

# Short meetings could encourage teachers to stay on the job

May 16 2023, by James Martinez

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A single, 10-minute meeting between teachers and their principals can increase teacher job satisfaction, our new research shows. This increase in job satisfaction could potentially encourage teachers to stay in the

profession longer, thereby reducing turnover and potentially saving school districts hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Our pilot study [findings were published](#) in the *Journal of Leadership, Equity, and Research*.

By combining surveys and digital conferencing to gauge how teachers felt before and after they met with their principals, we implemented a novel research design that, to the best of our knowledge, has never been attempted previously. The three teachers who had the meetings were compared to four teachers who did not meet with their principals.

Although there are many factors, such as relatively low salaries and [lack of support](#) from colleagues, that [contribute to teacher turnover](#), teachers also frequently mention [inadequate support from school principals](#) as a major reason for leaving the profession. Due to increasing demands on school administrators' time, a commitment of only 10 minutes could have a lot of appeal if later on, that 10 minutes can save countless hours that would otherwise be spent on attracting and hiring new teachers to replace the ones that leave.

Half of U.S. teachers [leave the profession within their first five years on the job](#). These early departures occur most often in [schools located in poorer, rural and inner-city areas](#).

Very often these schools have [higher percentages of students who require remedial or specialized learning environments](#). In terms of subject matter, [many schools are struggling](#) to find qualified math and [science teachers](#), as well as teachers who are certified to teach English language learners.

Studies have also shown that many schools with lower student achievement [have disproportionately high numbers of inexperienced](#)

[teachers](#).

While our study involved 10-minute meetings, we recognize that [school principals](#) need to do more than just hold these meetings to ensure they are supporting their teachers effectively. Recent research has shown that COVID-19 [led to lower job satisfaction among teachers](#), placing greater demands on school principals to support their teachers.

Depending on the location, the [cost of replacing each teacher](#) is between US\$10,000 and \$20,000. Taken nationally, these costs amount to \$7.3 billion annually that could be spent on facilities, programs, meals and supplies to directly assist students.

We are making plans to expand this intervention research to include a much larger population of teachers—500 from one state, to be exact—and administrators.

We also plan to investigate the role that social media plays in how the [general public](#), and specifically aspiring teachers, view the teaching profession. Thirty years ago, burned-out teachers were limited in expressing their workplace challenges to friends, family and others in their local communities. With the advent of social media, however, they are able to broadcast these struggles to anyone with [internet access](#), across the country and around the world.

Determining the factors that contribute to the number of teachers who enter the profession is also just as important as keeping [teachers](#) in their classrooms longer.

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## Provided by The Conversation

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