Percent who agree with the statement: "The transfer process allows me to hire the teachers that create the best possible instructional team for my school."	92%	95%
Overall satisfaction with transfer process	91%	91%

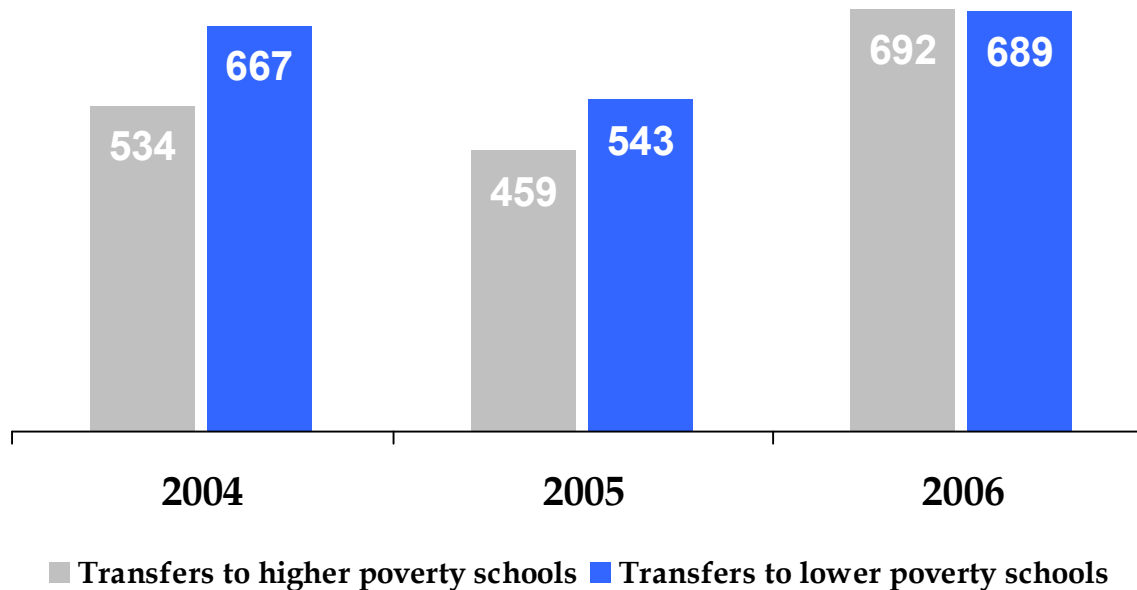
Source: TNTP survey conducted in February - March 2007 of 464 district principals.

\*Higher poverty schools have more than 75% of students receiving free or reduced lunch.



## Data demonstrate that the CPS transfer system leads to equitable teacher movement between high and low poverty schools.

There is little difference in the poverty levels of the schools to which teachers transfer



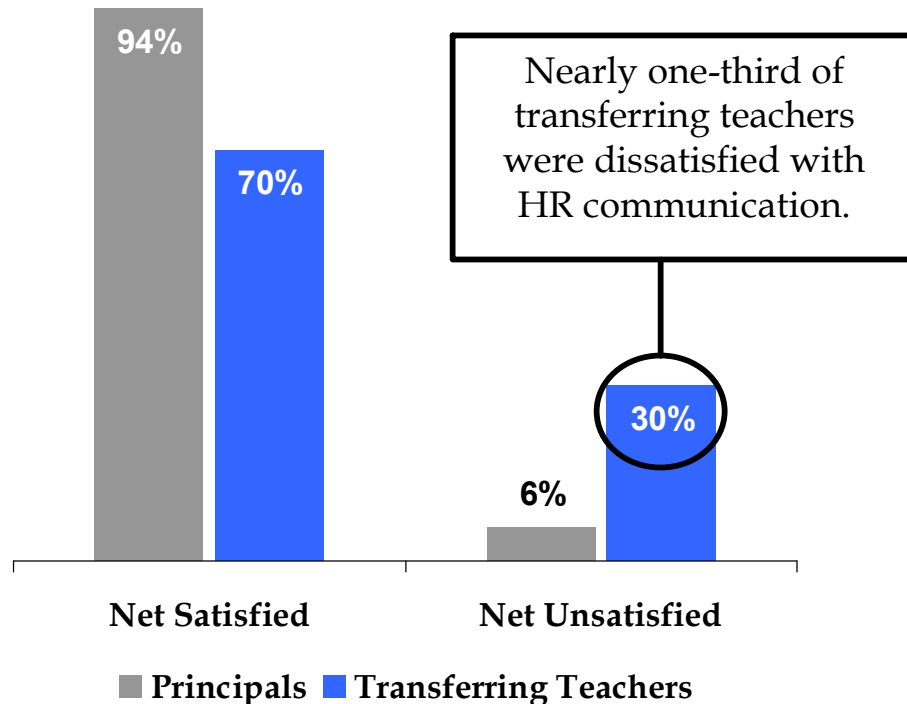
Data also show that the CPS transfer rules do not disadvantage schools by size – teachers do not consistently move from larger to smaller schools, nor from smaller to larger schools.

Source: CPS HR Data



## Teachers are not as satisfied as principals with communication from HR about the transfer process.

Satisfaction with HR



**Teachers:** “How satisfied were you with the communication and support that you received from HR during the transfer or reassignment process?”

**Principals:** “Overall, how satisfied are you with the communication about the transfer and hiring processes you receive from Human Resources?”

Source: TNTP surveys conducted in 2007 of 464 CPS Principals and 1446 teachers

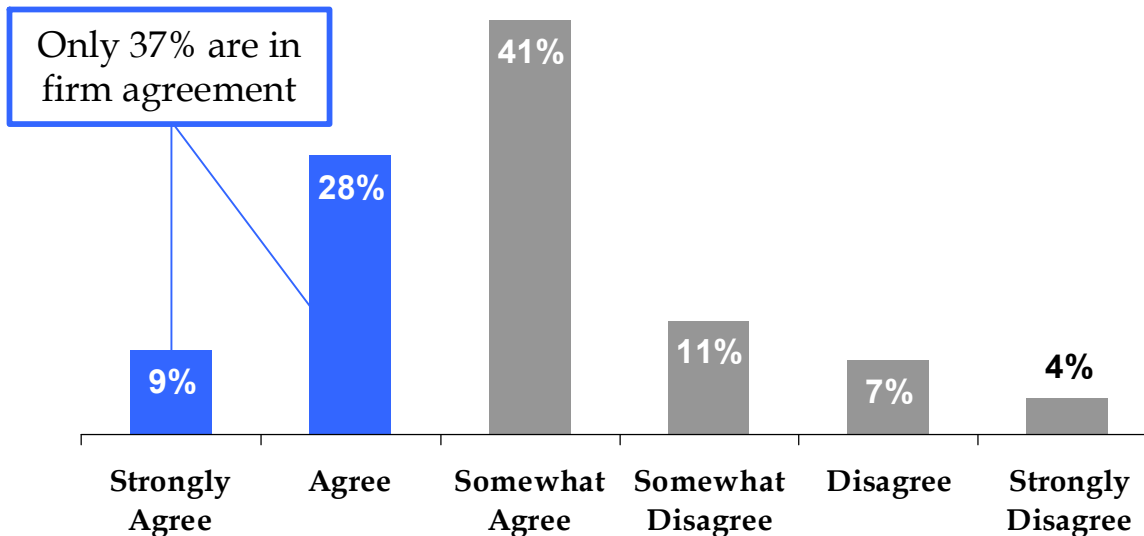


## Not all principals use the online vacancy system – and most users find it to be only somewhat helpful.

**24%**

24% of principals report that they do not use the online system to post vacancies

“When I am reviewing candidates for hire, the CPS online systems provide me with the information I need to make a good hiring decision.”



Source: TNTP survey conducted in February – March 2007 of 464 CPS Principals



## Transfer and Hiring Summary

### Good news

- CPS has a transparent, highly effective system of teacher staffing rules
- Teachers and principals strongly agree that the process is working very well
- Equal transfer opportunities for all

### Can be better

- A subset of teachers is not satisfied with transfer communication from HR
- Principals are lukewarm about vacancy management system



### Recommendations

- Extend current policies that support mutual consent for teachers and principals
- Share news of CPS successes with teachers and other stakeholders
- Keep the decentralized structure but increase targeted communication from central HR
- Invest in technology that brokers meaningful interactions between transferring teachers and principals while preserving teacher and principal autonomy

\*More detailed recommendations provided in the Recommendations section at the end of this report.





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## #3

### **Reassignment and Reserve Pool**

*While the number of reassigned teachers is relatively small, current CPS policy requires reassignment based on seniority rather than teacher quality or school fit, which leaves top performers vulnerable to being displaced and compromises the efforts of principals to maintain effective instructional teams.*



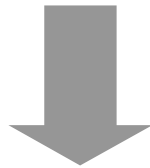
## Overview of Current CPS Reassignment Policy

- Teacher reassignment occurs when a school or program is closed, enrollment drops, or the educational focus of a school is changed, requiring the removal of some or all teachers at that school.
- Provisionals, substitutes, and probationary teachers will be cut first, followed by regularly certified and tenured teachers.
- The teacher with the lowest level of seniority within the certification area must be reassigned. When teachers are reassigned, they are to be notified in writing and provided with a vacancy list.
- Principals are not required to interview or hire any reassigned teachers. Reassigned teachers compete with all other candidates for positions.
- A reassigned PAT (probationary teacher) has one month to find a new position before being laid off.
- Reassigned tenured teachers who do not find positions by the time school begins are put in the reserve pool. There, they work as substitutes with full pay and benefits and continue to search for permanent positions.
- If a reassigned tenured teacher is unable to secure a permanent appointment within 10 school months after notice of removal, the teacher shall be laid off and given an honorable termination from service.

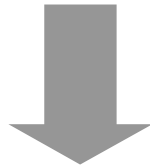


The number of teachers reassigned has decreased since 2004 and now constitutes only about 1% of CPS teachers each year.

**604**



**225**



**262**

604 teachers were reassigned in the 2004-2005 school year.

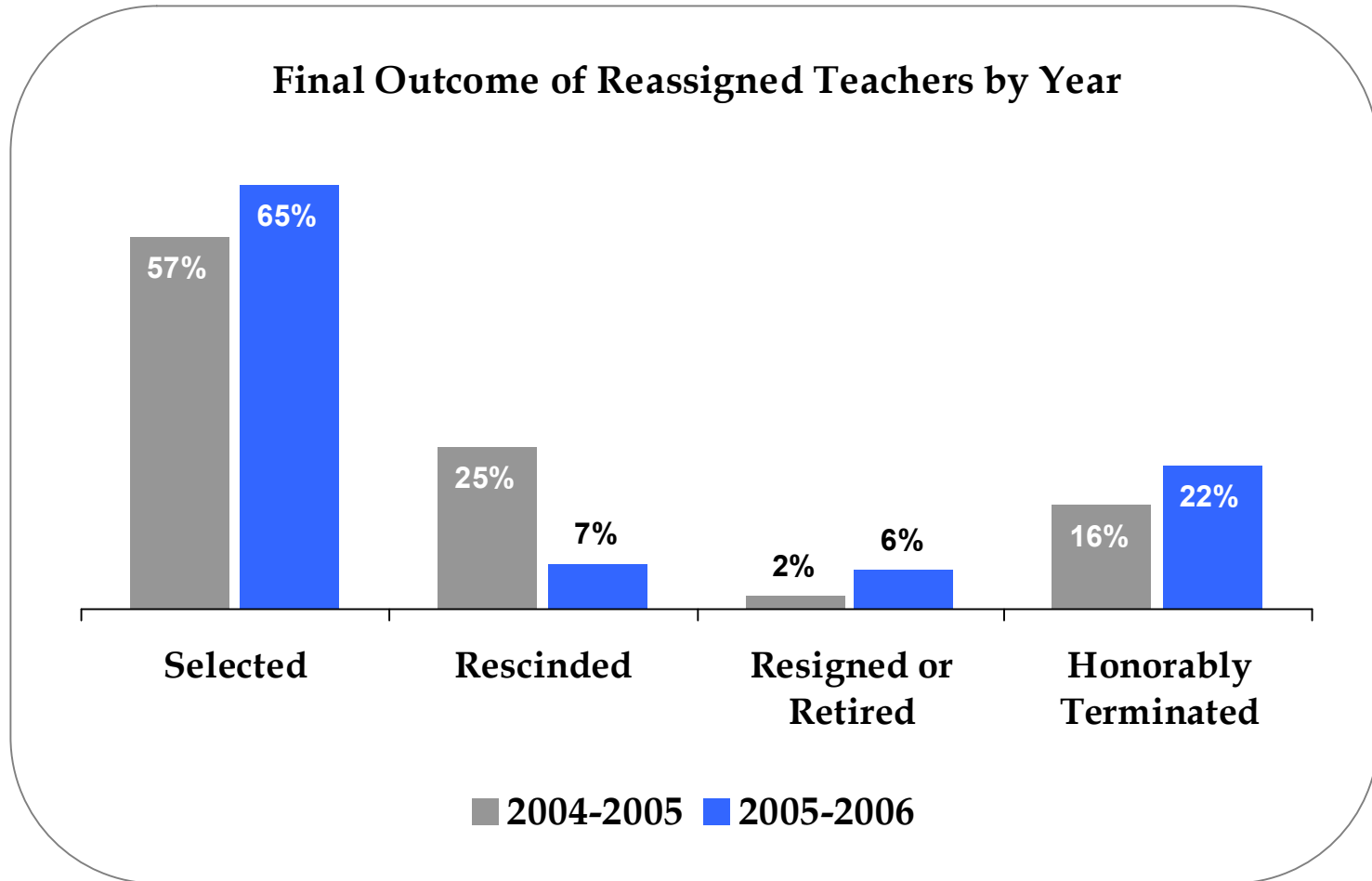
That number dropped by 63% to 225 for the 2005-2006 school year.

262 teachers were reassigned for the 2006-2007 school year – **only 1% of all CPS teachers.**

Source: CPS HR Data



**About 4 out of 5 reassigned teachers find a new position or are rescinded into a previous position.**



Source: CPS HR Data

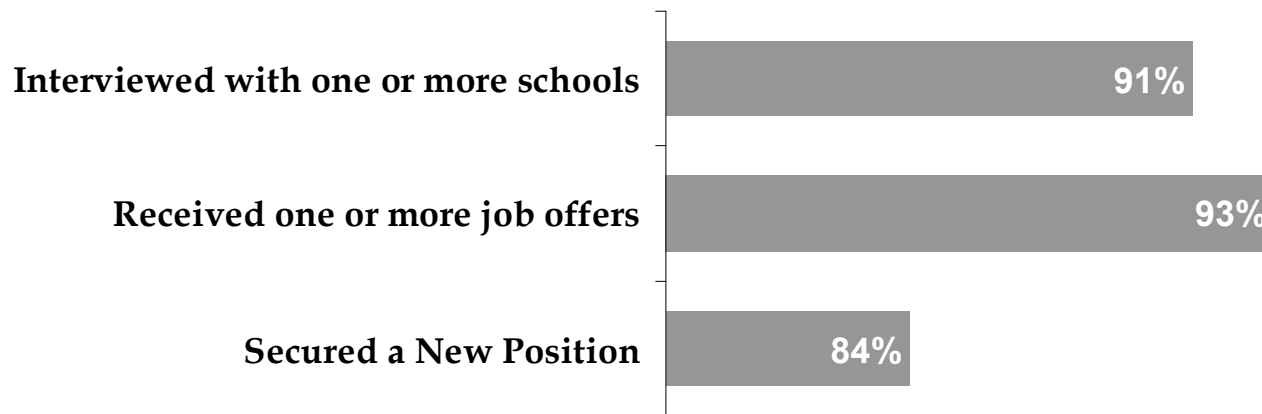


## Reassigned teachers were successful in finding new positions with which they were satisfied.

93%

93% of teachers who were reassigned and who found positions agreed that “The transfer or reassignment process resulted in a match that both my new principal and I felt good about”

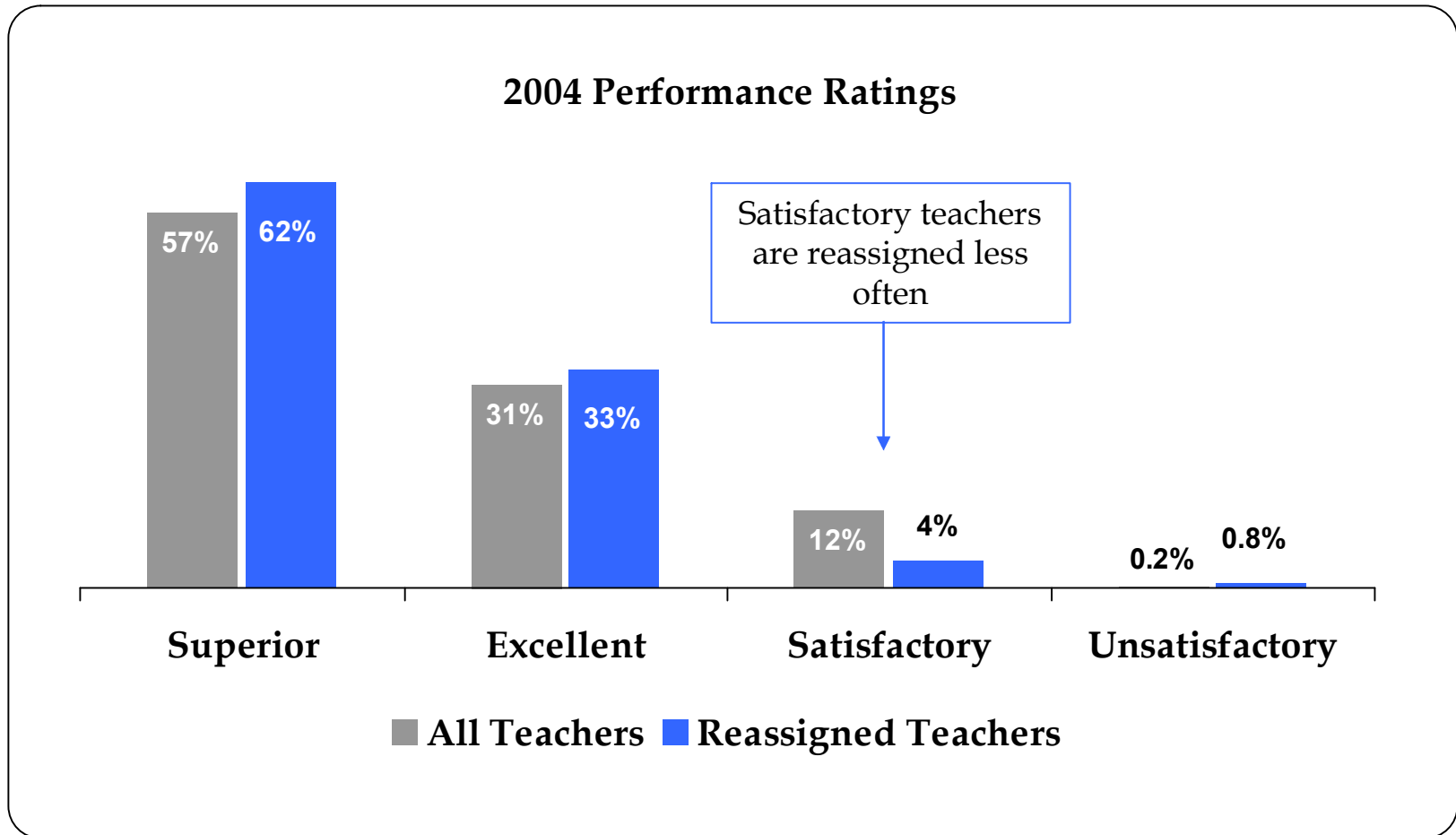
### Job Search Activities of Reassigned Teachers



Source: TNTP survey conducted in March 2007 of 1446 CPS teachers, 48 of whom were reassigned



According to efficiency ratings, top performers are reassigned slightly more often than satisfactory performers.



Source: CPS HR Data



## Principals are frustrated with losing top performers to reassignment.

50%

Half of principals reported losing a teacher to reassignment or layoff whom they wanted to keep at their school.



“This past school year I was particularly angered by losing two teachers in key positions.”

“It has been difficult... keeping highly efficient teachers who just happen to have the least seniority.”

Source: TNTP survey conducted in February – March 2007 of 464 CPS Principals



## Reassignment Summary

### Good news

- The vast majority of reassigned teachers find new jobs that are a good fit
- Tenured teachers have the protection of the reserve pool if they are reassigned
- CPS has a mechanism for terminating reassigned teachers who can't find jobs

### Can be better

- Principals cannot protect top performers from being reassigned if less senior
- Principals find alternative, unofficial ways to rid their schools of poor performers



### Recommendations

- Support principals in protecting their top performers by allowing them to reassign any teachers rated “Satisfactory” before those rated “Excellent” or “Superior.”
- Do not allow “Unsatisfactory” teachers to be reassigned. They should stay where they are until they are remediated or dismissed.
- Among principals, draw a clear distinction between reassignment and non-renewal. Using non-renewal as a substitute for reassignment undermines the credibility of non-renewal as a performance-based tool. Provide additional training to principals on reassignment and non-renewal.

\*More detailed recommendations provided in the Recommendations section at the end of this report.





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## #4

### **Performance Evaluation and Dismissal**

*The current CPS teacher performance evaluation system does not distinguish strong performers and is ineffective at identifying poor performers and exiting them from the district. Lack of a useful evaluation system makes it more difficult for failing schools to improve.*



## Overview of CPS Evaluation Policy

- Teachers are to receive ratings on or before the Friday of the 37<sup>th</sup> week of the school year.
- Possible ratings include: Superior, Excellent, Satisfactory, and Unsatisfactory.
- Tenured teachers rated excellent or superior are rated EVERY TWO YEARS, rather than annually. Probationary teachers are evaluated annually.
- When a principal is new to a school, he/she only evaluates probationary teachers and substitute teachers initially. New principals may not begin to evaluate tenured teachers who have been rated satisfactory or better until they have served in the school at least five months.
- **Principal submission of evaluation records to HR is inconsistent, which results in CPS having no central evaluation data on many teachers.**



## Overview of CPS Evaluation Policy (cont.)

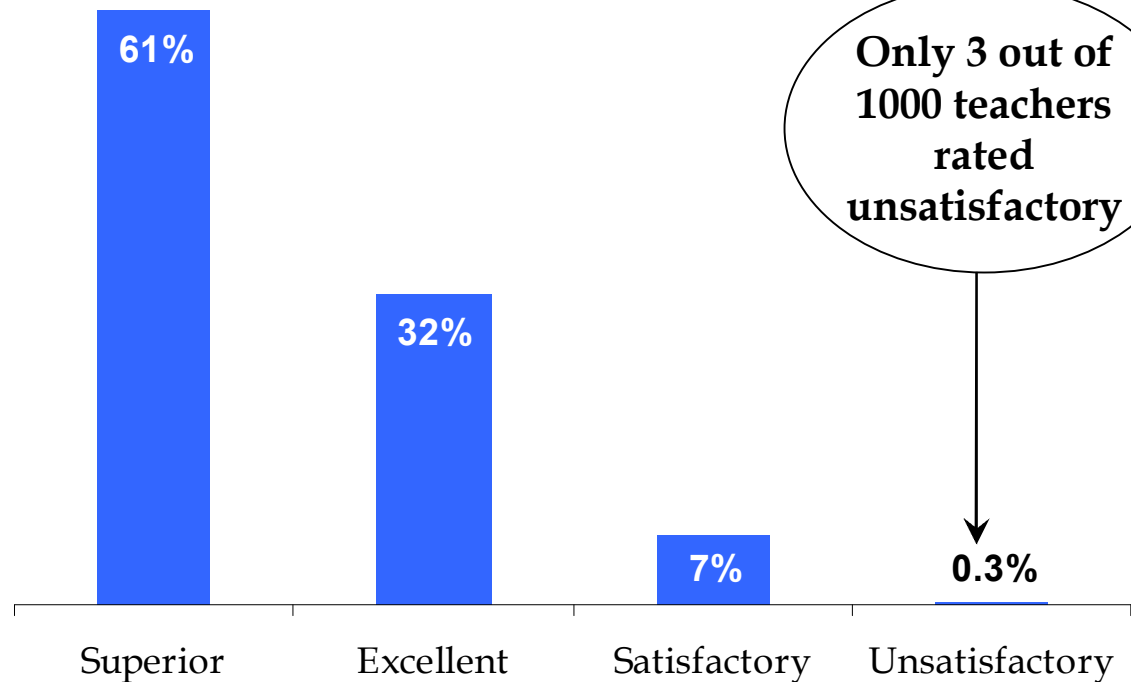
- To reduce a teacher's rating (from Superior to Excellent, or from Excellent to Satisfactory, for example), the principal must notify the teacher in advance in writing.
  - Before being reduced to "Excellent," the teacher can request a conference to discuss ways to improve performance and possibly maintain the original rating.
  - Before reducing a teacher's rating to "Satisfactory", the principal must notify the teacher in writing using Form E-1.
    - This form is given to the teacher during a conference 10 weeks prior to the date the efficiency ratings are to be issued.
  - To rate a teacher as "Unsatisfactory," the principal must observe the teacher in the classroom on two different school days, then notify the teacher in writing using Form E-3. The notice is given to the teacher at a conference and states that the teacher is required to participate in a remediation plan.

**These complex procedures for merely lowering the scores of teachers, most of whom are only rated every other year, make it extremely difficult and daunting for principals to accurately rate teachers. Such procedures are highly unique among urban districts.**



**More than 90% of CPS teachers have received one of the top two efficiency ratings in recent years – and hardly any teachers are deemed “unsatisfactory.”**

**Distribution of CPS efficiency ratings, 2003-2006**



Source: TNTP analysis of more than 36,000 efficiency ratings issued from 2003-2006. Our data include all centrally recorded ratings. Not all schools reported ratings to HR.



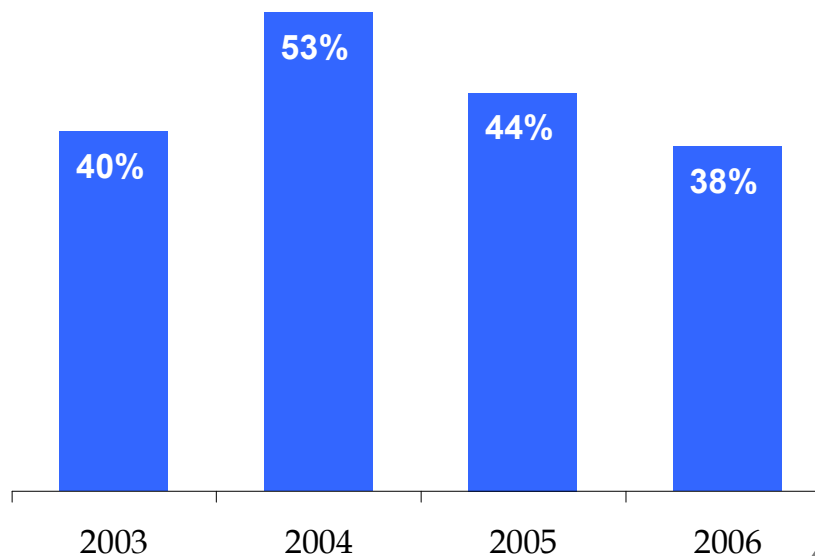
## Most schools do not assign any “unsatisfactory” efficiency ratings.



In each of the last 3 years,  
fewer than 1 in 20 schools  
assigned *any*  
unsatisfactory ratings.

## Even “satisfactory” ratings are infrequent.

Percent of CPS schools issuing only  
"superior" and "excellent" ratings



**88%** of CPS schools have not issued a single unsatisfactory rating in the past four years.

\*Source: CPS HR Data



Even when CPS teachers receive an unsatisfactory efficiency rating, they are rarely dismissed.

**2003**

Total efficiency ratings:

**5,824**

Unsatisfactory ratings:

**23**

Number of U-rated teachers no longer teaching in CPS by the following school year:

**8**

**2004**

Total efficiency ratings:

**13,413**

Unsatisfactory ratings:

**22**

Number of U-rated teachers no longer teaching in CPS by the following school year:

**3**

**2005**

Total efficiency ratings:

**2,585**

Unsatisfactory ratings:

**4**

Number of U-rated teachers no longer teaching in CPS by the following school year:

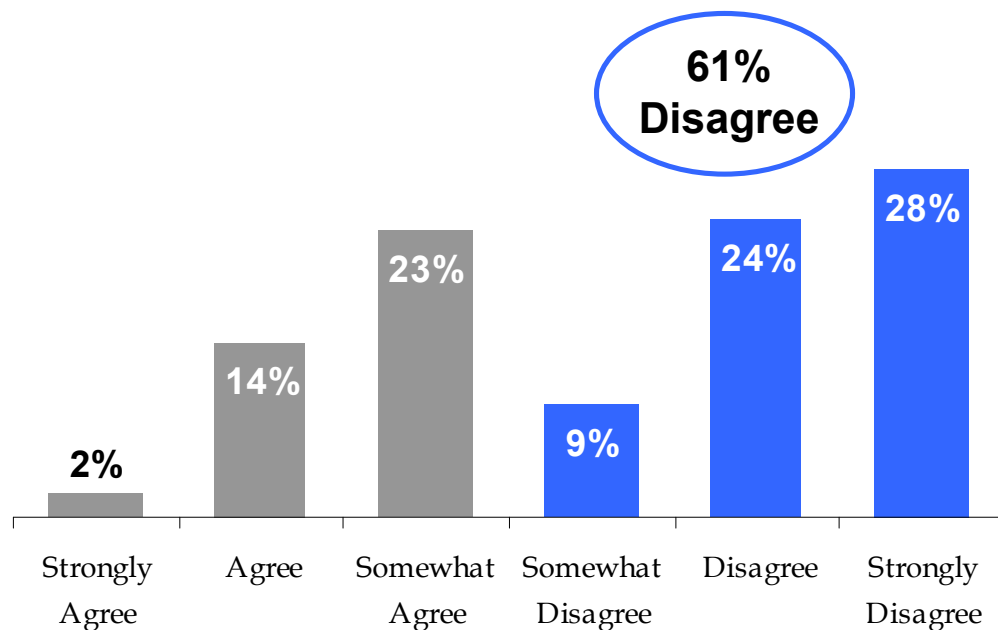
**0**

Between 2003 and 2006, nine teachers received two or more U ratings. *Not one* of those teachers appears to have been dismissed.



## Principals do not have confidence in the evaluation tool.

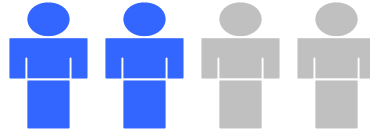
Percent of veteran CPS principals who agree that the CPS performance evaluation process allows them to address poor performance adequately



Source: TNTP survey conducted in February – March 2007 of 464 CPS Principals

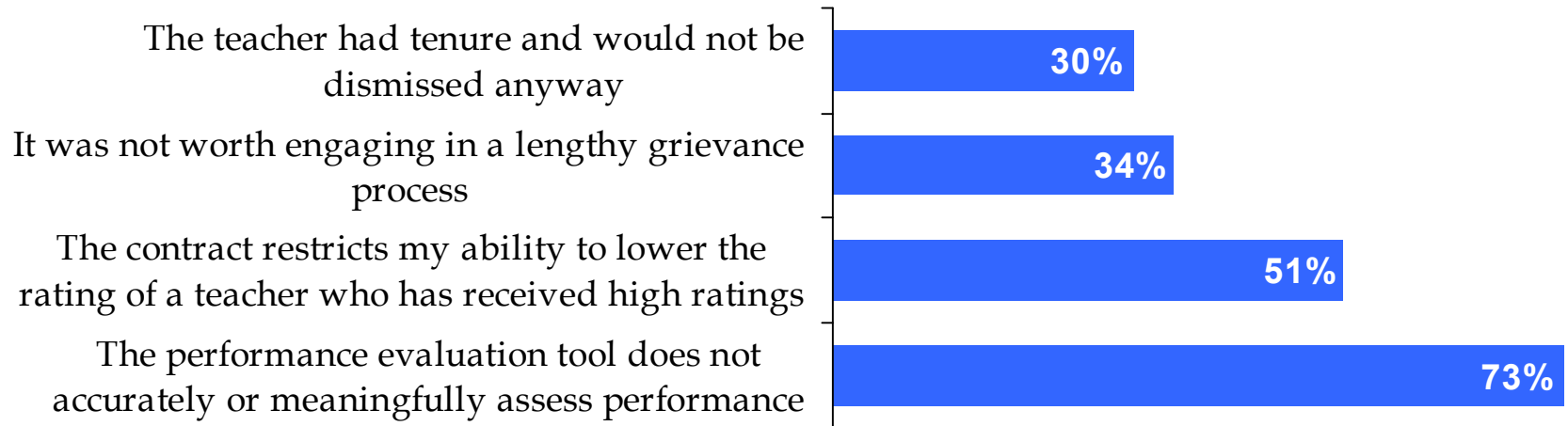


## Principals admit to assigning inflated efficiency ratings.



56% of veteran CPS principals admit to having “assigned a higher efficiency rating to a teacher than the teacher’s performance warranted.”

Principals responded that they inflated ratings because:



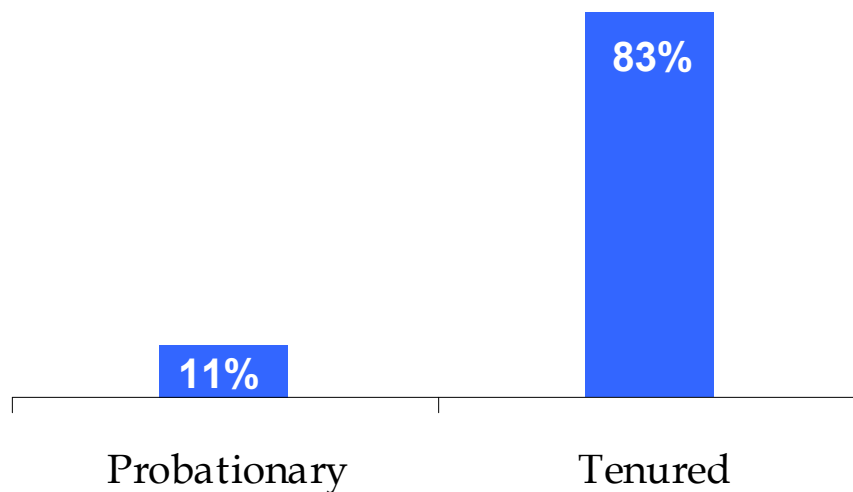
Source: TNTP survey conducted in February – March 2007 of 464 CPS Principals





**Principals report that poor performing tenured teachers are rarely or never terminated.**

**Percent of poor-performing teachers who are rarely or never terminated, according to principals**



Source: TNTP survey conducted in February – March 2007 of 464 CPS Principals



## Principals strongly support the PAT non-renewal policy for probationary teachers.

99%

385 of 388 responding principals believe that “the ability to dismiss poor-performing probationary teachers is important to maintain a high-quality teaching staff.”

Source: TNTP survey conducted in February – March 2007 of 464 CPS Principals

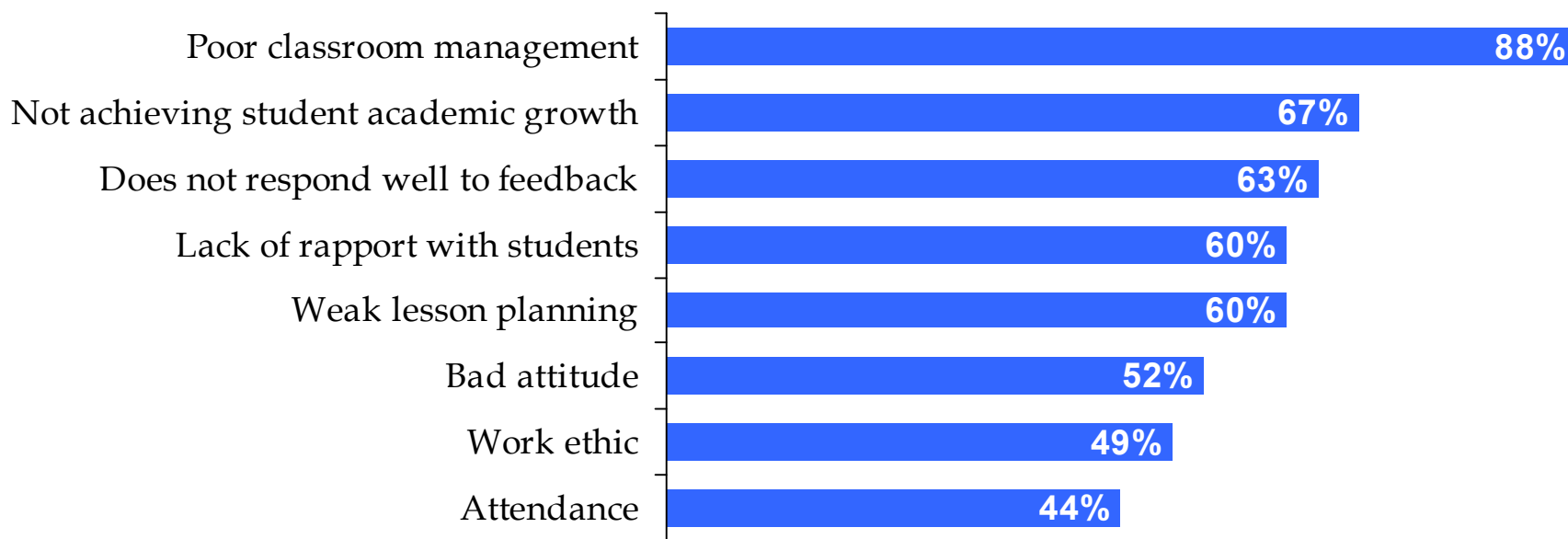


## Principals typically point to weak classroom management and instructional skills as the causes for non-renewal.

94% of CPS principals reported that they “always” or “usually” work with probationary teachers who are performing poorly to improve...

...but only 19% of principals reported that those probationary teachers “always” or “usually” improved and were no longer poor performers.

### Common reasons for non-renewing PATs:



Source: TNTP survey conducted in February – March 2007 of 464 CPS Principals



## Principals are reluctant to seek termination of poor performing teachers – even PATs.

**Top reasons principals do not always take steps to terminate or non-renew PROBATIONARY teachers who are poor performers:**

- 51% - “I believe that teachers deserve a chance to improve.”
- 13% - “The dismissal process is too time-consuming.”
- 13% - “Non-renewing would cause disruption at my school or in my community.”

**Top reasons principals do not always document and seek the initiation of a termination proceeding for TENURED teachers who are poor performers:**

- 55% - “The documentation required is too time-consuming.”
- 39% - “I believe that teachers deserve a chance to improve.”
- 38% - “The teacher leaves on his/her own.”
- 34% - “The risk of a cumbersome grievance process is too great.”

Source: TNTP survey conducted in February – March 2007 of 464 CPS Principals



## Without an effective evaluation system, even failing schools appear to be staffed with outstanding teachers.



# 87

In the HR data set, 87 schools met the following criteria for being identified as “failing schools”:

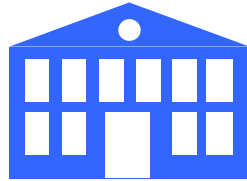
- Student test scores declined between 2003 and 2005
- Student test scores were below average on the 2005 math and reading tests.

- In failing schools in particular, one would expect to see unsatisfactory teacher evaluations, given that those schools are not achieving positive results or progress for students.
- However, of the 87 failing schools, 69 (79%) *did not issue a single unsatisfactory rating* between 2003 and 2005.

\*Source: CPS HR Data



## The disconnect between teacher performance and student performance is striking.



### Case study:

A PreK-8 school with about 500 students is almost 90% low-income and 100% African-American. The percentage of students scoring at or above the national average on the ITBS math section has gone from 45% to 27% since 2003, and the percent scoring at the national average on the reading section has gone from 33% to 18%. Of the school's 51 ratings, not a single one was unsatisfactory. But this particular school also did not issue any satisfactory ratings. **All 51 ratings were superior or excellent.** The breakdown was 78% Superior, 22% Excellent.



**Unfortunately, these cases are the norm rather than the exception.**



### **Case study:**

A pre-K-5 school has over 900 students, 98.6% of whom are low-income and 97% of whom are Hispanic. Reading scores have fallen 57% to 36% since 2003, and math scores have fallen from 48% to 43%. The school has issued 99 efficiency ratings since 2003. **Of the 99 ratings, not a single one was unsatisfactory, and only 3 were satisfactory.** The breakdown was 65% Superior, 32% Excellent, and 3% Satisfactory.



## Some high-rated teachers believe that the evaluation system is not meaningful.

“I do not feel the evaluation is fair in the school. A principal comes to visit your classroom once or twice during the school year; that is not adequate time to formulate a true fair evaluation of a teacher's performance.” -Superior-rated teacher at low poverty High School with 21-25 years experience

“I do not feel that I am observed adequately to be judged. I have gotten superior ratings, but I don't really think I have been observed enough. In fact, last year I was not observed at all.” -Superior-rated teacher at high poverty K-8 school with 4 years experience

“Rather than a year-end evaluation, I think teachers/staff should receive an evaluation every quarter (like the students) -- so teachers can continuously 'improve' performance each quarter.” -Superior-rated teacher at low poverty K-8 school with 11-15 years experience

“My principal has never observed me in the classroom. I continually receive superior ratings. I work hard and have done much to improve the education of my students. However, there are numerous teachers at my school who also receive superior ratings who would easily be rated as unsatisfactory or lower by an objective administrator.” -Superior-rated teacher at high poverty High School with 11-15 years experience

Source: TNTP survey conducted in March 2007 of 1446 CPS teachers.





## **Some teachers also believe that ratings are inflated and that there are not appropriate consequences for poor performance.**

“My perspective on the evaluation process is that it is a joke. I have never seen or heard of anyone getting anything less than superior...Similar to the inflation of grades that is seen in many school districts, I believe our rating scale is also questionable.” -Superior teacher at low poverty high school with 4 years experience

“I don't think all that get Superior deserve to be Superior.” -Superior teacher at high poverty elementary school with 11-15 years experience

“I think CPS is forced to keep teachers who are not effective in the classroom. I think there should be a system to get rid of people who should not be teachers.” -Superior teacher at low poverty elementary school with 11-15 years experience

“There are too many teachers who are put into positions just because they cannot be fired or the process to fire them is too difficult.” -Superior teacher at high poverty PreK-8 school with 6-10 years experience

“Teachers with bad ratings should be fired.” -Superior teacher at high poverty PreK-8 school with 6-10 years experience

Source: TNTP survey conducted in March 2007 of 1446 CPS teachers.



**While some teachers feel their principals inflate the ratings of their peers, teachers overall feel they are being rated fairly.**

**84%**

84% of teachers surveyed reported that they believe their current or most recent principal rates them fairly.

Source: TNTP survey conducted in March 2007 of 1446 CPS teachers.



## Performance Evaluation and Dismissal Summary

### Good news

- CPS has mechanisms to address poor performance in PATs
- Teachers believe that their own principals are fair evaluators

### Can be better

- Nearly all teachers receive positive ratings – even when kids are failing
- Even those who get U ratings are rarely dismissed
- Principals need better training on PAT non-renewal
- Principals do not buy into the current evaluation system



### Recommendations

- Partner with an independent, external entity that can design a new, more rigorous evaluation system
- Invest in substantial training for principals on using that new system
- Evaluate all teachers annually
- Include data from parent and colleague surveys in teacher evaluations
- Simplify the process for dismissing poorly performing tenured teachers
- Deny an annual salary step increase to any teacher receiving a U rating

\*More detailed recommendations provided in the Recommendations section at the end of this report.



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## Recommendations

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### Recruitment and Hiring

- CPS should consider offering financial incentives for principals to make earlier hiring decisions.
- CPS should design and implement a targeted recruitment campaign aimed at increasing the number of candidates available for high need subjects like special education and should lobby to change state alternative certification rules for special education.
- CPS should identify and evaluate obstacles to earlier hiring, including budget timelines and vacancy notification, then design and implement a plan to move up the hiring timeline.
- CPS should reconsider the timing of job fairs to ensure they are early enough to support a competitive hiring timeline.
- Human resources should have a small number of publicly stated, measurable goals relating to human capital. (See examples on the slide following Recommendations.)



## Recommendations (cont.)

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### Transfer and Hiring Rules

- CPS should retain its current provisions requiring the mutual consent of principals and teachers in all placements in order to continue to effectively staff its schools. Compared to most large districts, CPS has an excellent transfer process structure.
- CPS should develop and implement a consistent, customer-friendly communication and support plan for working with incumbent teachers during the transfer process and with new hires in the initial placement process.
- CPS should invest in a high-quality online tool that unifies the incumbent and new hire pools of teachers to offer one-stop shopping for principals
  - Online systems should include detailed information such as resume, statement of educational philosophy, geographic preferences, and letters of reference
- CPS should provide additional support for the use of the online system.



## Recommendations (cont.)

### Reassignment and Reserve Pool

- CPS should reform its reassignment policy to connect it with performance evaluation. Instead of considering only seniority and subject area when making reassignment decisions, principals should also use efficiency ratings, possibly along the following lines:
  - “Unsatisfactory” teachers would be remediated and/or exited and therefore should not be eligible for reassignment.
  - “Satisfactory” teachers would be the first to be reassigned (the “Satisfactory” teacher with least seniority first, then proceeding in seniority order within the group of teachers rated “Satisfactory”).
  - “Excellent” teachers would only be reassigned if the group of “Satisfactory” teachers had been exhausted, and “Superior” only if “Excellent” had been exhausted.
- We hypothesize that connecting reassignment with performance evaluation would have the following positive outcomes:
  - Increased incentive for strong teacher performance because it carries the additional benefit of additional position security.
  - Increased incentive for thorough and accurate use of the performance rating tool by principals.
- Successful implementation of these reforms presumes improvements to the evaluation tool, as recommended in the Evaluation and Dismissal section.



## Recommendations (cont.)

### Performance Evaluation and Dismissal

- CPS and the Chicago Teachers Union should partner with an independent, external entity to design and implement a rigorous evaluation system. Recommended process steps include:
  - Survey parents and colleagues annually about teacher performance, and factor that information into teacher evaluation.
  - Work with principals to ensure their confidence in the tool and their appropriate and accurate implementation of it.
- Once a more rigorous evaluation tool is in place, all CPS teachers should be evaluated every year.
- Past evaluations should have no bearing on the present year's evaluation.
- Teachers receiving two U ratings in five years (that are upheld through any applicable grievances) should be dismissed from CPS.
- Teachers who receive one U rating should not receive an annual salary increase that year.
- Collection of performance evaluations from principals should happen consistently, and performance evaluation records should be readily available for principals during the hiring process.
- In addition to overhauling the tools and processes for teacher performance evaluation, CPS should provide additional training to principals to ensure they are following protocols appropriately. CPS should also work with principals to emphasize the importance of tenure decisions as they relate to performance. We recommend a more rigorous process of evaluation at the end of the probationary period. Teachers should not be awarded tenure by default, but rather based on thoughtful reflection and assessment of performance.





## Sample HR goals

Category	Goal	Target
<b>Quantity</b>	# teachers who start teaching Math and special education from this app year	460 Math and Science 680 Special Education 1500 overall
<b>Quality</b>	% of teachers who receive CST score of 240 or higher in their content area	70%
<b>Customer service</b>	% of teachers who answer the question, "How would you rate your satisfaction with the level of service you have received" as satisfied or very satisfied	85% net satisfied; 70% satisfied or very satisfied
<b>Training</b>	% of teachers who answer the question, "Given the limited time available for training, the summer institute prepared me as well as possible to be successful in my first year of teaching" with agree or strongly agree	80% net agree
<b>Retention</b>	% of teachers who start teaching second yr and third yr	88% return for yr 2 and 70% return for yr 3
<b>Placement Communications</b>	% of teachers who answer the question, "I have been satisfied with communication surrounding the placement process" with agree or strongly agree.	70% net agree; 50% agree or strongly agree
<b>Placement</b>	% of teachers who have a school level placement by the day teachers report to schools	90%
<b>Overall satisfaction</b>	On the question, "Overall, how would you describe your attitude toward CPS now?", % of incoming teachers say somewhat positive, positive or very positive	85% net positive



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## Appendix A: Methodology

TNTP divided its work into the following two phases:

### Phase 1: Off-Site Contract Analysis

TNTP gained a basic understanding of CPS contractual staffing rules and provided the district with a high-level overview. To achieve this, TNTP:

- o Analyzed the staffing rules in the CPS collective bargaining agreement, with a focus on the provisions governing voluntary transfers, involuntary transfers (excessed teachers), new teacher hiring timelines, bumping, evaluation, and teacher dismissal.
- o Talked with district staff members who could elaborate on how these rules work and answer our questions.
- o Provided a memorandum that included our contractual analysis and preliminary hypotheses, questions, and recommendations.

### Phase 2: On-Site Data-Gathering

TNTP gathered the qualitative and quantitative data needed to understand the impact of CPS staffing rules and to build a strong, fact-driven case for change. To achieve this, TNTP:

- o Gathered data from existing district tracking systems on hiring timelines, the movement of voluntary transfers and excessed teachers, and evaluation/terminations. We focused on the following questions: Do staffing rules result in the forcing of incumbent teachers onto other schools that may not want them? The passing around of poor performers? Late new teacher hiring and the loss of the best applicants? Do the rules systematically disadvantage novice teachers, even the best?
- o Interviewed district staff and principals
- o Conducted surveys
- o Evaluated the impacts of the union staffing rules
- o Delivered final report/presentation that includes TNTP's findings, analysis and recommendations



## Appendix A: Methodology (Cont.)

To further explain each part of our Phase 2 data gathering and analyses, which are reflected in this report, the following is a summary of each type of methodology we employed:

### *Analysis of HR Data*

TNTP worked with staff members from CPS to collect key data points to examine in relation to our goals. The main data sets we requested were:

- o Snapshot data showing all placements of teachers at the beginning of each school year
- o Separation data showing all teachers who exited the system with reasons
- o Application data showing all applicants to the system, their education experience, and whether they were hired
- o Performance evaluation data showing all teacher ratings
- o School demographic data

All data sets showed the 2002-2003 school year through present. We used Microsoft Access and Excel to explore the data and determine basic descriptive statistics.

### *Surveys*

TNTP drafted three surveys for distribution to the following groups:

- o CPS principals
- o CPS applicants
- o Current CPS teachers

All surveys were reviewed and edited by CPS HR staff. Surveys were distributed and tabulated electronically, on SurveyMonkey.com. On the principal survey, we had an 80% response rate (464 out of 577). On the applicant survey, we had a 20% response rate (434 out of 2175). Please note that we anticipate a low response rate on this type of survey, since applicant email addresses may have changed since the time they submitted their application. On the teacher transfer survey, we had a 29% response rate (1446 out of 5000).

### *Case Studies/Interviews*

TNTP interviewed the current principals of 7 different schools, including 5 PreK-8 schools, 1 PreK-high school, and 1 high school. We asked the principals a set of questions about Chicago's transfer, hiring, and evaluation processes to get a sense of their perspectives.