



Educator Retention Dashboard Facilitation Guide

Purpose

This facilitation guide was created to support district leaders who are interested in using the [CDE Educator Retention Dashboard](#) as a resource to facilitate deeper conversations around recruitment and retention in their context.

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Dashboard Background

Dashboard Purpose

The educator retention dashboard was created to fill a hole in our current understanding of the educator workforce in Colorado. While we already publish [annual “turnover” rates](#) by LEA, that rate counts anyone who moved positions, schools, or districts as turnover with less visibility into how much of turnover is movement and how much is truly educators leaving the field. The visualizations in this dashboard aim to provide additional visibility into movement and retention patterns within the Colorado educator workforce, of interest to district leaders, legislators, educator preparation program leaders, and the media.

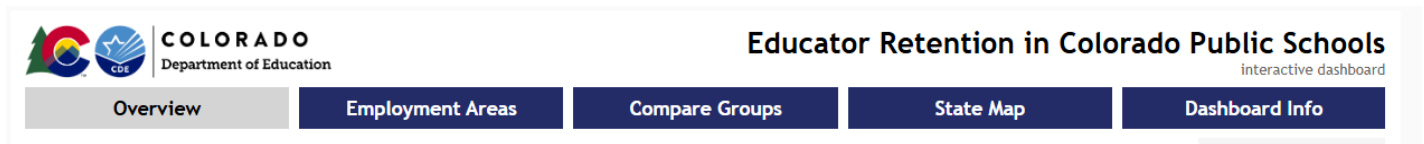
Data Sources

The retention dashboard utilizes data from the annual Human Resources collection. Data is analyzed at the individual level. If an educator’s EDID (state employee id #) is present in one year’s HR data, the system explores whether that educator is also present one, three, and five years later to determine patterns in their movement– exploring whether the educator is still in the same position, school, teaching area, and district. Those rates are then combined at the district level to represent patterns.

Navigating the Dashboard

Available Views

The educator retention dashboard includes four main views with different focuses:



The **Overview tab** focuses on movement patterns within the educator workforce including changes in position, school, district, etc. By default, the dashboard will show just two categories: stayed in Colorado public schools or left Colorado public schools. Users can use the “level of detail” filter on the right to explore patterns at a deeper level with “Most Detail” as the most comprehensive view.

The **Employment Areas tab** focuses on movement patterns that vary by content area (for teachers) or job code (for principals and SSPs). For example, users can explore how likely it is that a teacher in a particular content area will still be teaching that content area 1, 3, or 5 years later.

The **Compare Groups tab** allows a state-level view of factors that may be associated with higher or lower retention rates. Users can use the “Compare by” tab to explore comparisons by salary, role, school-level, and more.

The **State Map tab** allows a map-based look at how retention rates vary by district at 1, 3, and 5 years with the option to explore by district setting, rural designations, content areas, and more.

The **Dashboard Info tab** has additional details on the dashboard.

Available Filters

Most dashboard views include a variety of filters to allow deeper exploration of the data.

On the Overview, Employment Areas, and State Map tabs, filters include:

Recent vs. Historical
Recent (Within 5 Years) ▾

Employment Year
(All) ▾

Educator Group
Teacher ▾

Employment Area
(All) ▾

District Setting
(based on urban proximity)
(All) ▾

Rural Designation
(based on # of students)
(All) ▾

LEA (District)
(All) ▾

- **Recent vs. Historical:** Allows exploration of the most recent 5 cohorts or all available data.
- **Employment Year:** Allows exploration of data by individual cohorts going back to 2016-17. Note that each view of a particular cohort will only show the data available for that cohort. For instance, selecting the 2023-24 cohort will only show retention data for one-year since data is not yet available for three years and five years after the 2023-24 school year.
- **Educator Group:** Allows exploration by teacher, principal, or Special Service Provider (SSP)
- **Employment Area:** Allows exploration by a particular content area or focus. For instance, if Educator Group is set on SSP, the nine SSP specialties are available in employment area.
- **District Setting:** Allows exploration of patterns based on the distance from a metro area.
- **Rural Designation:** Allows exploration based on Colorado’s rural designations
- **LEA (District):** Allows exploration by a particular school district, BOCES, or other LEA

Within the **Employment Area and State Map tabs**, an additional filter is added to allow exploration by retention time period: 1, 3, or 5 years.

Since the **Compare Groups tab** focuses on a state-level analysis of factors, the filters are unique:

Compare by...
School Level ▾

Outcome
Stayed in Colorado Pu... ▾

X-axis
Retention Timeframes ▾

Recent vs. Historical
Recent (Within 5 Years) ▾

Employment Year
(All) ▾

Educator Group
Teacher ▾

- **Compare by:** Allows an exploration by varying factors that may be associated with increased or decreased retention including school level, salary, experience level, and more.
- **Outcome:** Allows a user to toggle the view between exploring who stayed in Colorado public schools vs. who is moving between districts
- **X-axis:** Allows a user to toggle between a view focused on 1, 3, and 5-year retention or a view that focuses on changes across cohorts.
- **Recent vs. Historical:** Allows exploration of the most recent 5 cohorts or all available data. The dashboard contains information on cohorts going back to 2016-17.
- **Employment Year:** Allows exploration of data by cohort going back to 2016-17.
- **Educator Group:** Allows exploration by teacher, principal, or Special Service Provider (SSP)

Dashboard Feature: Hover for more details

Each dashboard view includes built-in definitions to support understanding. Hover over any visualization to see additional information about that data point. The “context” box and info icon on the upper right corner also includes more information about each view.

Limitations

While this dashboard displays correlations between educator retention and various constructs of interest, correlation does not imply causation. In many cases, there could be underlying factors that affect both educator retention and the displayed data point.

Note that the category “Left Colorado Public Schools” includes all types of exits, including retirement. An educator who leaves education, moves to a private school, moves to a different state, or retires would all be included in the “left” category.

Dashboard Uses

The Educator Retention Dashboard can support multiple levels of decision-making and continuous improvement efforts. District leaders may find it valuable for purposes such as:

1. Strategic Planning and Goal-Setting

- Identifying retention strengths and challenges across educator groups or content areas
- Setting measurable recruitment and retention goals aligned to district strategic plans

2. Root-Cause Analysis and Workforce Diagnostics

- Exploring movement patterns (e.g., content-area shifts, departures from the field) to better understand *why* retention challenges may be occurring
- Identifying educator groups or specialties with particularly high mobility or exit rates
- Comparing district patterns to state-level trends to determine whether issues are local or statewide

3. Informing Recruitment and Hiring Strategies

- Using retention patterns to anticipate future hiring needs more accurately
- Identifying hard-to-staff content areas or roles with consistently low retention

4. Communicating With Boards and Community Stakeholders

- Offering a clear, data-driven explanation of educator workforce patterns
- Supporting budget and staffing decisions with evidence on retention over 1-, 3-, and 5-year windows
- Helping community partners understand staffing needs, including hard-to-fill roles

5. Strengthening Partnerships With Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs)

- Identifying patterns of retention by content area to inform joint planning with EPPs.
- Highlighting fields where additional pre-service pipelines or Grow-Your-Own programs may be needed.

6. Evaluating the Impact of Retention Initiatives

- Monitoring changes in retention after implementing new induction supports, mentoring programs, compensation adjustments, or school culture efforts
- Comparing historical retention patterns to recent cohorts to look for improvements
- Using multi-year data to evaluate whether initiatives are affecting short-term (1-year) or long-term (5-year) retention

7. Budget and Resource Allocation

- Using retention data to inform compensation discussions, recruitment grant requests, or decisions about stipends and supports for hard-to-staff areas
- Understanding the financial implications of turnover by identifying roles that experience frequent movement

8. Building a Shared Understanding Across Teams

- Facilitating conversations across HR, school leadership, and finance teams through a common, accessible data source
- Supporting professional learning communities (PLCs) or leadership meetings focused on workforce sustainability
- Helping teams move from anecdotes to shared, evidence-based understanding

Suggested Questions

The discussion questions below can be adapted to facilitate a conversation on the data in the dashboard. Questions may be more or less relevant for particular audiences.

Overview Tab Questions— Movement & Retention Patterns

- How do our 1-, 3-, and 5-year retention rates compare to districts of similar size, demographics, and setting?
- When we increase the level of detail, what types of movement (within school, within district, between districts) appear most common for our educators?
- Are certain groups—teachers, principals, or SSPs—showing concerning movement trends?
- Which cohorts in our district show improvement or decline, and what decisions or conditions might have influenced that?
- What surprises us about how educators move within our system compared to statewide patterns?
- Which movement patterns are most pressing for us to understand (e.g., leaving the profession, shifting roles, leaving our district but not the state)?
- Where should we dive deeper with school leaders or HR to understand “why” behind the movement patterns?

Employment Areas Tab Questions— Content-Area and Role Stability

- Which content areas in our district have the lowest retention, and how do those rates compare to districts similar in size or setting?
- Where do we see strong retention within content areas—and what can we learn from those?
- Are high-mobility areas (e.g., SPED, CTE, STEM) consistent with statewide trends, or are they unique to our context?
- How many educators in key content areas stay in the district but change subjects or roles? Is that movement helpful or disruptive?
- Which focus or content areas pose the greatest risk for future vacancies based on the 3- and 5-year trends?
- Are our “harder to staff” content areas harder to retain as well, or is the challenge primarily recruitment?
- Which content areas show recent improvements, and what district actions may have contributed?
- What district structures (induction, coaching, mentoring, workload) might be contributing to subject-area variation?
- Are there content areas where we should consider strengthening preparation partnerships or pipeline programs such as Grow Your Own educator initiatives (GYO)?

Compare Groups Tab Questions – State-Level Patterns

- What do the state-level patterns suggest about factors that correlate with retention? (e.g., salary, experience, school level, role)
- Which groups in the state show the highest stability, and do we suspect similar or different patterns in our own district?
- Which factors appear most strongly associated with lower retention statewide, and are those areas relevant concerns for us locally?
- When viewing 1-, 3-, and 5-year retention, which trends suggest potential early warning signs that we should examine in our own data?
- What statewide patterns seem especially relevant to districts of our size, setting, or rural designation?

- When toggling the outcome between “Stayed in Colorado Public Schools” and “Moved Between Districts,” what hypotheses does this raise about mobility?
- Which statewide trends challenge or confirm our assumptions about educator movement and stability?
- Are there groups statewide that retain better than expected? What might those patterns suggest about practices we could explore or adapt?
- What follow-up questions does this generate for our internal HR data, exit interviews, induction programs, or leadership supports?

State Map Tab Questions – Geographic Comparisons

- How do our district’s retention rates compare to nearby districts or those serving similar student populations?
- Are regional patterns (urban vs. rural vs. mountain vs. plains) aligned with or different from our own context?
- Which districts with similar characteristics have stronger retention outcomes—and what might we learn from them?
- Are there districts in our region where educators appear to be moving into or out of our district?
- What economic, geographic, or competitive factors might be influencing mobility across districts in our area?
- For key content areas, how do retention rates in our region compare to the statewide landscape?
- Are neighboring districts experiencing similar challenges in specific roles (SPED, secondary math, principals), or are our patterns distinct?
- Does our district show improvement or stagnation over time compared to nearby districts?

Suggested Activities

The educator retention board can support a wide variety of conversations within a district about how to recruit and retain educators. The resource below includes a 45-minute introduction protocol plus a variety of extension activities that can be adapted for your context.

45-Minute Outline: Introducing the Retention Dashboard

- Welcome & Objectives (3 minutes)
 - Brief introduction to the session
 - State objectives:
 - Understand purpose and structure of the dashboard
 - Preview major views and functionality
 - Generate district-specific questions for future exploration
- Background & Rationale (7 minutes)
 - Why the dashboard was created
 - Limitations of prior “turnover” measures
 - Value of tracking movement vs. true exits
 - Overview of individual-level HR data used
 - Quick reflection prompt: “What retention or staffing question is top-of-mind in our district?”
- Guided Walkthrough of Key Views (20 minutes)
 - Overview Tab
 - Purpose and key features
 - Levels of detail
 - Leader reflection prompt (see suggested questions above)
 - Employment Areas Tab

- Content-area movement patterns
 - Identifying high-need roles
 - Leader reflection prompt (see suggested questions above)
- Compare Groups Tab – State-Level Only
 - Factors correlated with statewide retention
 - Not district-specific
 - How leaders can use this to generate hypotheses
 - Leader reflection prompt (see suggested questions above)
- State Map Tab
 - Geographical differences
 - Benchmarking against similar district contexts
 - Leader reflection prompt (see suggested questions above)
- District-Specific Reflection & Sensemaking (10 minutes)
 - Group discussion: Choose 2–3 guiding questions
 - What patterns align with or contradict our perceptions?
 - Which educator groups/content areas need a closer look?
 - What questions remain unanswered?
 - What additional data might be needed (exit surveys, climate data, etc.)?
- Next Steps & Closing (5 minutes)
 - Recommended actions to consider:
 - Pull local HR data to compare with state context
 - Identify 1–2 high-priority groups/areas for deeper investigation
 - Plan to share dashboard insights with other audiences
 - Pair with internal data sources for full picture
- Closing prompt: “What is one action you will take in the next month to explore educator retention more deeply?”

Extension Activities

The activities below can be used in combination with the introduction outlined above or as a stand-alone activity to explore the dashboard and map implications of the data.

10-20 Minute Extensions

Small-Group Deep Dive by Tab (10–20 minutes)

Break leaders into four groups and assign each group one dashboard tab (Overview, Employment Areas, Compare Groups, State Map).

Each group discusses:

- What the tab reveals statewide
- What questions it raises for our district
- What data we might need internally

Groups share 1–2 insights back with the whole room.

Scenario Analysis: “What Would We Do If...?” (10–15 minutes)

Give leaders 2–3 plausible district scenarios (e.g., SPED retention declines, principal turnover rises, rural setting competition increases).

Using the dashboard:

- Identify which tab(s) illuminate the issue

- Identify comparable statewide patterns
- Brainstorm potential district responses

Role-Focused Discussion (10 minutes)

Have leaders reflect on implications by role:

- Superintendent
- HR/Talent
- Academics
- School Leadership

Each group identifies:

- Which dashboard views matter most for their role
- Which decisions could be informed by retention data
- Follow-up actions needed

Regional Mapping Exercise (10–15 minutes)

Using the State Map tab:

- Identify 3–5 comparable districts by size, setting, or demographics
- Note similarities/differences in retention patterns
- Discuss what regional factors may influence retention
- Identify regional partners to connect with

Connecting Dashboard Insights to Local Data (10–20 minutes)

Invite leaders to consider:

- How do statewide patterns compare to local perceptions?
- What local data (exit interviews, climate survey, vacancy data, salary data) should be brought to the next meeting?

Option to have leaders identify 2–3 local data sources to prioritize.

Prioritization Protocol (10 minutes)

Leaders individually identify:

1. One educator group of concern (Overview tab)
2. One content area of concern (Employment areas tab)
3. One “potential retention factor” of concern (Compare Groups tab)

Then share and cluster priorities to identify top 1–2 district-wide areas for deeper analysis.

“What Surprised You?” Gallery Walk (10 minutes)

Leaders view each tab. On sticky notes or digital board, they add:

- “Surprised me because...”
- “Confirms what we’ve seen...”
- “Raises a new question...”

Debrief as a group.

Build a District Learning Agenda (10–20 minutes)

Leaders collaboratively identify:

- 3–5 priority questions the district wants to answer about educator retention
- Which dashboard tabs inform each question
- What additional local data is needed
- Who needs to be involved

This creates a clear roadmap for next sessions.

Action Planning Mini-Workshop (10–15 minutes)

Using the data + discussion:

- Identify one short-term action (next 30 days)
- One medium-term action (next 90 days)
- One long-term action (year)

Leaders share commitments in pairs or with the room.

20–60 Minute Extensions

Data Carousel Protocol (20–30 minutes)

Set-Up:

Create four stations—one for each dashboard tab. At each station, post 2–3 guiding questions.

Process:

- Divide leaders into four groups.
- Groups spend 5–7 minutes per station, reviewing the tab and answering the posted questions.
- Groups rotate until they have visited all stations.
- Whole-group debrief: What themes emerged across stations? What data points appeared repeatedly?

Data-Driven Problem of Practice Protocol (30–45 minutes)

Steps:

1. Identify a problem of practice (3–5 minutes): Each leader selects one retention-related challenge (e.g., SPED turnover, new teacher attrition, school leadership stability).
2. Explore the dashboard (10–15 minutes): Leaders examine which dashboard views inform the problem, and note any state-level patterns or potential contributing factors.
3. Consultancy Rounds (10–15 minutes):
 - One leader presents their problem (2 minutes).
 - Peers ask clarifying questions (2 minutes).
 - Peers discuss strategies while presenter listens (5 minutes).
 - Presenter reflects (1–2 minutes).
 - Repeat as time allows.
4. Action Commitments (3 minutes): Each leader identifies next steps or additional data needed.

Strategy Mapping Protocol (30–60 minutes)

Steps:

1. Highlight key dashboard insights (5–10 minutes)
Each leader identifies 1–2 patterns that feel most relevant or urgent.

2. Sort insights into themes (10 minutes)
Facilitate grouping into themes such as early-career support, compensation, leadership development, working conditions, or staffing pipelines.
3. For each theme, create a “strategy map” (15–25 minutes)
Include:
 - a. Short-term actions
 - b. Long-term strategies
 - c. Key partners
 - d. Required resources
 - e. Indicators of success
4. Gallery walk or share-out (5–10 minutes)

Internal vs. External Data Alignment Protocol (30–45 minutes)

Preparation:

Bring (or pre-identify) internal datasets such as:

- Exit interviews
- Climate/culture survey results
- Vacancy reports
- Hiring timelines
- Teacher/leader experience data

Process:

1. Generate dashboard insights (5–10 minutes)
Leaders list 3–5 trends that stood out.
2. Layer internal data (10–20 minutes)
For each insight, leaders discuss:
 - a. What internal data confirms this pattern?
 - b. What internal data contradicts it?
 - c. What’s missing that we need to collect?
3. Identify data gaps & next steps (10 minutes)

Getting Support

The Educator Retention Dashboard is produced by the Research & Impact office in the Educator Talent division at CDE. Questions can be directed to EdTalentResearch@cde.state.co.us