



Administrator Turnover and Attrition Brief SY2014 to SY2015

Introduction and Goals

One of the primary challenges in education for Wisconsin and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is the growing teacher shortage. State Superintendent Tony Evers has labeled it one of the “most critical public policy issues” confronting the state and is dedicating significant resources towards addressing it (<https://dpi.wi.gov/news/dpi-connected/teacher-shortage-announcement>). Work on this issue is also being guided by the Professional Standards Council—a statutorily constructed group that assists the state superintendent with improvement in the areas of teacher preparation, licensure, and regulation (<http://dpi.wi.gov/news/releases/2016/evers-announces-efforts-address-school-staffing-shortages>).

The issue of educator shortages is directly linked to the ability of schools and districts to recruit, retain, support and develop staff members. When schools suffer high turnover and attrition rates, students’ education and learning environments are disrupted. This situation works against efforts to improve student educational outcomes and hinders efforts to reduce the achievement gap throughout the state. High levels of turnover and attrition would also work against efforts at improving equity throughout Wisconsin schools (<https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/esea/pdf/WisconsinEdEquityPlan.pdf>).

This brief will only cover educational staff that are licensed through DPI and it will focus specifically on administrative personnel, which includes school social workers, guidance counselors, and school psychologists. It presents data on both turnover and attrition in administrative personnel throughout the state that occurred between the 2013-14(SY2014) and 2014-15(SY2015) school years.

For the purposes of this study, “turnover” is defined as the situation when an individual left a position at a school, but kept working within the Wisconsin Public School system the subsequent year either by finding a position at another school, or by retaining at least one other position within the school system. “Attrition” is defined as the situation when an individual left all of their positions within the Wisconsin public school system and did not return the next year.

Administrative Turnover and Attrition

Analysis shows that during the 2013-14 school year, 5687 licensed administrative personnel were employed in Wisconsin Public Schools filling 6551 positions. The analysis distinguished between the number of positions and the number of distinct people in the administrator category, because one person might hold multiple positions in a district (or even in multiple districts), and therefore the number of people in the school system was less than the number of positions held by them. Additionally, data on the assignment workload percentages—full-time equivalency (FTE)—that these positions entailed is presented.

Of these 5687 licensed administrative personnel, 4184 individuals remained in 4649 positions into the next year, 668 individuals left 785 positions while remaining within the system (turnover) and 970 left the system entirely (attrition). These statistics are displayed in table 1 along with FTE totals.

Table 1—Administrative Personnel SY2014-15—Remaining, Turnover, & Attrition Numbers

	Positions	% of total	Individuals	% of Total	FTE	% of Total
Total Admin	6551	100.00%	5687	100.00%	4953.72	100.00%
Remaining	4649	70.97%	4184	73.57%	3730.76	75.31%
Turnover	785	11.98%	668	11.75%	525.15	10.60%
Attrition	1117	17.05%	970	17.06%	697.81	14.09%

It is important to note that the percentages for individuals adds up to more than 100%. This occurs because individuals with multiple positions may have kept some of them (and were thus counted in the Remaining group), while also leaving others (thus being counted in the Turnover group).

Within the administrator category, there are a number of different positions, but the eight largest categories—making up over 94% of all FTEs—are principal(34.44%), program coordinator (20.25%), Asst. principal(12.83%), district administrator(8.02%), director of Instruction(5.63%), director of special education(5.25%), business manager(3.94%) and reading specialist(3.82%). Altogether, these positions constituted 4666.36 FTEs within the administrator category. Table 2 displays the turnover and attrition numbers for each of these positions in terms of FTE.

Table 2—Administrative Positions SY2014-15—Turnover and Attrition Numbers

Positions	Total FTE	Turnover FTE	% Turnover	Attrition FTE	% attrition
Principal	1705.98	168.82	9.90%	143.93	8.44%
Prog. Coord.	1003.30	108.18	10.78%	290.87	28.99%
Asst. Principal	635.70	115.88	18.23%	49.64	7.81%
District Admin.	397.40	18.00	4.53%	32.77	8.25%
Dir. of Instruct.	278.79	22.65	8.12%	33.83	12.13%
Dir. of Spec. Ed.	260.30	28.54	10.96%	24.57	9.44%
Business Mgr.	195.29	13.25	6.78%	16.80	8.60%
Reading Spec.	189.6	34.06	17.96%	34.16	18.02%

One important aspect of the educator staffing challenge is knowing whether those leaving the profession are newly engaged educators, moderately experienced educators, or are long-term education professionals nearing retirement. By analyzing staffing data, this brief examines how long administrative personnel had been working in Wisconsin public schools. The time period categories used in this analysis are noted in Table 3. These categories were chosen to highlight the critical nature of early years of employment within the Wisconsin Public School

Table 3--Work History Categories used in Analysis

1 year or less of experience
2 years or less of experience
3 years or less of experience
3-5 years of experience
5-10 years of experience
10-20 years of experience
20+ years of experience

system as well as the different stages within an educator’s professional development. One caveat to this data is that it measures the total years of experience as an educator overall rather than measuring only the total experience in a particular position or subject area. Thus, an educator who worked as a sub for one year, then as a math teacher for 7 years, and finally as a vice principal for 7 years would have a sum of 15 years of total experience for this measure.

Table 4 presents a summary of the turnover and attrition groups within the administrative category, and there are a couple of important inferences to make. With regards to turnover, one can note that there is not significant turnover of administrative personnel with little experience. This finding would fit with the assumption that administrative personnel tend to have more experience in education than other categories. The highest amount of turnover is within those educators with 15+ years of experience, which might suggest that there is a lot of movement in this bracket as people focus on career advancement.

Table 4—Administrative Turnover and Attrition compared to Years of Experience.

Years Exp.	Turnover		Attrition	
	# of individuals	% of total Turnover	# of individuals	% of total Attrition
0-1 years	4	0.60%	23	2.37%
0-2 years	8	1.20%	39	4.02%
0-3 years	14	2.10%	70	7.22%
3.1-5 years	22	3.29%	52	5.37%
5-10 years	109	16.32%	148	15.27%
10-15 years	175	26.20%	174	17.96%
15+ years	348	52.10%	525	54.18%

Regarding attrition, the information in Table 4 shows that the majority of those leaving administrative positions in the Wisconsin public school system were very experienced. According to FTE percentages, 39.5% of the FTE’s leaving the system were aged 55 or older, which could signify retirement. However, another 37.5% of those leaving (according to FTE %) were between the ages of 40 and 54, which is not yet within the standard age of retirement and might therefore be important for those interested in educator retention. Finally, the 70 individuals with 0-3-years of experience represent over 35% of the administrative personnel with that much work experience, which is a high level of attrition for inexperienced administrators.

Maps of Educator Turnover Rates

The statewide analyses of educator turnover and attrition above do not, however, display the distribution or concentration of educator losses throughout the state. To accomplish this, this brief presents three separate maps that show turnover, attrition, and combined (turnover+attrition) rates for each of the 378 unified school districts in the state. Accompanying these maps are three tables that present related information. Table 5 shows the number of districts that fall

Table 5—Number of Districts in Mapping Categories of Turnover and Attrition Rates

	Turnover	Attrition	Turnover+Attrition
0%	157	117	64
0-5%	38	46	34
5-10%	43	55	33
10-15%	34	48	33
15-20%	38	38	43
20-33.3%	46	48	86
33.3%+	22	26	85
no data	0	0	0

within the different percentage-based categories for turnover and attrition.

Tables 6 and 7 show the breakdown the data from Table 5 further using National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Locale Codes. These codes are “a measure of geographic status on an urban continuum that ranges from ‘large city’ to ‘rural.’”(<https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/commonfiles/localedescription.asp>) The four main categories in these codes are “city,” “suburb,” “town,” and “rural.” Table 6 shows the breakdown of districts related to turnover percentages, while table 7 shows the same breakdown for attrition percentages.

Table 6—District Breakdown by NCES Locale Code for Turnover Percentages

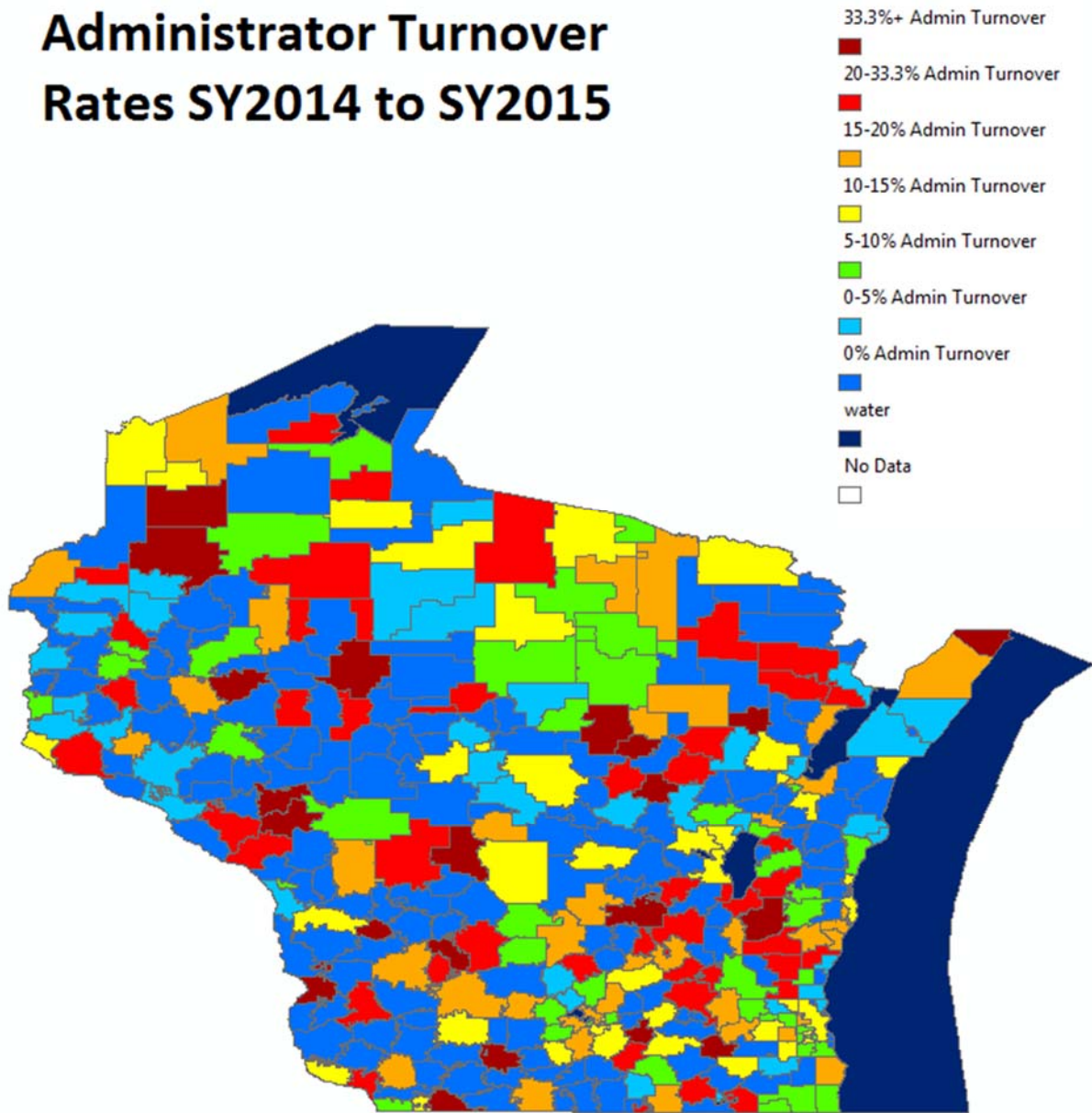
% Turnover	Rural	Town	Suburb	City	Total # of Districts
0%	106	33	18	0	157
0-5%	17	10	7	4	38
5-10%	12	10	18	3	43
10-15%	9	13	7	5	34
15-20%	19	9	7	3	38
20-33.3%	26	14	4	2	46
33.3%+	19	3	0	0	22
Total # of Districts	208	92	61	17	378

Table 7—District Breakdown by NCES Locale Code for Attrition Percentages

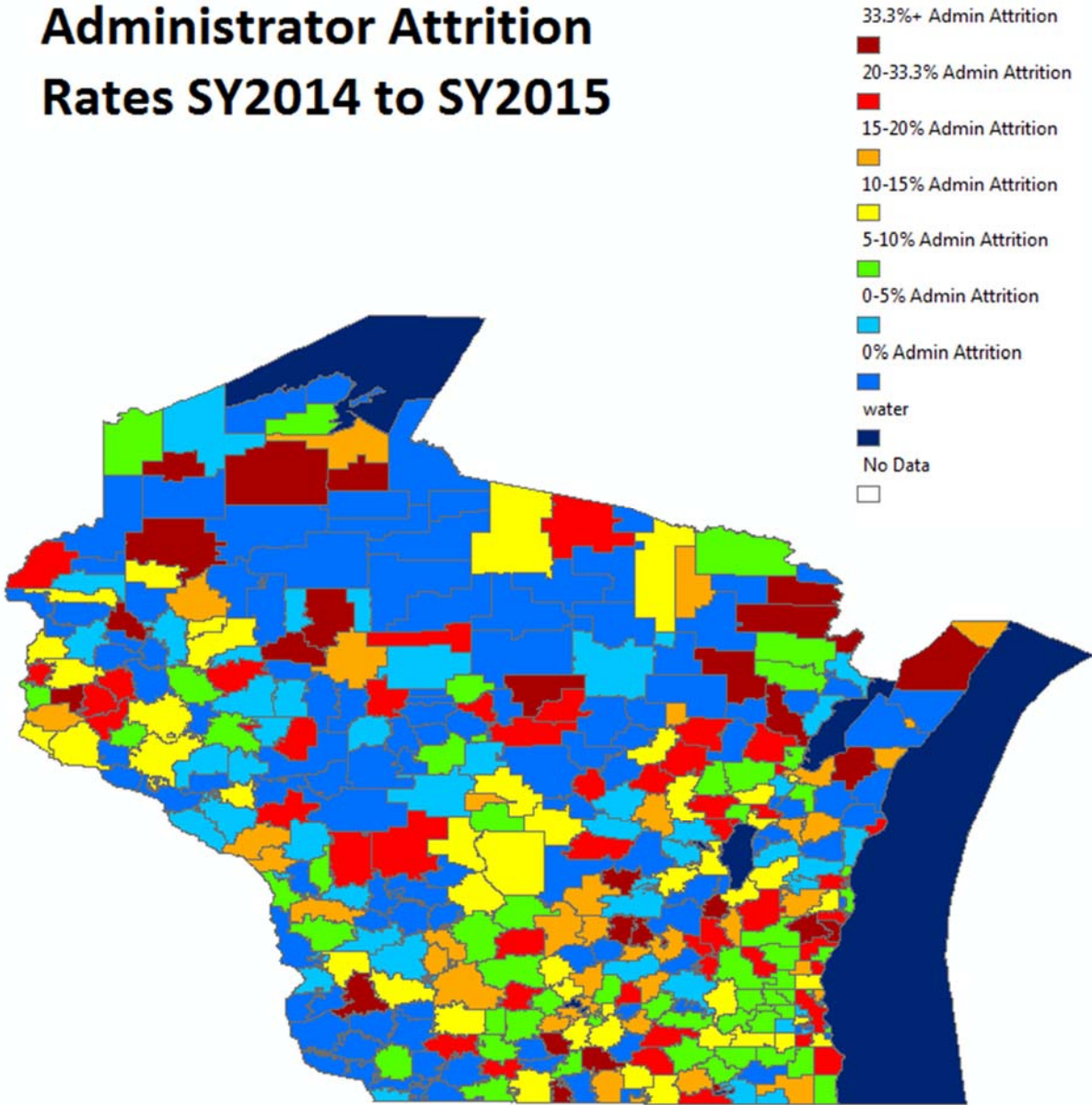
% Attrition	Rural	Town	Suburb	City	Total # of Districts
0%	91	18	8	0	117
0-5%	26	13	6	1	46
5-10%	15	15	20	5	55
10-15%	19	13	12	4	48
15-20%	17	13	5	3	38
20-33.3%	20	15	10	3	48
33.3%+	20	5	0	1	26
Total # of Districts	208	92	61	17	378

Maps will be shown on separate pages for easier visibility.

Administrator Turnover Rates SY2014 to SY2015



Administrator Attrition Rates SY2014 to SY2015



Administrator Turnover + Attrition Rates SY2014 to SY2015

