



# Teacher Hiring, Transfer, & Evaluation in Los Angeles Unified School District

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Final Report | Revised September 2009

**EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE  
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**Summary: The recommendations of this report aim to help Los Angeles Unified School District meet ambitious human capital goals.**

*We envision a system in which Los Angeles:*

- Hires the best new teachers in Southern California – and beyond
- Treats all teachers, including displaced teachers, with respect
- Places teachers in positions that are a good fit for all concerned
- Evaluates its teachers fairly and develops them as professionals
- Sets ambitious, public goals for customer service and meets them
- Takes strategic steps to retain its high-need teachers

*Getting there requires cooperation between all stakeholders, including district, unions, parents, community members...*



## Purpose






**The New Teacher Project (TNTP)** is a national non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that high-need students get outstanding teachers.

Our work centers on recruiting and retaining the best talent for the classroom and ensuring that all teachers work in environments that maximize their impact on student achievement.

These goals are dependent on a functioning continuum of human capital policies, processes, systems and services that have a real daily impact on teachers, principals and schools.

The purpose of this analysis is to increase the alignment of human capital systems in the district with the goal of excellent instruction in every classroom.

Our inquiry centers around **fundamental questions**, such as:

-  Is the district recruiting teachers effectively?
-  Do placement processes facilitate strong, lasting matches between teachers and schools?
-  Are schools creating effective instructional teams through the staffing process?
-  Does the district have reliable mechanisms for evaluating and improving teacher performance?
-  Is the district retaining its best teachers?



## Methodology

In the spring of 2008, The New Teacher Project (TNTP) partnered with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to analyze the district's current teacher staffing practices and to make recommendations for increasing the concentration of high-quality teachers in LAUSD schools.

As the first step in the analysis, TNTP explored several key staffing issues through interviews with central office leadership, principals and teachers. Areas discussed included:

- **Teacher Recruitment and Supply;**
- **Teacher Hiring, Transfer, and Staffing Processes;**
- **Teacher Evaluation;** and
- **Retention of Teachers.**

Using the information gained through these stakeholder interviews, TNTP then identified areas for further investigation and conducted a detailed data analysis of:

- 1 **District transaction data**, including records on hiring and evaluation
- 2 **Survey data** collected from district principals and teachers, and recent applicants for teaching positions. Overall response rates:
  - **3,663** Teachers: 10% of ~34,956
  - **245** Principals: 30% of ~824
  - **500** Applicants: 33% of ~1,500

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








## Summary of Findings

- ▶ LAUSD recruits year-round and generates a high quality applicant pool. However, teacher hiring tends to happen late, which reduces the size of the applicant pool and leaves some principals reporting that they do not have the applicants they need.
- ▶ Most teacher placements occur through mutual consent of teachers and principals, and these placements are generally successful. However, LAUSD's displacement process often results in compulsory placements that satisfy neither teachers nor principals.
- ▶ Improved communication from LAUSD HR with both external applicants and internal transfers has the potential to sharply improve stakeholder satisfaction.
- ▶ Teachers and principals convey mixed messages about the effectiveness of the evaluation process; currently, almost all teachers are rated as meeting expectations.
- ▶ Two in five LAUSD teachers plan to leave the district in the next few years, especially from high-poverty and low-performing schools.








## Summary of Recommendations

-  **Increase the proportion of new teachers hired by May 1 from about 20 percent to at least 50 percent.** This will entail moving up internal staffing and budget processes that inhibit earlier hiring.
-  **Require consent of teachers and schools for each teacher placement,** eliminating priority lists and forced placement. A system of mutual consent must be supported by new tools such as an online vacancy management system and robust communication plan that make the process transparent and simple.
-  **Set public goals for customer service by the Human Resources department,** and assess progress by surveying stakeholders annually.
-  **Commission an independent working team to redesign the teacher evaluation process within one year.** The team should be led by a chairperson jointly chosen by LAUSD, UTLA, and AALA and should have members from all three groups. The goal would be to increase the practical use of evaluations in improving teacher performance, making tenure decisions, shaping professional development, and informing retention strategies.
-  **Create a strategic retention taskforce to reduce teacher attrition** by prioritizing teachers who are more likely to leave and providing targeted interventions. Interventions may include additional support, career ladder options, retention incentives, improvements to working conditions, or cost of living allowances.



## The recommendations in this report will benefit both UTLA and LAUSD.

	<b>Benefits to LAUSD</b>	<b>Benefits to UTLA</b>
 <b>Earlier Hiring of New Teachers</b>	Access to more top recruits. Fewer teachers lacking proper credentials.	Financial benefits for members who notify early of intention to retire. Smoother starts to the school year.
 <b>Mutual Consent Hiring</b>	Decreased teacher turnover. Principal cooperation with staffing systems.	Increased job satisfaction and longevity for membership. Reduction of negative stigma on members who have been displaced.
 <b>Overhauled Evaluation</b>	Tailored teacher development leading to higher quality. Greater accuracy and transparency. More rigor.	Increased fairness and consistency. Opportunities for teachers to improve their practice as professionals.
 <b>Improved HR Services</b>	Better retention of current teachers and recruitment of new hires. More positive relations with employees.	More responsiveness from HR to needs of membership, more respectful interactions.
 <b>Overall Impact</b>	<i>For all, a public image of cooperation and common-sense reform. Higher-quality teaching for the students of Los Angeles.</i>	



# Contents

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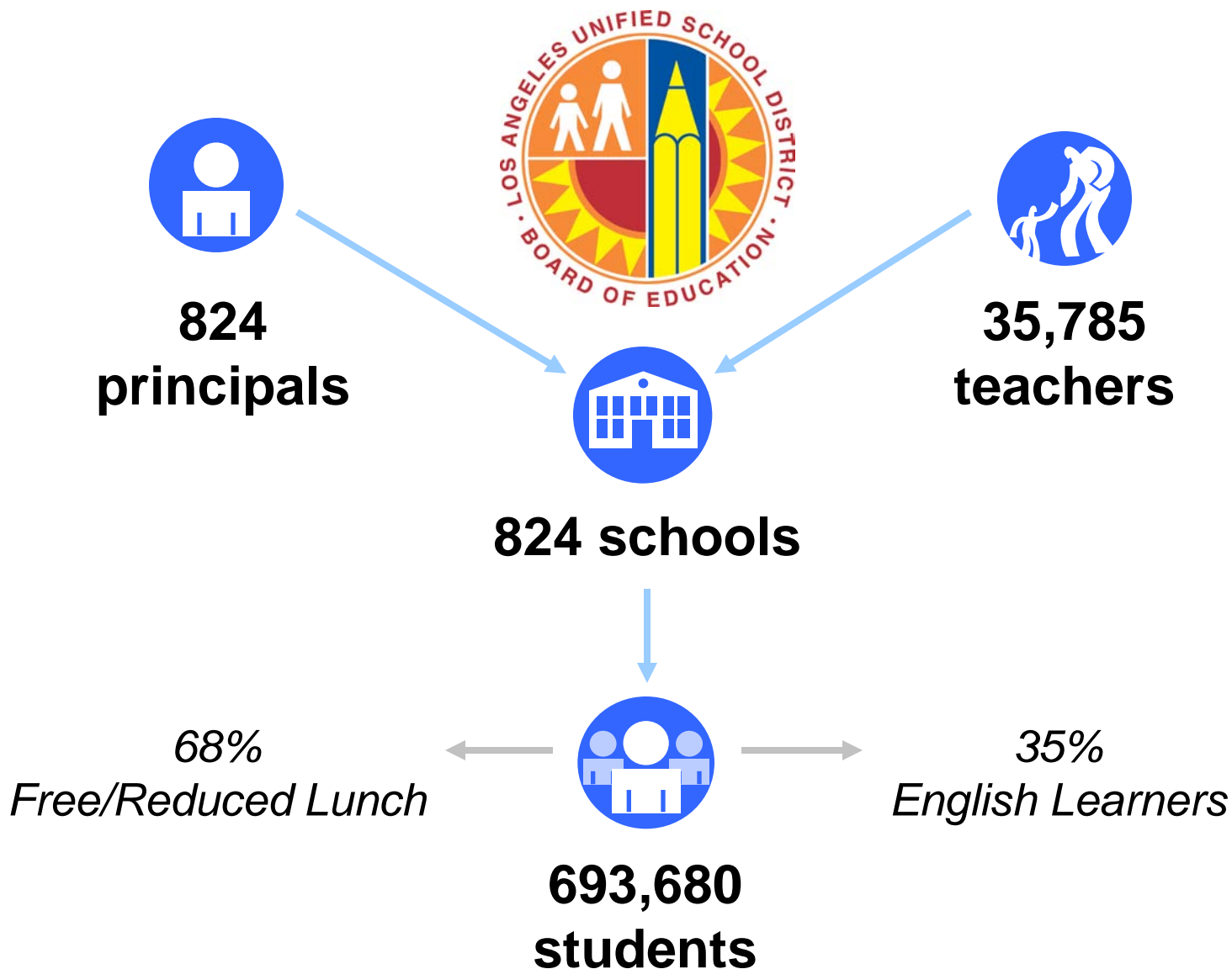
**Background**

Findings

Appendix



# Background: Overview of Los Angeles Unified School District, 2007-08



Source: Ed-Data (<http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us/>), 2/09.

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## Background: School Staffing Policies in LAUSD

### General staffing process

- When vacancies occur, principals must notify HR, which then sends a “priority list” of qualified candidates including internal transfers, early contract new hires, and other external applicants to the principal.
- Principals may interview candidates and fill the vacancy only from the priority list.

### Involuntary transfers

- Displaced teachers may list school preferences for HR.
- According to the contract, displaced teachers receive “priority” over all other candidates for vacancies.
- Displaced teachers should receive positions by the “norm date,” usually the 4th or 5th week of school.

### Voluntary transfers

- Teachers in good standing can apply for a voluntary transfer at any time.
- Every effort is made to accomplish all available transfers no later than September 1.
- According to the contract, voluntary transfers receive “priority” over new hires (before April 15).



## Background: LAUSD's Human Resources Innovations

### Year-Round Recruitment

- Unlike many districts, LAUSD recruits teachers year-round and is continuously hiring.

### Recruitment & Retention Incentives

- State-funded Teacher Recruitment and Student Support grants (TRSS) for Deciles 1-3, and “program improvement” funds have allowed:
  - Retention pay (\$5,000 after 3 years)
  - Tuition reimbursement for math/SPED
  - Extra \$1,000 for SPED teachers
  - Bonus pay for mentoring, National Board certification

### “Early contract” hiring

- 10% of the most qualified external applicants are offered “early contracts,” as early as Sept. for the following school year.
- Principals can offer early contracts to high-quality student teachers.
- Early hires are not assigned a specific placement at the time of the contract.

### Priority Staffing Program (discontinued)

- 22 high schools each received a support coordinator and five substitute teachers.
- The out-of-classroom PSP coordinator helped in hiring, then provided support to teachers in first few years, including logistics and instructional support.
- Vacancies in PSP schools dropped during the program's operation.



Background

▶ Findings

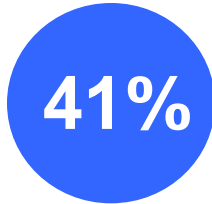
Appendix

## #1

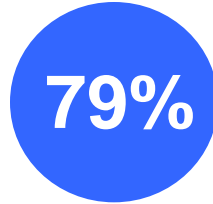
**LAUSD recruits year-round and generates a high-quality applicant pool. However, hiring tends to happen late, which reduces the size of the applicant pool and leaves some principals reporting that they do not have the applicants they need.**



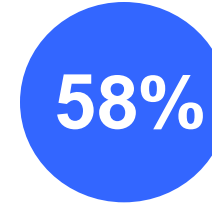
Principals are satisfied with LAUSD's applicant pool, which appears to be relatively well-educated, accomplished, and bilingual.\*



of applicants have  
**advanced degrees**



of applicants  
reported **GPA**s  
over **3.0**



of applicants are certified  
to **teach English**  
**language learners**\*\*\*

**91%**

percent of principals are satisfied with the quality of teachers  
in the new hire applicant pool...

**...and 90% are satisfied with the quality of "early contract" new hires.\*\***

\* Survey data; reflects only unhired applicants. \*\* Responded "Very satisfied," "Satisfied," or "Somewhat satisfied."

\*\*\* By contrast, 85% of new hires in the past three years are certified to teach English language learners.

Source: TNTP surveys, July/August 2008. Respondents: 179 unhired applicants; 132 LAUSD principals.



## Most teachers hired by LAUSD did not apply to other districts.

**Percent who also applied to another district when applying to LAUSD:**

**62%** vs. **37%**  
of applicants of new hires

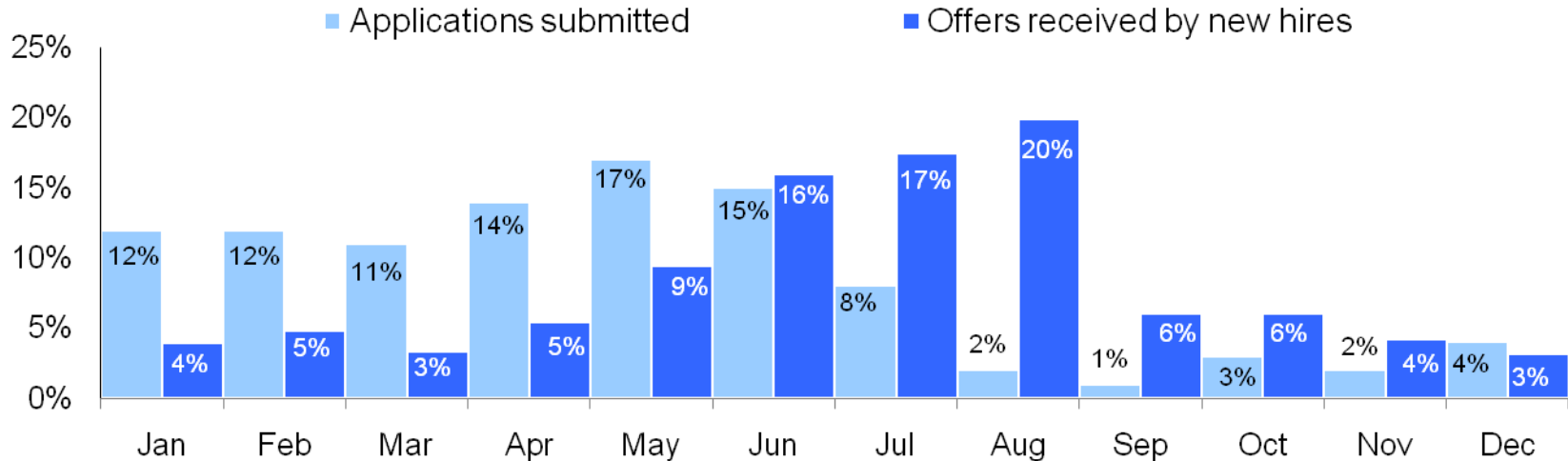
**Districts receiving the most applications from teachers eventually hired by LAUSD**

*Glendale Pasadena*  
*Long Beach Santa Monica-Malibu*  
*Burbank Culver City*



LAUSD receives most of its applications by the end of April, but most hiring does not take place until summertime.

Number of Applications vs. Number of Offers, by Month



**49%** of **applications** were received in the calendar year prior to May 1, but only...  
**18%** of new teachers received **job offers** before May 1.

Separate research by TNTP has shown that districts must *complete* the bulk of hiring by May 1 to capture the highest quality applicants.<sup>1</sup>

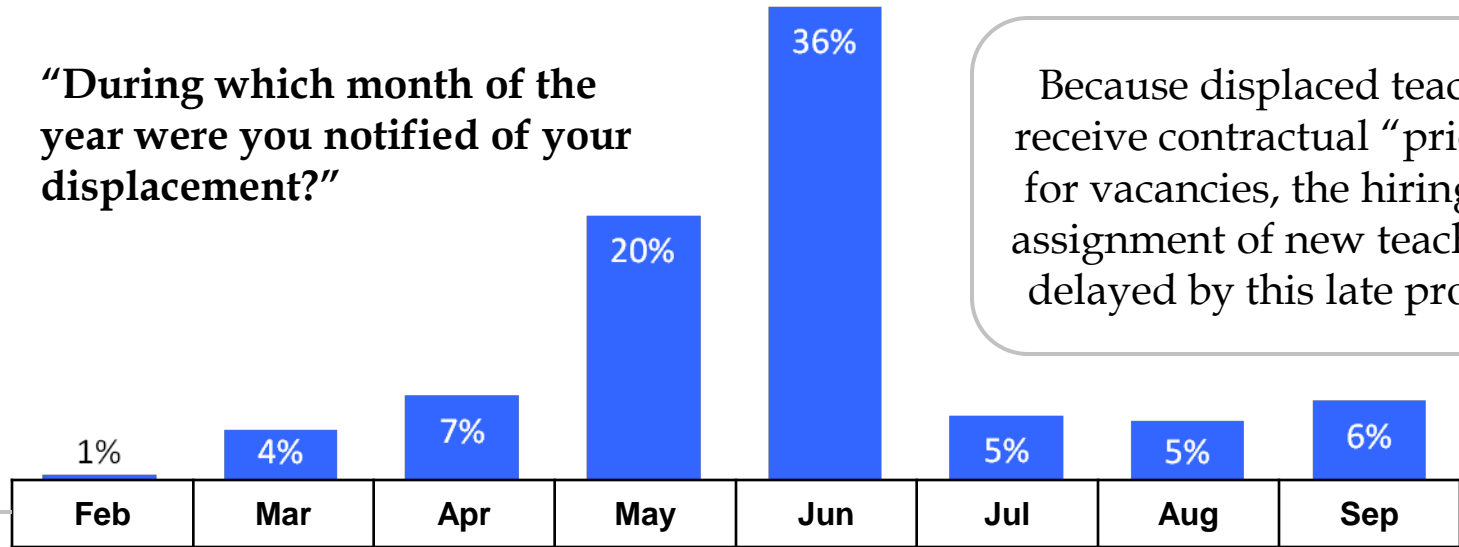
<sup>1</sup> J. Levin and M. Quinn, *Missed Opportunities: How We Keep High Quality Teachers Out of Urban Classrooms*, (The New Teacher Project, 2003) Source: TNTP surveys, July/August 2008. Respondents: 242 unhired applicants; 658 LAUSD teachers with 0-3 yrs experience.



# A late displacement process and lack of resignation and retirement notification deadlines further delay new teacher hiring and assignment.

DISPLACEMENT

“During which month of the year were you notified of your displacement?”



Because displaced teachers receive contractual “priority” for vacancies, the hiring and assignment of new teachers is delayed by this late process.

RESIGNATION/  
RETIREMENT

In Long Beach Unified, ALL teachers must report leave, retirement, or resignation **before March 1<sup>st</sup>**.

LAUSD has **no deadline** for notifications of retirement/resignation. In 2007, in another urban California district with no notification deadline, this resulted in **82% of resignations** and **39% of retirements** occurring **after May 1**.

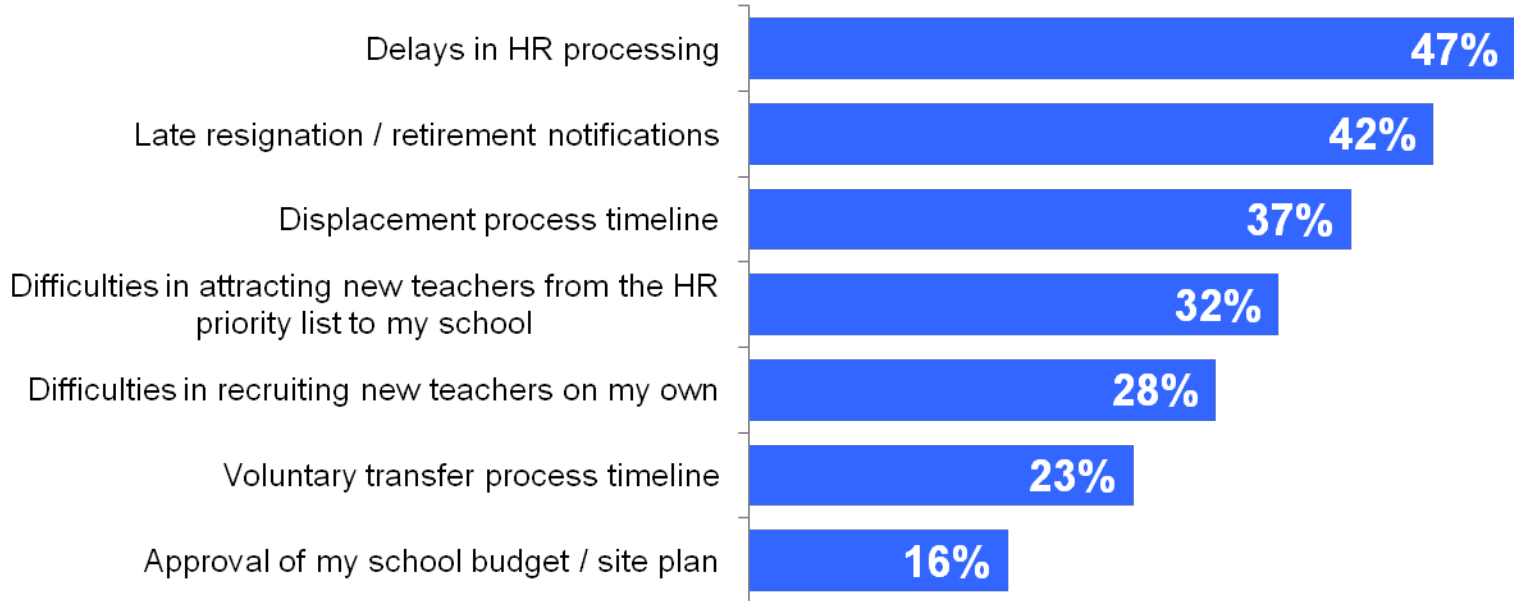
In contrast, in a high-performing Colorado district with a retirement deadline, **94% are received before March**.

Source: Long Beach Unified Agreement; other TNTP research; TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 265 LAUSD teachers.



Principals believe that inefficient HR processes and district-wide staffing policies are largely responsible for the delayed hiring process.

### Factors that contribute to hiring delays of new teachers, according to LAUSD principals



*“Candidates that are pre approved should be fully processed and ready to go when offered a position.”*

*“Too many steps for new teachers. They have to ‘run the gauntlet’ of HR to actually get a position.”*



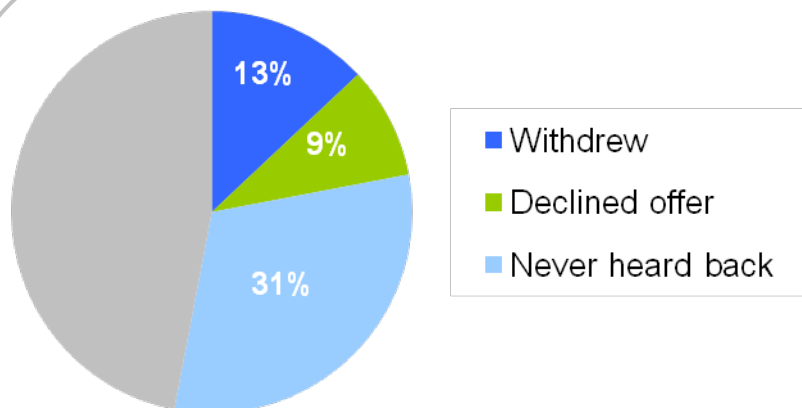
*“We did not receive the revised must-place list until mid-July. I had interviewed, selected and offered positions to non-contracted teachers based on information that was later revised.”*

Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 159 LAUSD principals.

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## The result is that LAUSD is losing out on desirable applicants...



According to survey results of un hired applicants, 13% withdrew from the process and 31% never heard back from the district – a large proportion of the applicant pool.\* Another 9% did not accept an offer to teach in LAUSD.

**“Have you ever lost a desirable teacher candidate from outside the school system because you were unable to make an offer in a timely fashion?”**

**55%**  
**of new principals (three or fewer years’ experience) said “Yes”**

\* LAUSD sends an automated response to all teacher applicants, but many applicants feel that they never received any response. Source: TNTP surveys, July/August 2008. Respondents: 156 un hired applicants not still in process; 62 principals with 0-3 yrs experience.



... while principals are reporting shortages for vacancies.

“Does the pool of available new hires include enough teachers in **high need subject areas** (Mathematics, Science, Special Education)?”

*Elementary*

**53%**

*of principals said “No”*

*Middle*

**82%**

*of principals said “No”*

*High*

**73%**

*of principals said “No”*



## Summary: Recruitment and Hiring

### Recommendations

- **Make at least 50 percent of new teacher hires – and 80 percent of new hires in shortage subjects – by May 1** (or four months prior to the start of class in year-round schools).
- **Expand the practice of offering “early contracts” to the most qualified applicants** for school-specific vacancies, including principals’ recommendations for student teachers.
- **Move up the timelines of processes that hinder earlier hiring:**
  - Provide small financial incentives for notification by Feb. 1 of intent to resign or retire, and protect teachers’ benefits through the summer;
  - Make school closure announcements, administrator staffing changes, budgetary projections, and School Site Council procedures on a timeline that supports completing internal transfers by April 15;
  - Set publicly shared customer service goals and timelines for new hire contracts and processing, and streamline HR processes to meet them.
- **Consider reinstating the Priority Staffing Program** for selected schools, to support earlier filling of hard-to-staff vacancies.
- **Work directly with schools of education** to increase the number of students graduating with certification in mathematics, science, and special education.



Background

▶ Findings

Appendix

## #2

**Most teacher placements occur through mutual consent of teachers and principals, and these placements are generally successful. However, LAUSD's displacement process often results in compulsory placements that satisfy neither teachers nor principals.**



For nearly all teachers in LAUSD, having the consent of the new site administrator is important in seeking a new position.

“It was important to me when changing schools that my new site administrator wanted me to move to his/her school.”

89%

Displaced  
teachers

96%

Voluntary  
transfers

at least “somewhat agreed.”

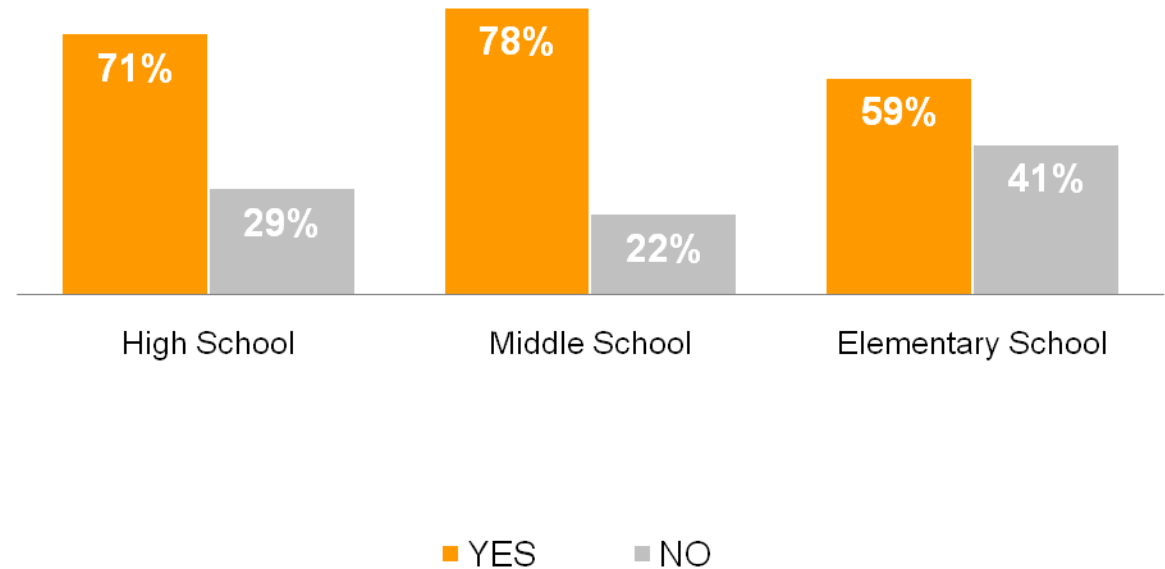


## Principals and HR staff differ in their opinions about the occurrence of non-consensual placements by HR.

**“In the past three years, have you had any teacher(s) placed in your school whom you did not want (e.g., ‘must-place’)?”\***



According to LAUSD staff, **“must-places” are nonexistent or extremely rare.**



# 74%

of principals have had to hire a teacher from within LAUSD over a new hire for a position, even though they felt the new hire was **more desirable** for the job.

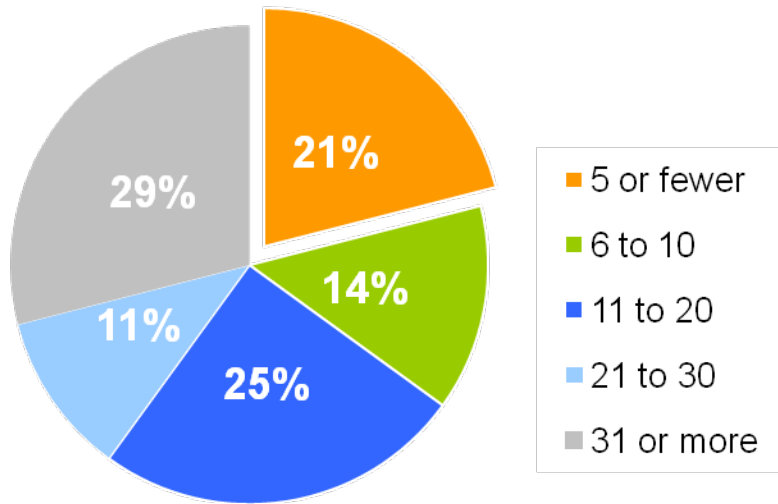
\* High School n=21; Middle School n=27; Elementary School n=90.

Source: Interviews with HR staff; TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 165 principals.

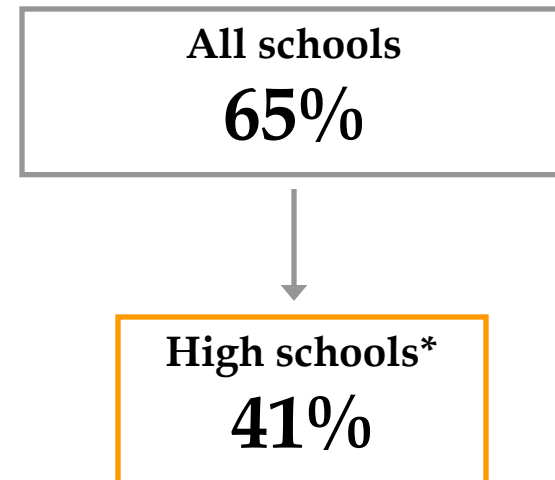


Principals report that HR priority lists often contain only a limited number of candidates to choose from, especially in high schools.

**“Over the past three years, on average, how many candidates have appeared on each HR priority list?”**



Percentage of schools that receive more than 10 candidates on each priority list, on average:

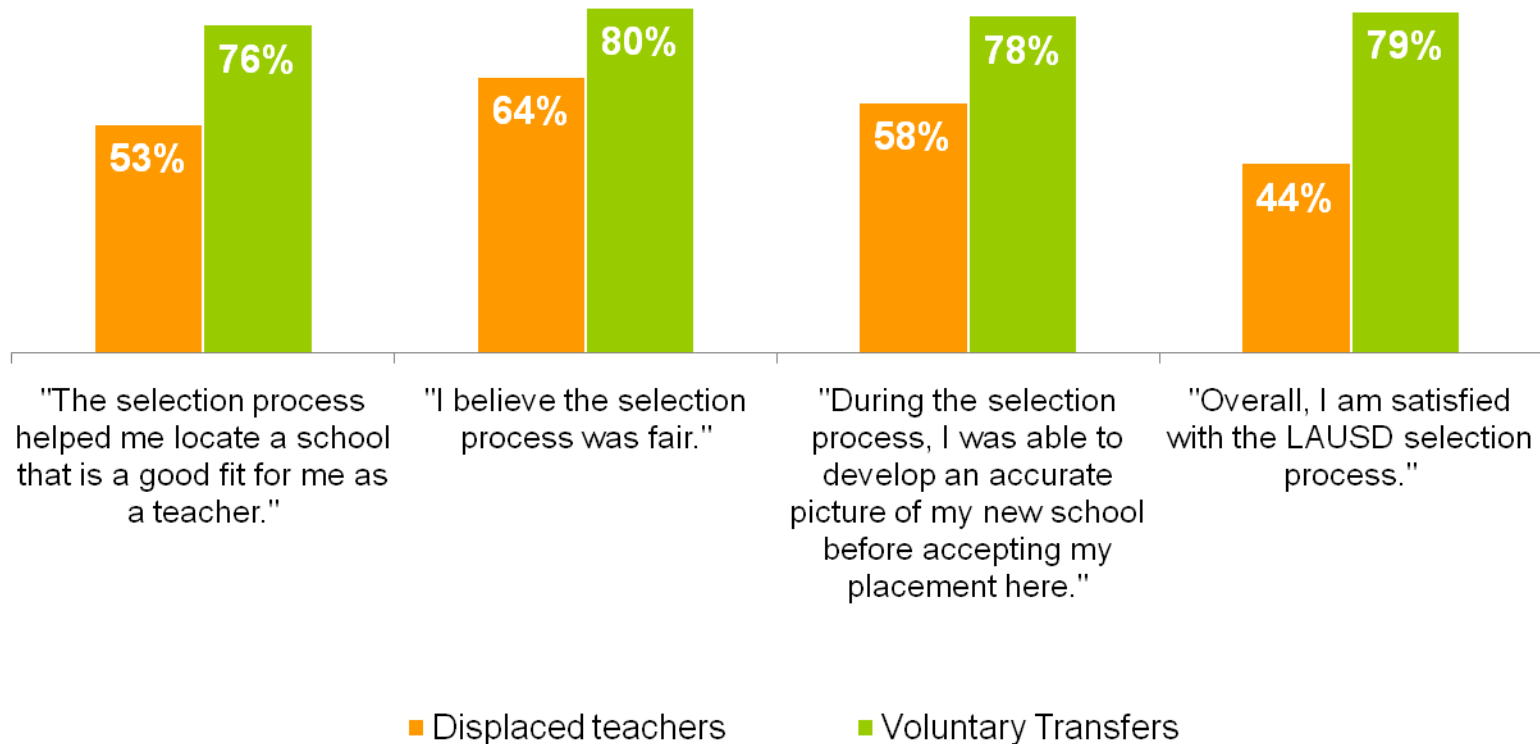


\* n=22; Middle schools: 56% (n=25); Elementary schools: 73% (n=85)  
Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 156 principals.



Overall, voluntary transfers are much more satisfied than displaced teachers with the helpfulness and fairness of the selection process.

**Percent of teachers who agree with the following statements:\***



\* Responded "Strongly agree," "Agree," or "Somewhat agree"

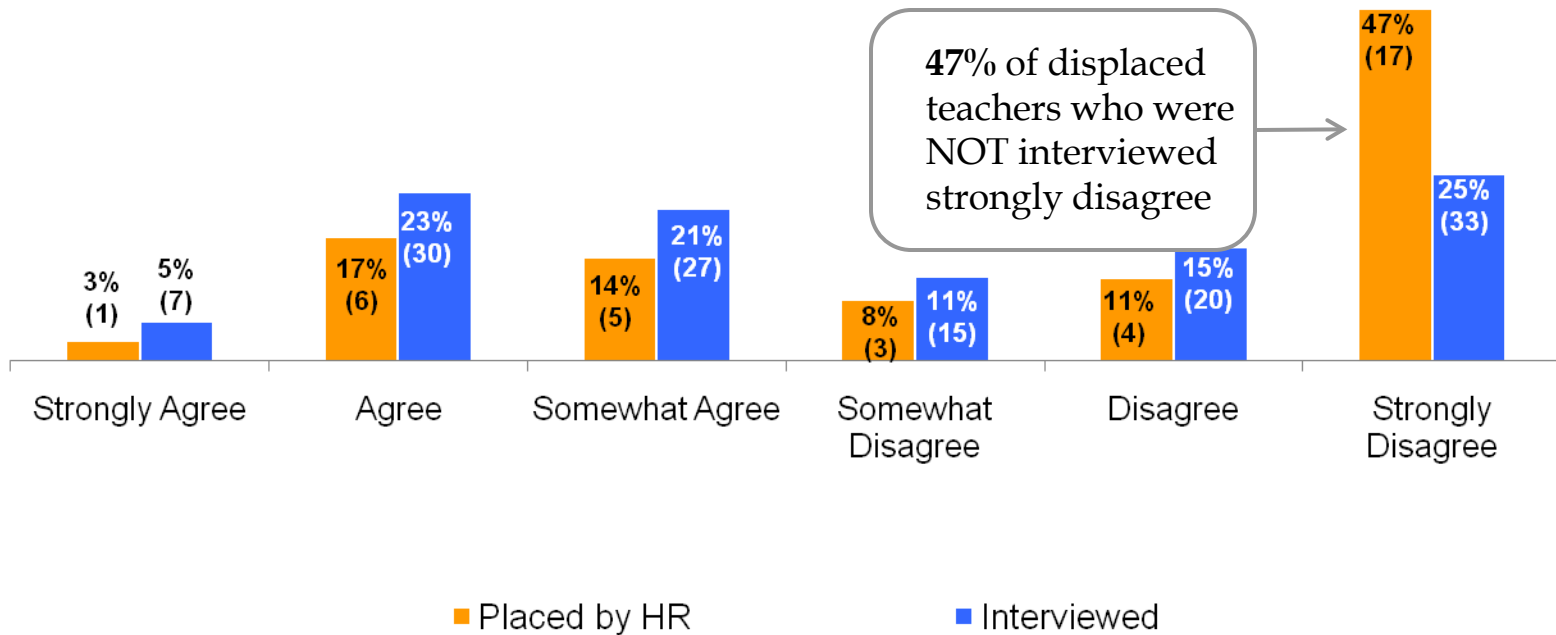
Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 205 displaced teachers and 449 voluntary transfers.



LAUSD is successful in finding consensual placements for most displaced teachers, but those who are placed without a school interview are noticeably less satisfied with the process.

**75%** of displaced teachers who were successfully selected at a new school report having interviewed before moving there.

**“Overall, I am satisfied with the LAUSD selection process for displaced teachers.”\***



\* Placed by HR n=36; Interviewed n=132.

Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 168 displaced teachers.

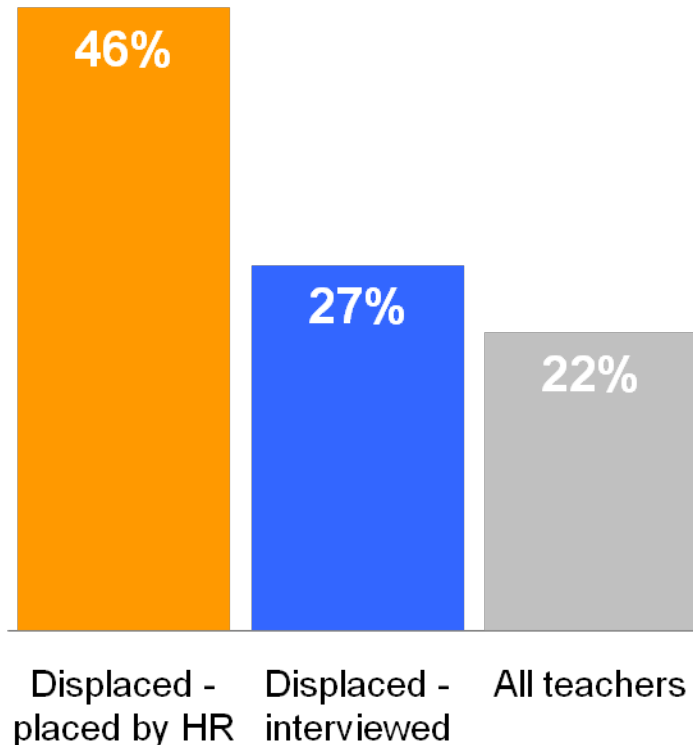


Displaced teachers who are placed by HR are far less happy with their new school than those who interview, which appears to make HR-placed teachers less likely to stay in their new positions.

“How satisfied were you with the school that you moved TO?”\*

**89%** vs. **69%**  
Interviewed Placed by HR\*\*

Percent of teachers who have applied for a voluntary transfer in the past five years



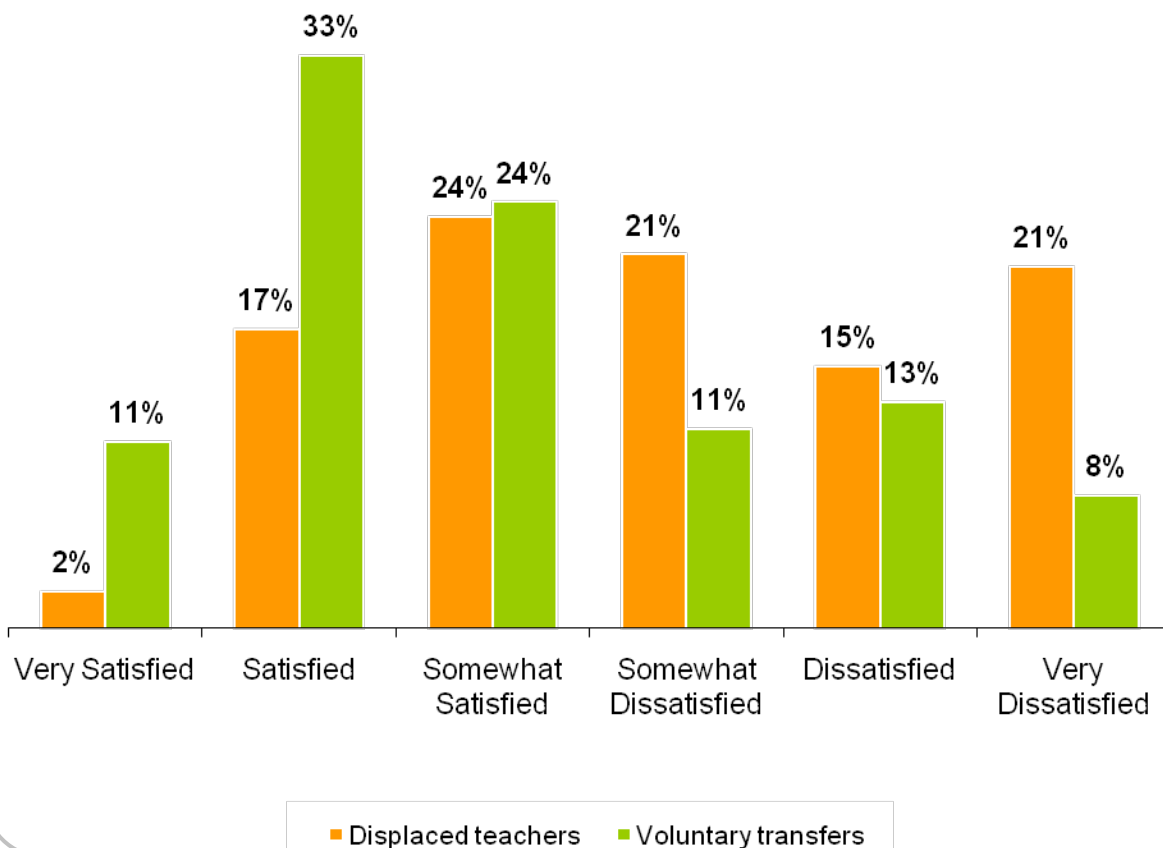
\* Responded “Very satisfied,” “Satisfied,” or “Somewhat satisfied.” \*\* Interviewed n=135; Placed by HR n=42.  
Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 175 displaced teachers and 3,437 other teachers.



LAUSD principals report that they are less satisfied with displaced teachers, and that teachers placed by HR may not meet expectations.

*Note: The following data do not address the RIF decisions from the 2008-09 year.*

### Principals' satisfaction with the QUALITY of candidates



**30%**

of principals said that 80% to 100% of teachers placed by HR **did not meet their expectations.**

**38%**

of principals said that priority placement teachers are **rarely or never a good fit** for their schools.\*

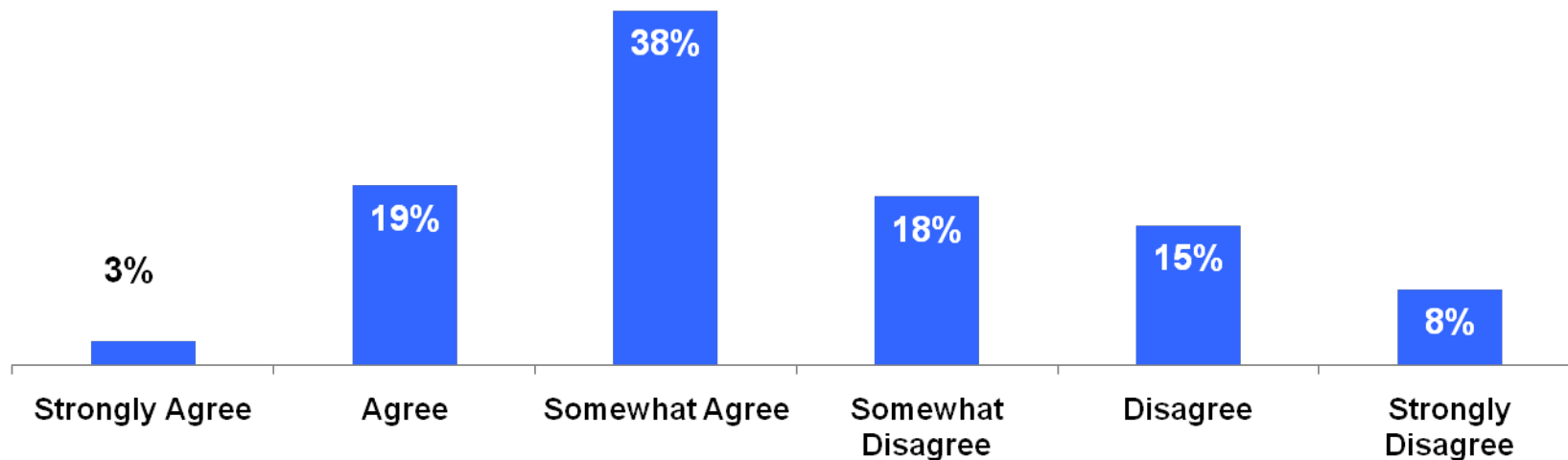
\* Includes only principals who have had priority placement teachers at their schools.

Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 131 LAUSD principals.



Many LAUSD principals agree that the hiring and transfer process allows them to build optimal instructional teams, but few feel strongly.

**“The hiring and transfer process allows me to hire the teachers that create the best possible instructional team for my school.”**



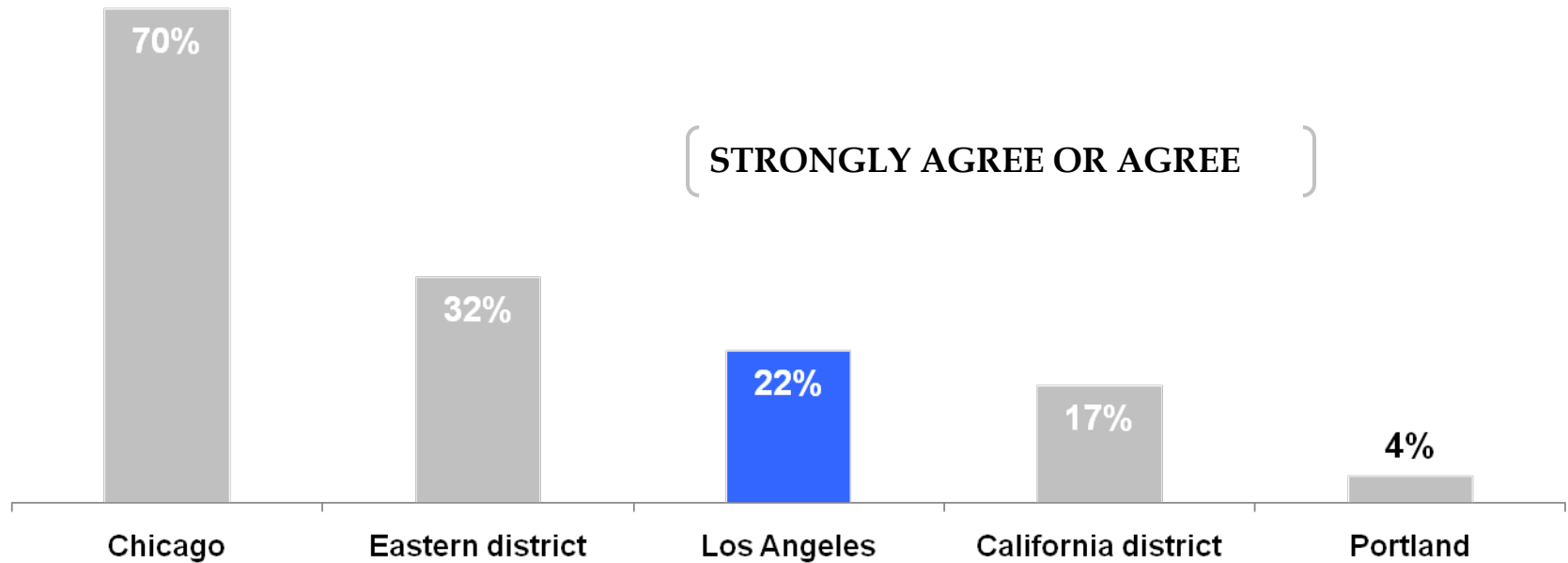
Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 162 LAUSD principals.

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The hiring and transfer system in LAUSD gains more principal favor than some urban districts, but far less than others.

**“The hiring and transfer process allows me to hire the teachers that create the best possible instructional team for my school.”**



Source: Other TNTP research; TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 162 LAUSD principals.

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## Summary: Teacher Placement

### Recommendations

- **Reformulate staffing rules** to base all selection on the mutual consent of the teacher and the receiving principal.
- **Allow schools to interview and select** from all eligible teacher candidates, internal and external, for any vacancy.
- **Shift the responsibility of the HR department** from creating priority lists to supporting a matching process between teachers and schools.
- **Create an online vacancy management system** that allows new and incumbent teachers to apply for any school-level openings. The system should support direct communication between candidates and administrators. An applicant's current status (displaced, voluntary transfer, new hire) should not be made apparent.
- **Provide increased job search support to displaced teachers** in the interview/hiring process. Create LAUSD/UTLA partnership to address district teachers who cannot find mutual consent placements.
- **Provide administrators with increased training** on how to interview and select teachers who will best fit their schools; emphasize how to attract experienced and accomplished teachers.



Background

▶ **Findings**

Appendix

## #3

**Improved communication from LAUSD HR with both external applicants and internal transfers has the potential to sharply improve stakeholder satisfaction.**



Many teacher applicants never hear back from the district; others desire improved communication.

**31%**

of unhired applicants reported that they **never received a response** from LAUSD

In open responses about how to improve the hiring process, LAUSD applicants desired:

**31%** clearer / more accurate information

**22%** faster responses / any responses

**16%** speedier hiring process



*“More feedback and response, even if it is a letter of rejection”*

*“They need to respond in a timely manner and let the applicant know his or her status in the hiring process”*

*“Follow up after an interview”*

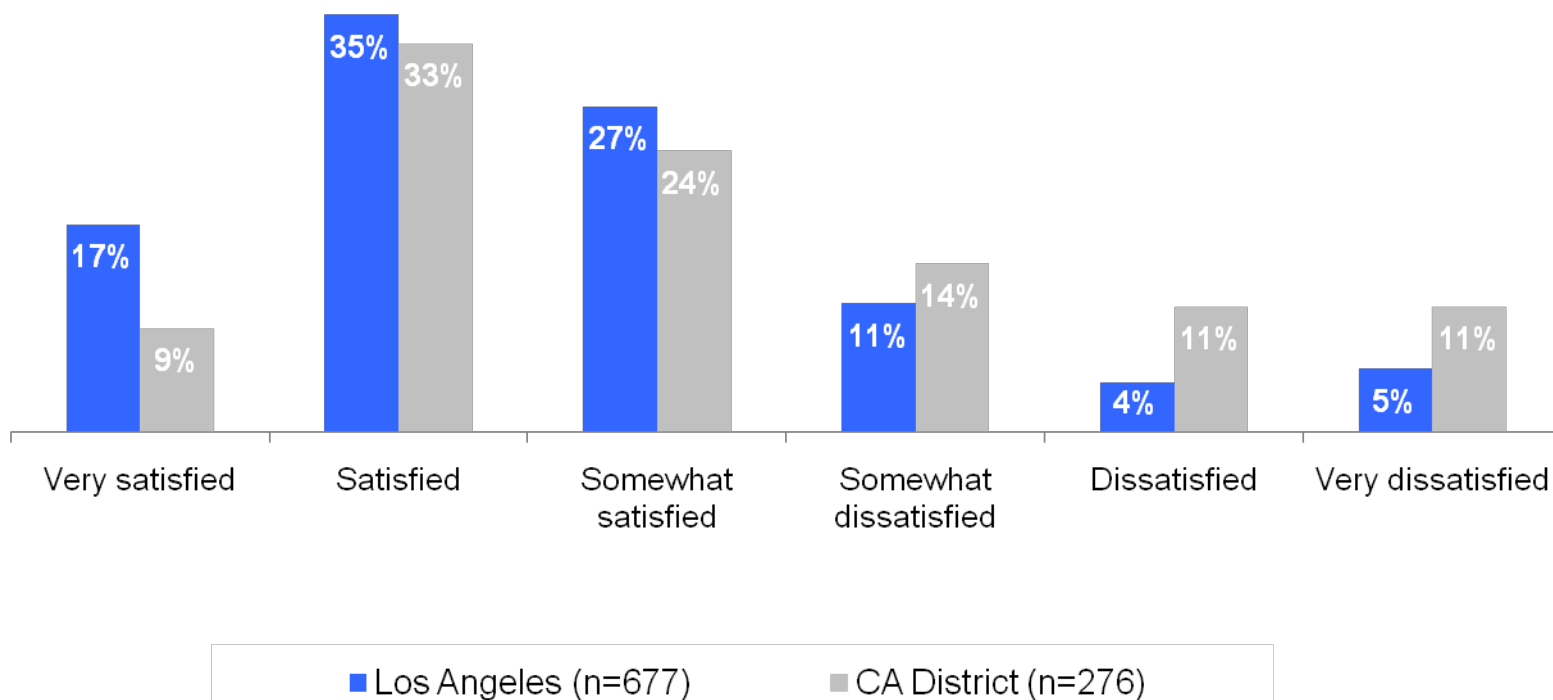
*“Let the prospective employee know the status of their application”*

\* LAUSD sends an automated response to all teacher applicants, but many applicants feel that they never received any response. Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 156 unhired applicants who were no longer in process.



However, teachers who succeed in getting hired by LAUSD are generally positive about the application process. LAUSD's results outpace those of a peer California district.

**“Overall, how satisfied were you with the hiring process?”\***



\* Includes current teachers with 0-3 years' experience in the district.

Source: Other TNTP research; TNTP survey, July/August 2008.

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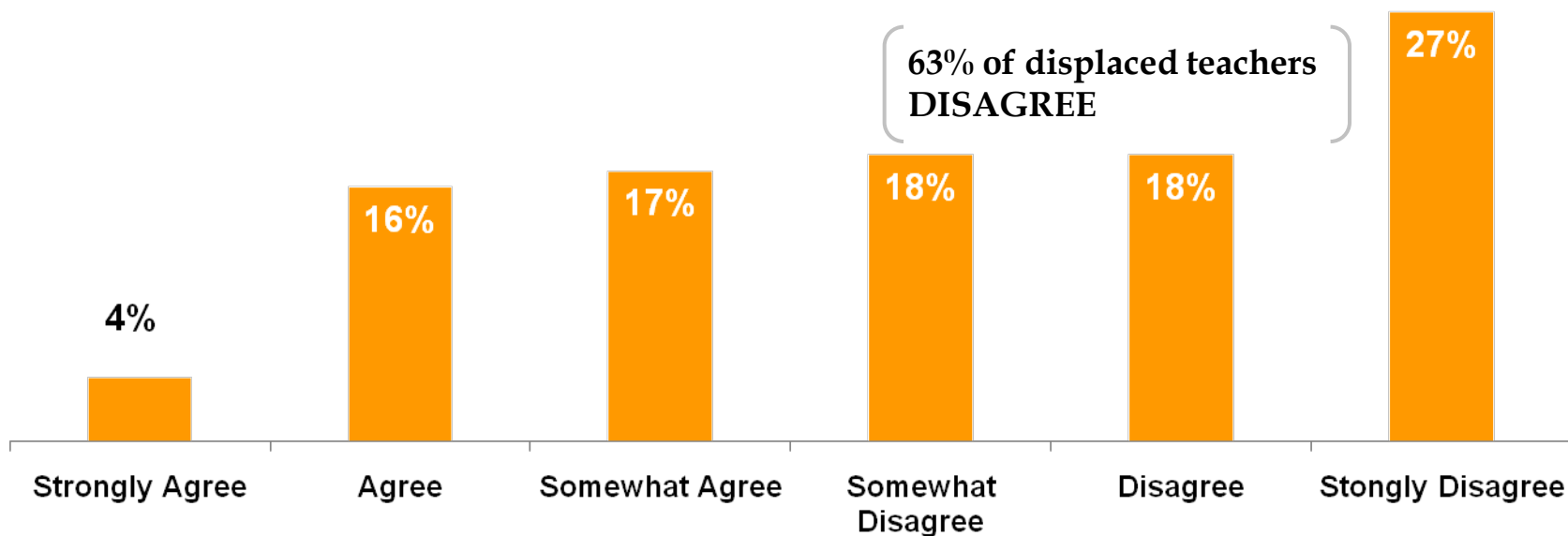
## Many displaced teachers are dissatisfied with the information and support available to them about the transfer process.

52%

of displaced teachers are DISSATISFIED with the communication and support they received from HR during the transfer process.\*

23% are **VERY DISSATISFIED**

### "Information about the displacement and selection process was readily available"



\* Responded "Very dissatisfied," "Dissatisfied," or "Somewhat dissatisfied."  
Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 210 displaced teachers.



Though administrators may comply with policies requiring that teachers have access to vacancy information, many teachers report needing more information during the transfer process.

**“Information about open vacancies was readily available during the selection / voluntary transfer process.”**

Almost **1 in 3**  
displaced teachers  
**STRONGLY DISAGREE**

More than **1 in 5**  
voluntary transfers  
**STRONGLY DISAGREE**

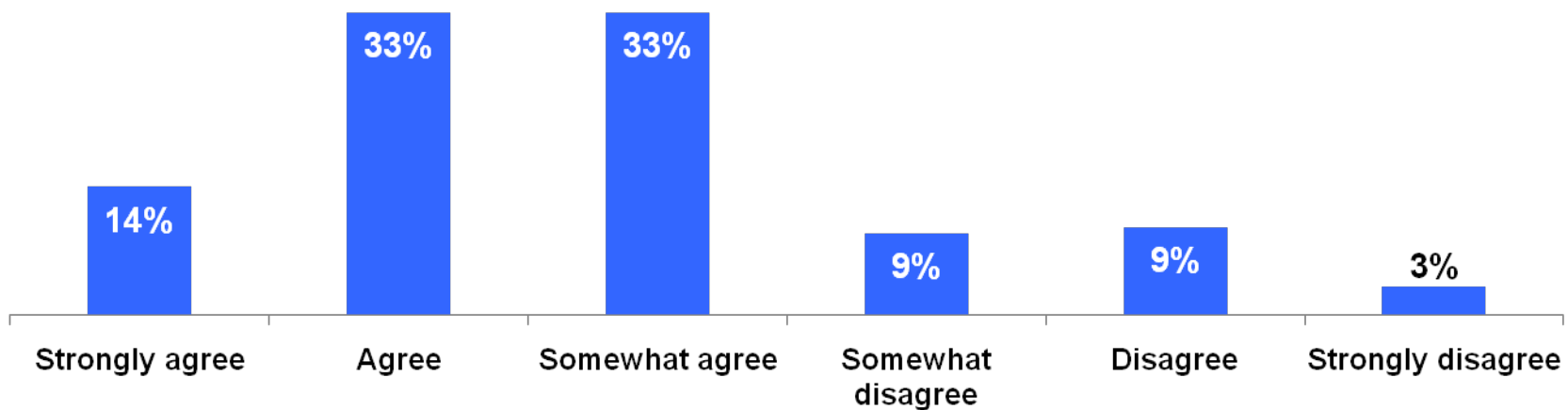
**According to the contract, the district must post vacancies at all locations and provide information to any requesting teacher: XI.9.2.**

“The appropriate administrator shall prepare a master list of anticipated vacancies for the locations served. This list shall be posted at all locations and copies made available to personnel upon request at least one week prior to the last date to file an application for transfer.”



Principals, on the other hand, give the Human Resources department solid marks for helpfulness.

**“LAUSD Human Resources is helpful to me in staffing my school with high quality teachers.”**



Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 160 LAUSD principals.

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### Recommendations

- **Develop a “customer service” plan** to improve communication with applicants. Launch a technology platform to enhance applicant tracking systems and ensure that proper communication is maintained with applicants throughout the hiring process, including sending a timely response to *all* applicants to the district.
- **Develop and implement a consistent communication and support plan** for current teachers during the displacement and transfer processes, including training in the use of the online vacancy tool.



Background

▶ Findings

Appendix

## #4

**Teachers and principals convey mixed messages about the effectiveness of the evaluation process; currently, almost all teachers are rated as meeting expectations.**



## Principals report that poorly performing teachers usually receive “Below Standard” ratings, but very few LAUSD teachers actually do.

### What they say...

**76%**

of principals at least somewhat agree: “Teachers who are not performing up to standards receive a ‘Below Standard’ rating.”

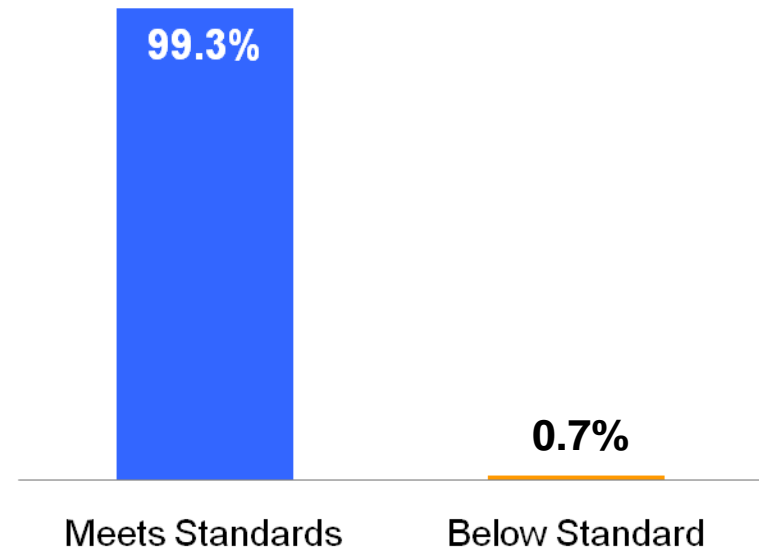
Percent of principals who report **always or frequently assigning a “Below Standard” rating** to teachers who do not meet expectations:

**56%** for probationary teachers

**48%** for tenured teachers

### What they do...

Percentage of LAUSD Teachers Rated “Meets Standards” vs. “Below Standard”\*



*(Teachers rated “Below Standard” in Program Improvement schools: **0.9%**)*

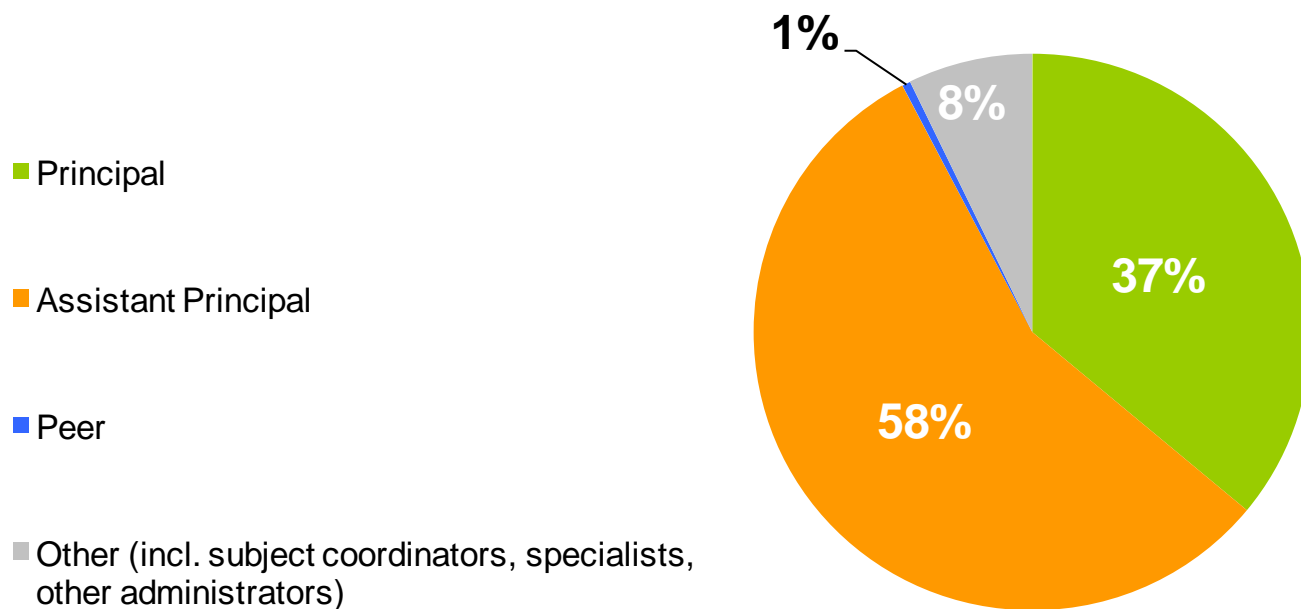
\* Anonymous self-report by teachers of most recent stull.

Source: TNTP surveys, July/August 2008. Respondents: 150 LAUSD principals; 3,204 LAUSD teachers (1,699 in Pgm Improvement schools).



## Most LAUSD evaluations are conducted by Assistant Principals.

**“Who performed your most recent evaluation (stull)?”\***



\* Multiple responses possible.

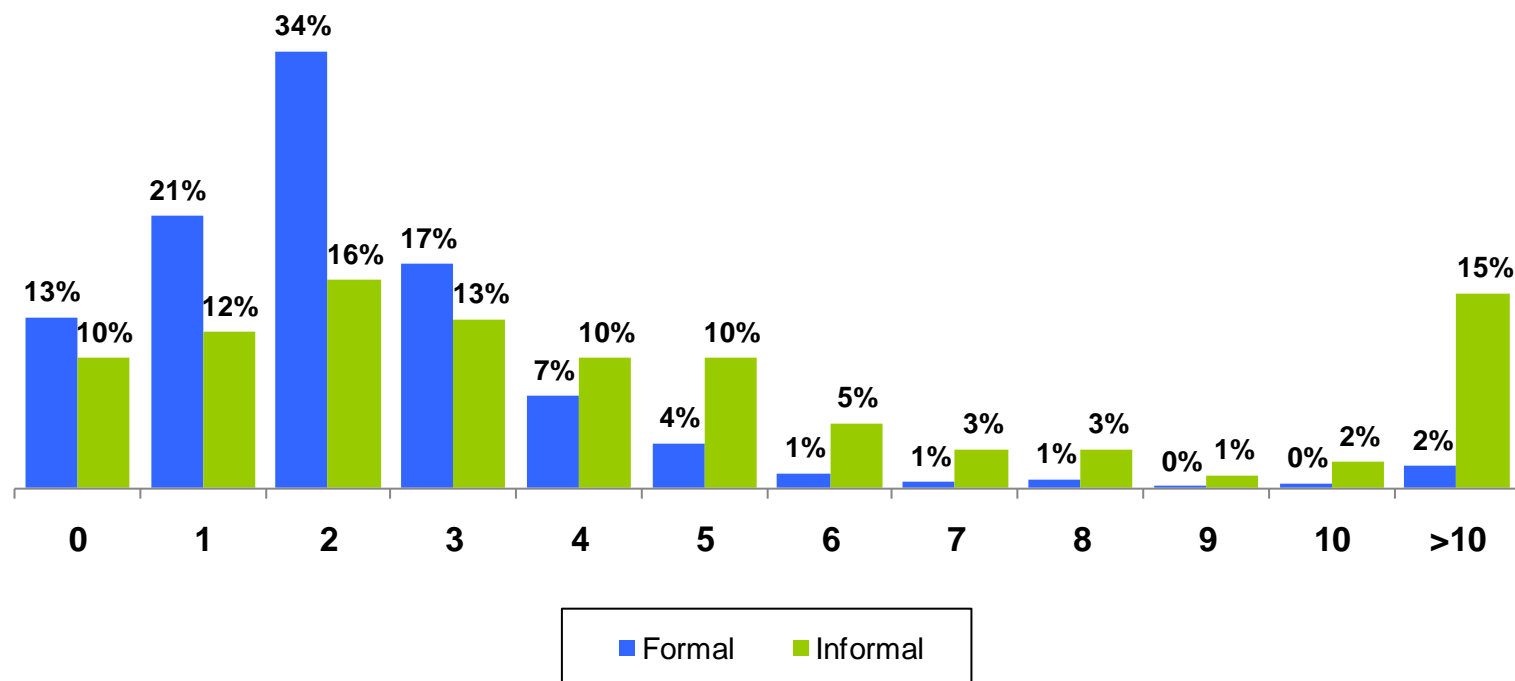
Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 3,312 LAUSD teachers.

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About two-thirds of teachers report being formally observed two or fewer times as part of their most recent evaluation.

**“How many times were you observed by the person who ultimately performed your most recent evaluation?”**



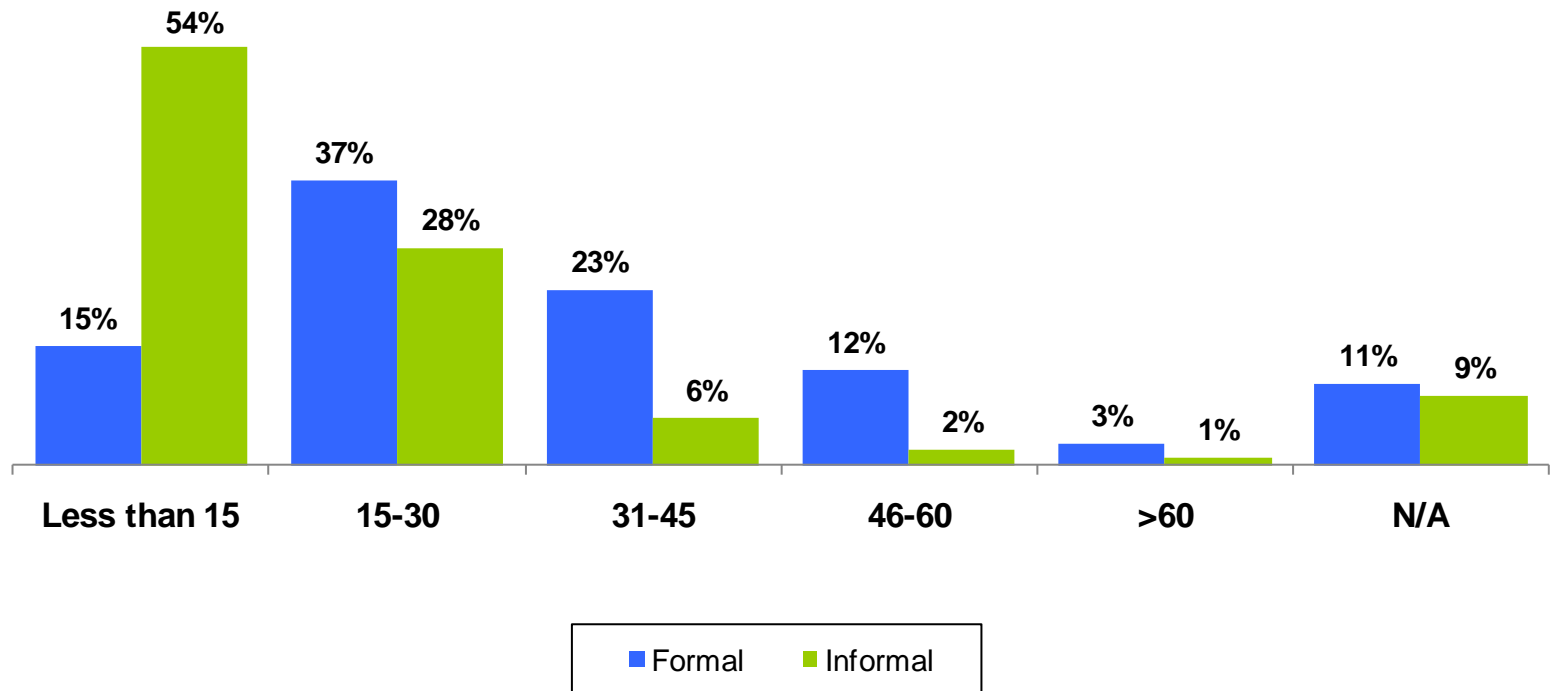
Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 2,957 LAUSD teachers.

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Most teachers report that observations last less than 30 minutes.

**“What was the average length of each observation, in minutes?”**



Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 2,846 LAUSD teachers.

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Teachers and principals agree that the evaluation process is fair and rigorous,\* but they disagree about whether it improves the quality of instruction.

TEACHERS	PRINCIPALS
<p>“I was evaluated <b>fairly</b>.” <b>87%</b></p>	<p><b>99%</b> “I feel confident in my ability to evaluate teachers <b>fairly</b>.”</p>
<p>“I was evaluated <b>rigorously</b>.” <b>74%</b></p>	<p><b>98%</b> “I feel confident in my ability to evaluate teachers <b>rigorously</b>.”</p>
<p>“My evaluator provided me with <b>information and strategies</b> that I could use to improve instruction.” <b>63%</b></p>	<p><b>99%</b> “I feel confident in my ability to provide teachers with <b>information and strategies</b> to improve their instruction.”</p>

**64% of teachers agree:**

“The evaluation process helped me improve my teaching practice.”

**64% of principals agree:**

“Overall, the LAUSD evaluation system allows me to adequately address instances of poor teacher performance.”

\* Responded “Strongly agree”, “Agree”, or “Somewhat agree”

Source: TNTP surveys, July/August 2008. Respondents: 3,184 LAUSD teachers and 149 LAUSD principals.



According to teachers, poorly performing teachers often remain in the classroom. Principals do not always non-reelect or terminate poor performers.

## TEACHERS

**60%** of LAUSD teachers say that there are tenured teachers in their schools who **should have been dismissed** for poor performance, but have not been.

**8%** of LAUSD teachers say that there are tenured teachers in their schools who **should NOT have been dismissed** for poor performance, but have been.

## PRINCIPALS

**75%** of LAUSD principals **do not always or frequently seek termination** for a poorly performing teacher who fails to improve.

**44%** of LAUSD principals **do not always or frequently non-reelect** a probationary teacher if the teacher has not demonstrated performance worthy of tenure at the end of his/her second year.

\* Top three responses from principals surveyed.

Source: TNTP surveys, July/August 2008. Respondents: 3,034 LAUSD teachers and 146 LAUSD principals.

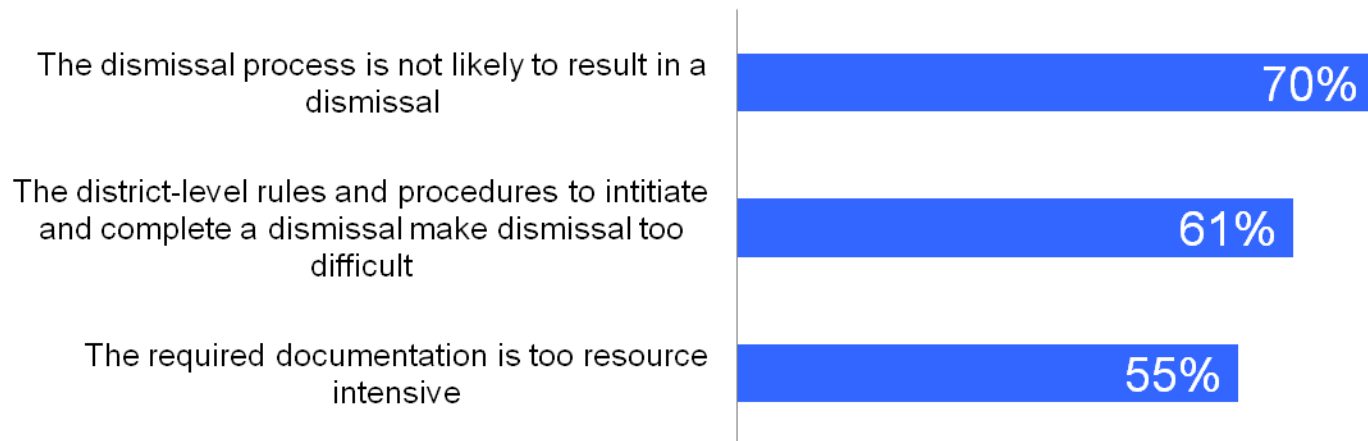
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Principals say that they do not initiate proceedings because they are difficult and unlikely to result in dismissal. Even non-renewed teachers often return to the system.

**Top three principal responses to the question:**

**"If you do not always seek the initiation of dismissal proceedings for tenured teachers who are poor performers, which of the following have contributed to your reluctance to do so?"\***



**38%** of LAUSD principals have non-renewed a poor performing teacher and then learned that the teacher had been hired by another LAUSD school.\*

\* In LAUSD, teachers who have been “non-renewed” through a formal process are forbidden from working in the district.

Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 148 LAUSD principals.

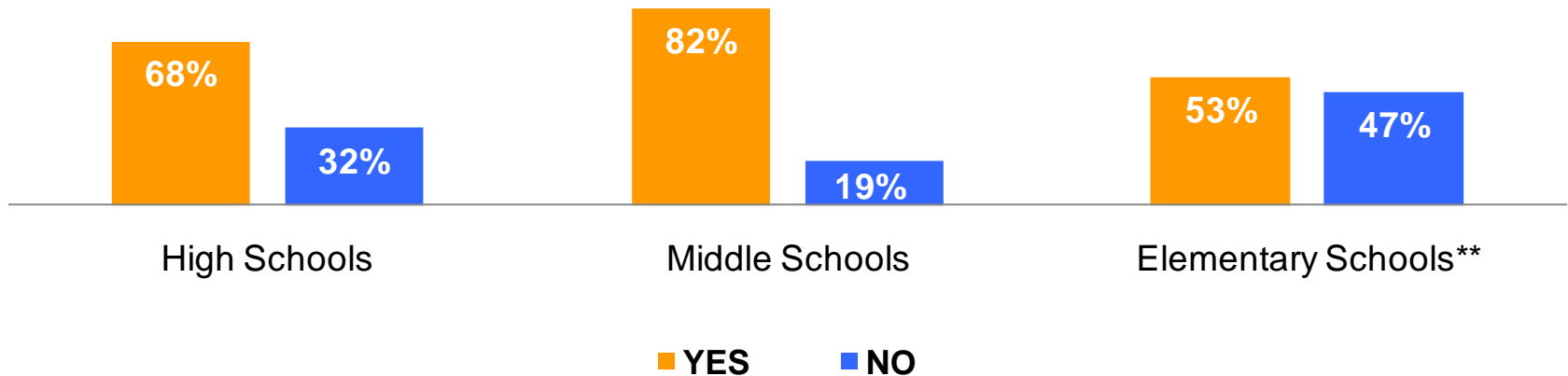


Principals admit to moving poor performers to other schools through the transfer process. This is particularly common in middle schools.

## 2 in 5

principals report encouraging tenured teachers who do not improve to move to another school\*

**“Have you ever displaced a teacher, or encouraged a teacher to seek a transfer or to volunteer for transfer, when you thought he/she was not performing well?”**



\*Principals responding “sometimes,” “frequently,” or “always.” \*\* High Schools n=22; Middle Schools n=27; Elementary Schools n=90.

Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 148 LAUSD principals.



## Summary: Evaluation

### Recommendations

- **Partner with an independent team to design a rigorous teacher evaluation process** with the primary goal of helping teachers improve performance. Possible elements:
  - o Evaluation outcomes tied to clear development targets, professional development resources, and benchmarks for measuring success;
  - o Increased frequency and duration of observations;
  - o Peer-review evaluation pilot, to which LAUSD schools may opt-in;
  - o Substantial re-training for principals and teachers;
  - o Additional external evaluations for second-year probationary teachers, who are approaching tenure.
- **Hold principals accountable for teachers who transfer from their school** and receive an “Unsatisfactory” rating the first year in their new school by recording the instance on the principal’s own evaluation.
- **Complete process of digitizing past performance evaluations.** Store all future evaluations in a database that is accessible to the appropriate staff.
- **Incorporate evaluation data into online applicant tracking system** so principals may consider past performance indicators in hiring decisions.



Background

▶ Findings

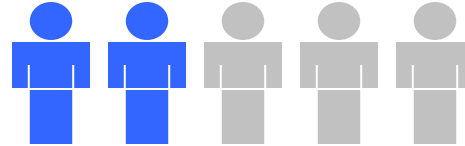
Appendix

## #5

**Two in five LAUSD teachers plan to leave the district in the next few years, especially from high-poverty and low-performing schools.**



Over the next five years, the district faces a significant loss of teaching staff, many of whom intend to leave for other teaching jobs.



2 out of 5 LAUSD teachers say that they **plan to leave the district in the next five years**,  
...and 10% plan to leave within a year.

*(2003 national urban average attrition: 18% after first year; 52% before the fifth year\*)*

Of those who plan to leave within five years:\*

**28%** plan to retire

**24%** plan to continue teaching elsewhere

**21%** plan to move into an administrative position within LAUSD

\* Data from R. Ingersoll in: National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, *No Dream Denied: A Pledge for America's Children* (2003). Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 3,397 LAUSD teachers, 1,341 of who plan to leave within five years.

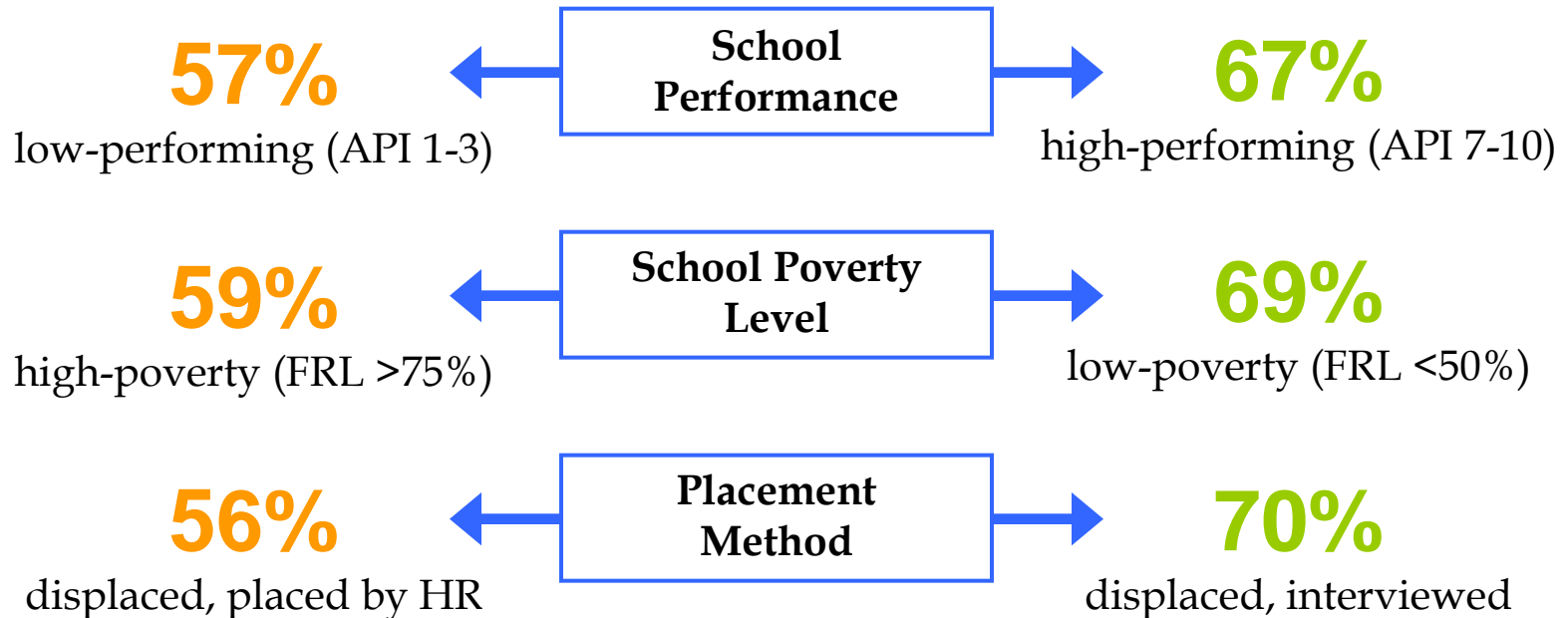


Teachers in high-performing or low-poverty schools, and interviewed displaced teachers, are more likely to plan to stay in LAUSD.

**61%**

of LAUSD teachers plan to stay in the district more than five years.

However, some groups of teachers are more/less likely to stay:\*



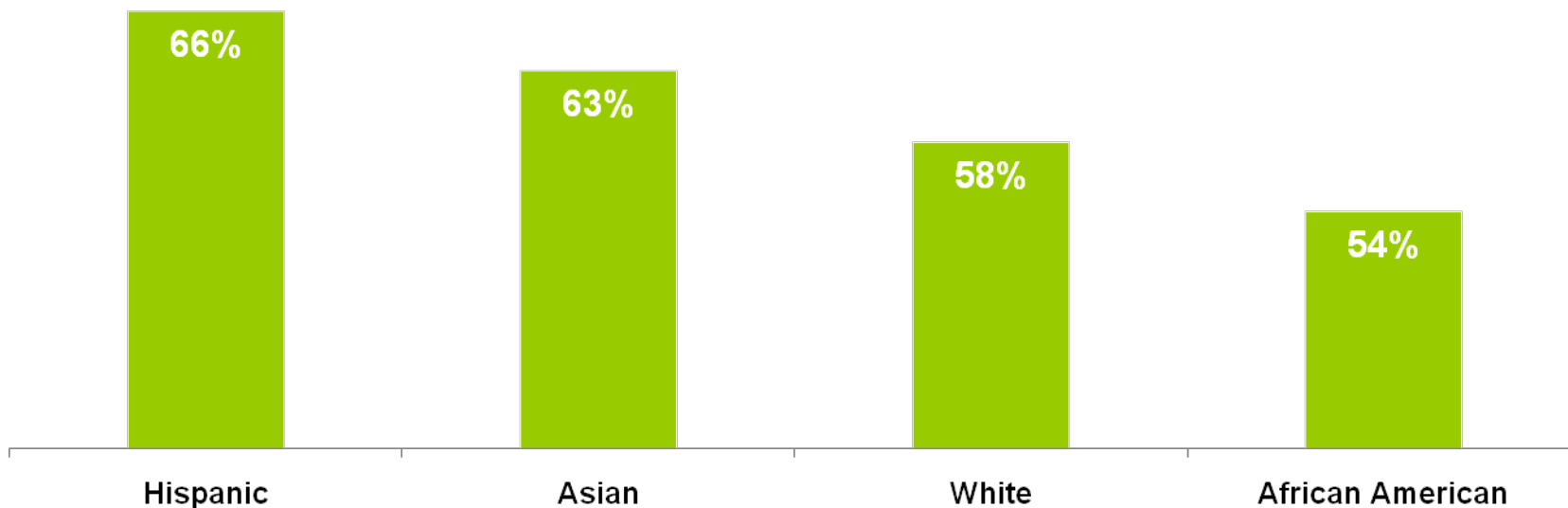
\* API 1-3 n=620; API 7-10 n=417; FRL >75 n=2,539; FRL <50 n=267; Displaced, placed by HR n=39; Displaced, interviewed n=133.

Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 3,397 LAUSD teachers.



LAUSD is likely to lose a disproportionate share of African American teachers in coming years.

Percent of teachers planning to continue teaching in LAUSD for at least six more years, by ethnicity\*



\* Hispanic n=612; Asian n=196; White n=1,376; African American n=225.

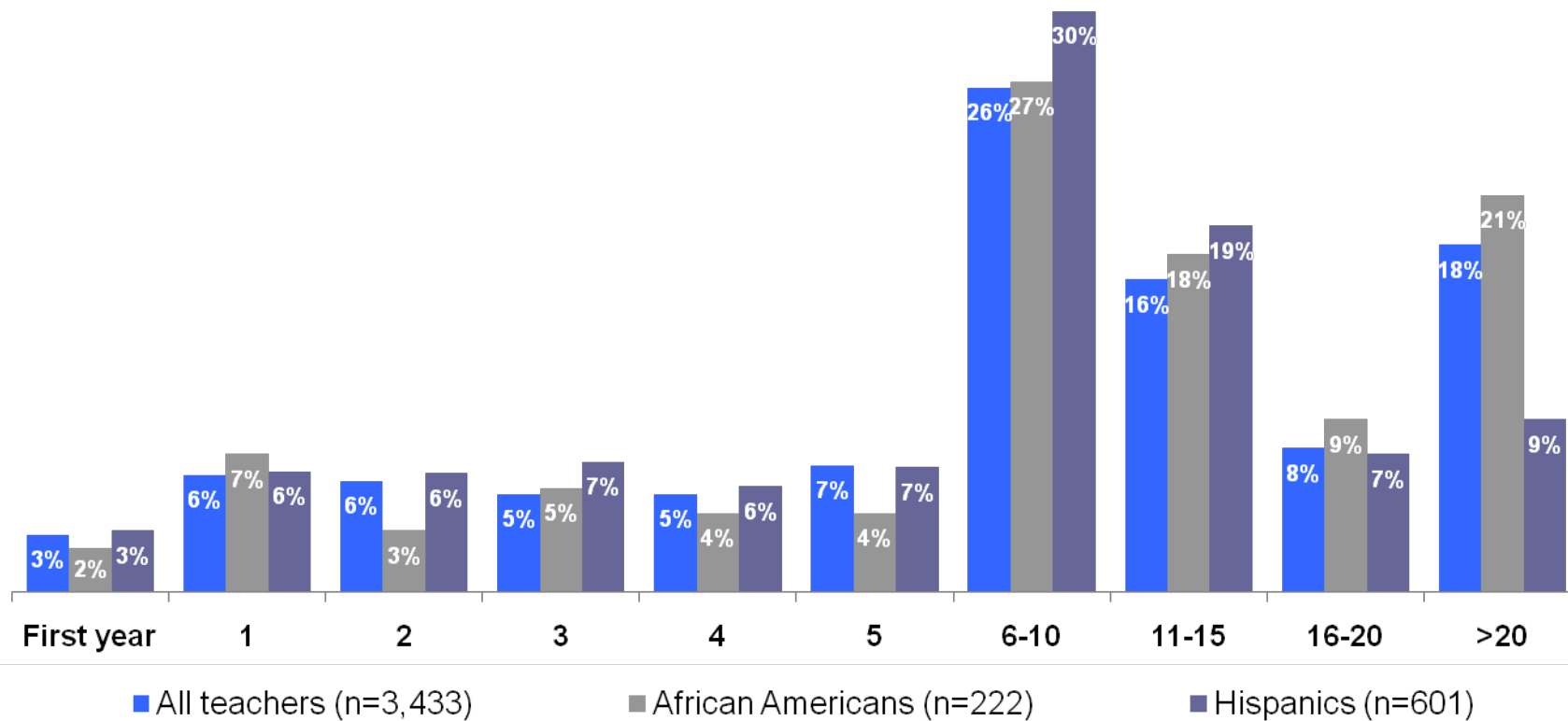
Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 2,510 LAUSD teachers. For more detail, see Appendix B.

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African American survey respondents were fairly similar in seniority distribution to the overall sample.

Years taught in LAUSD by survey respondents



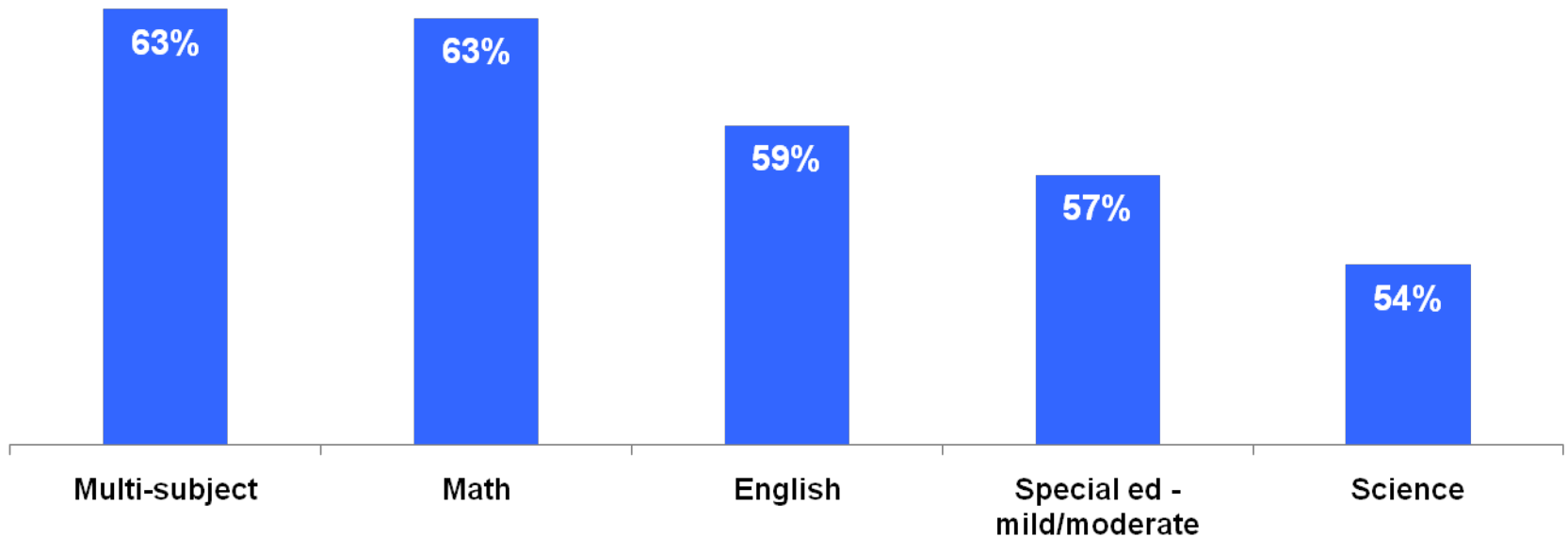
Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 3,433 LAUSD teachers.

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Among major subject areas, science and special education teachers appear to present the greatest risk for attrition.

Percent of teachers planning to continue teaching in LAUSD for at least six more years, by credential area



\* Multi-subject n=1,719; Math n=298; English n=519; SPED-mild/moderate n=443; Science n=231.

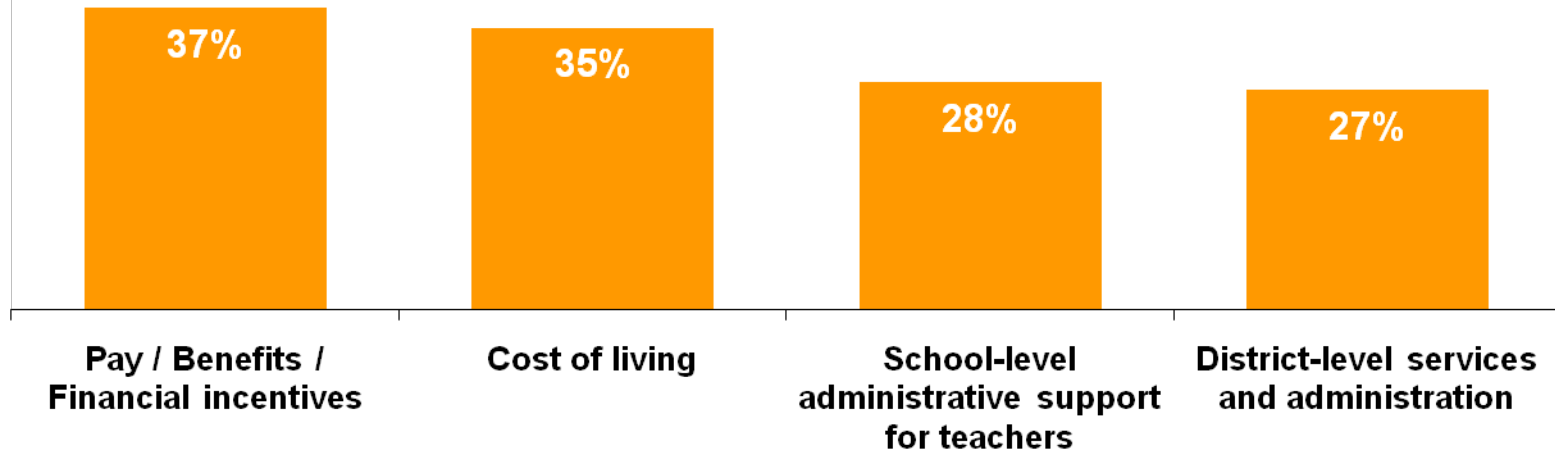
Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 3,397 LAUSD teachers.

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Salary/benefits packages are important in teachers' decisions to stay or leave the district, as are support and teaching assignment.

"Why do you plan to leave teaching in LAUSD in 5 or fewer years?"\*



"Why do you plan to stay in LAUSD for 6 or more years?"\*\*

Pay / Benefits / Financial incentives: **67%**

among high-need teachers: **70%**

among probationary teachers: **65%**

Subject Area / Grade-level Assignment: **42%**

among high-need teachers: **48%**

among probationary teachers: **51%**

\* Top four responses, n=953 teachers. \*\* Top two responses, n=2,018 teachers. High-need n=584; Probationary n=298.

Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 2,409 LAUSD teachers. For more detail, see Appendix C.



## Summary: Retention

### Recommendations

- **Create a strategic labor-management taskforce that will be held accountable for improving teacher retention in LAUSD.** This group will identify at-risk teacher populations and spearhead targeted interventions, e.g.:
  - o Expand offering of retention incentives, especially targeted for teachers in low-performing schools, teachers in higher-poverty schools, science teachers, and African-Americans;
  - o Identify and increase specific school- and district-level administrative support elements that are factors in teacher attrition, especially in low-performing and high-poverty schools, including working conditions and administrator quality;
  - o Evaluate methods for mitigating high cost of living in Los Angeles, such as housing assistance, transportation allowances, etc.;
  - o Re-examine the teacher salary scale and benefits packages.
- **Set specific retention goals** for targeted groups and report publicly on results.
- **Introduce a system of mutual consent in teacher placements** to improve school fit and overall satisfaction, ultimately leading to better retention.



# Contents

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Background

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**Appendix**



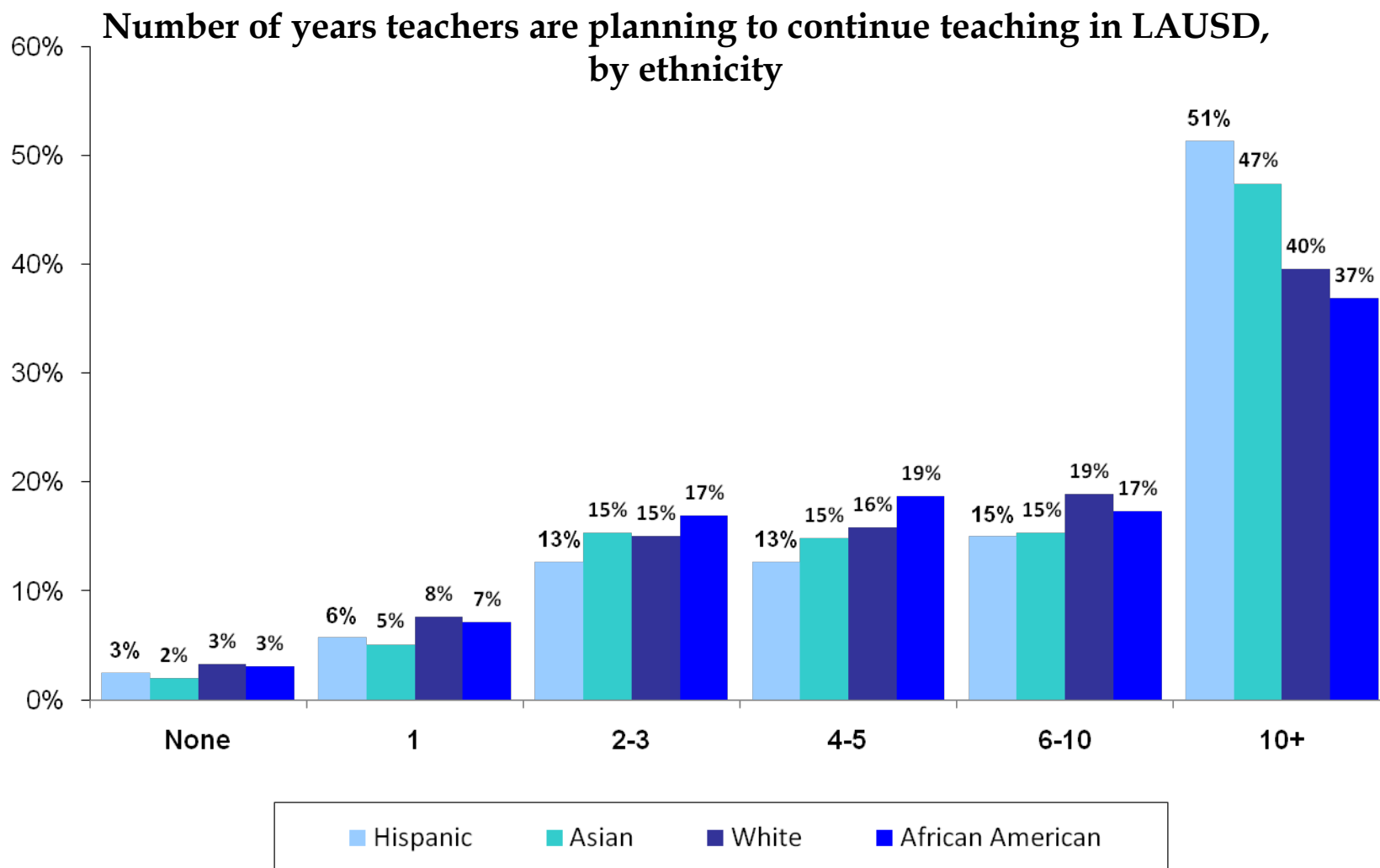
## Appendix A: Methodology

The data presented in this report were gathered from five sources:

1. Review of the district collective bargaining agreement, followed by interviews with district staff in March 2008.
2. Data collected from the HR department on current teachers, teacher movements and separations, applicants to the district, teacher evaluation, and school demographics.
3. An online survey of district teachers, distributed by LAUSD electronically via SurveyMonkey.com during August 2008. The teacher survey response rate was about 10% (3,663 out of ~34,956).
4. An online survey of district principals, distributed by LAUSD electronically via SurveyMonkey.com during August 2008. The principal survey response rate was about 30% (245 out of ~824).
5. An online survey of applicants to the district from the previous four years, distributed by LAUSD to a random sample of applicants electronically via SurveyMonkey.com during August 2008. The applicant survey response rate was about 33% (500 out of ~1,500).



## Appendix B: Retention by ethnicity



\* Hispanic n=612; Asian n=196; White n=1,376; African American n=225.

Source: TNTTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 2,510 LAUSD teachers.



## Appendix C: Response options for retention questions\*

<b>Reasons for retention/attrition of teachers:</b>	<b>Teachers leaving in ≤5 yrs</b>	<b>Teachers staying for &gt;6 yrs</b>	<b>Teachers staying until retire</b>
Amount of testing and accountability	23.30%	1.40%	2.20%
Class size	22.90%	13.20%	9.50%
Cost of living	34.90%	20.90%	22.10%
Curricular support tools	7.30%	7.10%	5.20%
District-level services and administration	27.20%	5.80%	4.60%
Empowerment to make decisions	25.70%	14.00%	13.60%
Facilities	10.60%	7.70%	9.30%
Involvement and culture of larger school community	8.10%	18.60%	14.40%
My subject area or grade-level assignment	3.80%	42.40%	41.70%
Pay / Benefits / Financial incentives	37.40%	67.40%	72.20%
Peer support – informal, mentoring, or coaching	7.30%	24.80%	20.70%
Planning or collaboration time	15.00%	10.40%	10.40%
Professional development	13.40%	17.00%	11.40%
Respect and acknowledgement from school leadership	25.70%	17.80%	19.10%
School climate and safety	19.80%	19.70%	19.10%
School-level administrative support for teachers	28.20%	17.00%	14.20%
Student behavior and motivation	25.80%	13.60%	12.50%
Other (please specify)	39.60%	24.60%	23.70%

\* Multiple responses possible. Response options randomized for each respondent. ≤5 yrs n=953; >6 yrs n=2018; until retire n=367.

Source: TNTP survey, July/August 2008. Respondents: 3,338 LAUSD teachers.



## The New Teacher Project

The New Teacher Project helps school districts and states fulfill the promise of public education by ensuring that all students – especially those from high-need communities – get excellent teachers.

[www.TNTP.org](http://www.TNTP.org)

- Founded by teachers in 1997
- Partners with school districts, state education agencies, and charter schools
- Targets acute teacher quality challenges
- Delivers a range of customized services and solutions on a fee-for-service basis
- Approx. 200 employees, most embedded in school district offices; majority are former teachers
- Past and present clients include:

*Districts:* Baltimore, Chicago, Denver, Memphis, New Orleans, New York, Oakland, Philadelphia, Washington, DC

*States:* Alaska, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia