

The Cost of Teacher Attrition and Savings from Reducing Teacher Attrition

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May 2007

The table below shows that it cost the state of Georgia almost \$400 million in FY05 to replace the teachers lost to attrition, an increase of nearly \$60 million from FY01. If the state had reduced attrition by 35%, the cost of replacing teachers would have been reduced by more than \$136 million. See Figure 1.

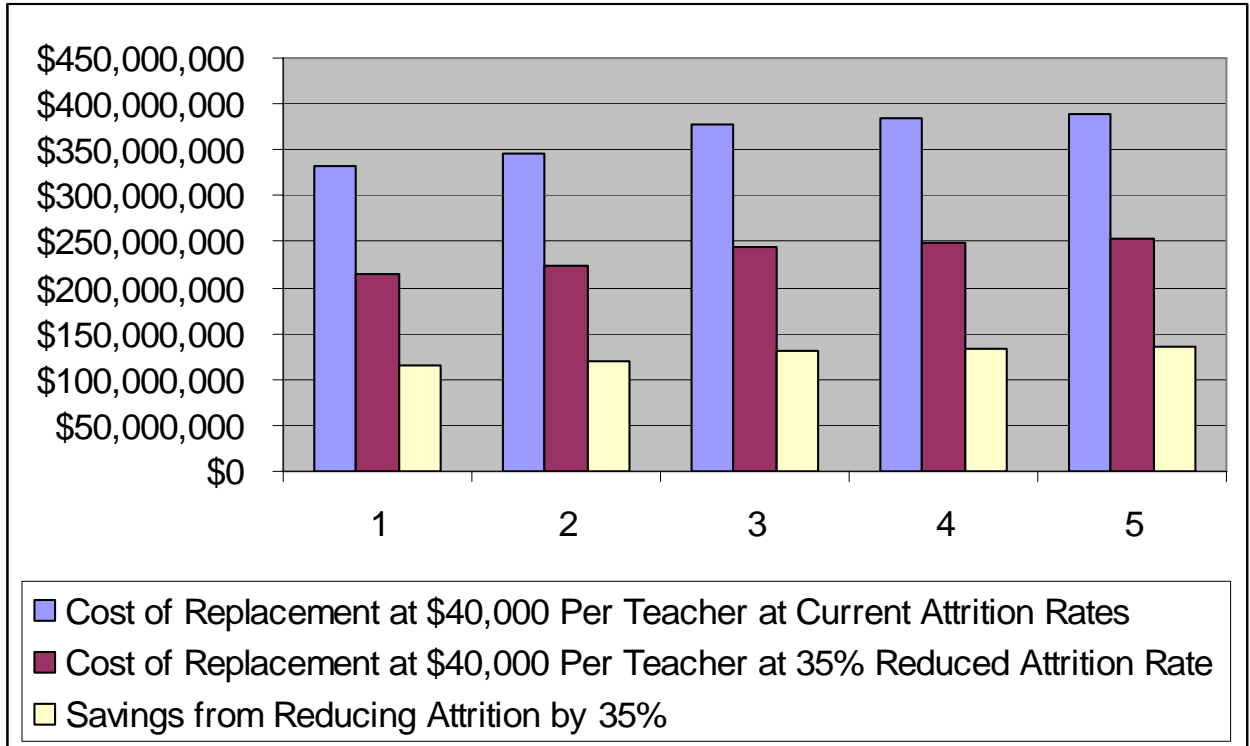
Ingersoll (2003) noted that the size of the teaching force, combined with its relatively high turnover, means that there are large flows in, through, and out of schools each year. He also argued that school staffing problems to a significant extent are the result of a revolving door phenomenon, where large numbers of teachers depart teaching long before retirement (Ingersoll, 2001).

In an effort to increase teacher retention, funds could be channeled towards increasing salaries, which are strongly linked to teacher turnover rates (Ingersoll, 2003). However, salary is not the only issue. Other strategies include improving teacher workplace conditions, providing more professional development in areas that teachers find most challenging such as classroom management, increasing support such as mentoring for new teachers, and increasing administrative support (Ingersoll, 2003).

Table 1. Cost of Attrition and Savings from Reducing Attrition by 35%, FY01-FY05

Year	FY01	FY02	FY03	FY04	FY05
Attrition	8,304	8,627	9,434	9,608	9,748
Cost of Replacement at \$40,000 Per Teacher at Current Attrition Rates	\$332,160,000	\$345,080,000	\$377,360,000	\$384,320,000	\$389,920,000
Attrition Reduced by 35% (i.e. 65% of actual attrition)	5,398	5,608	6,132	6,245	6,336
Cost of Replacement at \$40,000 Per Teacher at 35% Reduced Attrition Rate	\$215,904,000	\$224,302,000	\$245,284,000	\$249,808,000	\$253,448,000
Savings from Reducing Attrition by 35%	\$116,256,000	\$120,778,000	\$132,076,000	\$134,512,000	\$136,472,000

Figure 1. Cost of Attrition and Savings from Reducing Attrition by 35%, FY01-FY05



References

- Ingersoll, R.M. (2001). Teacher turnover and teacher shortages: An organizational analysis. *American Educational Research Journal*, 37(3), 499-534.
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