

Beyond the Numbers

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Conditions of Teaching in Charter/Community Schools in Ohio

The Ohio Collaborative is an initiative of the Ohio Board of Regents and the State University Education Deans of Ohio.

Charter schools (community schools) in Ohio are increasing in record numbers. Nationwide there are almost 3000. In Ohio in 1998, 15 community schools served 2245 students and today there are approximately 248* community schools serving roughly 57,000 students. Has the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers kept pace with rapid community school growth? While the proliferation of community schools is encouraging for many who are eager for school choice, the rapid growth of community schools comes with its own set of staffing challenges. The data for this analysis was taken from the Condition of Teacher Supply and Demand in Ohio – 2004 which used Education Management Information System (EMIS) data from the Ohio Department of Education.

Community School Growth and Teachers

Community school student growth is currently outpacing the growth in the number of community school teachers.

From 2003 to 2004, the number of teachers in community schools increased by about 6%, but enrollment grew by about 35%. Since faculty growth did not keep pace with enrollment increases, the pupil teacher ratio increased from 24:1 in 2003 to 30:1 in 2004. In comparison, the pupil to teacher ratio in traditional public schools was 17:1 in 2003 and 19:1 in 2004.

Table 1
Comparison of Student and Teacher Growth and Pupil Teacher Ratios in Ohio's Community Schools and Traditional Public Schools

Type of School	Change in enrollment 2003 – 2004	Change in faculty 2003-2004	Pupil teacher ratio 2003	Pupil teacher ratio 2004
Community Schools	35%	6%	24:1	30:1
Traditional Public Schools	-27%	-8%	17:1	19:1

* Source: Ohio Department of Education Website, Office of Community Schools, Community School Brochure (March, 2005).

The Ohio Collaborative

29 W. Woodruff Ave.

Columbus, OH 43202

(614) 292-1286

(800) 327-9541

ohiocollab@osu.edu

www.ohiocollaborative.or

Attrition and Mobility of Community School Teachers

Departure rates of community school teachers are much higher than are the rates for teachers in regular public school districts (See Table 2).

After 2003—2004 school year, about one-half of the teachers in community schools left their position. The highest percentage of such changes in any category of public school district for that year equaled about 20 percent for major urban – very high poverty school districts. Attrition in traditional public schools averaged 13% for that school year.

Table 2
Attrition and Movement of Community School and Traditional Public School Teachers
in Percentage of Teachers
2000 – 2003

Departed Teaching	2000	2001	2002	2003
Community Schools	52.80%	45.10%	44.30%	48.57%
Traditional Public Schools	7.70%	6.80%	6.90%	11.00%
Major Urban, High Poverty Schools	10.80%	7.70%	9.90%	19.19%
Moved Positions	2000	2001	2002	2003
Community Schools to Another Community School	3.90%	6.70%	4.10%	2.78%
Community Schools to a Traditional Public School	9.50%	11.70%	7.00%	6.32%
Traditional Public Schools	2.30%	2.20%	1.80%	2.00%

Few of the community school teachers who leave their positions go into traditional public school positions and fewer still accept jobs in other community schools. The majority leave teaching all together.

The percentages of community school teachers who left teaching and who moved to a different school district significantly exceed the comparable percentages for teachers in traditional public school districts. Table 2 indicates that of the community school teachers who left their position approximately 39.4% left teaching entirely, 6.3% of these teachers moved to a traditional public school and 2.8% of them found another community school position.

Credentials of Community School Teachers

Community school teachers are far more likely to be teaching on long-term substitute licenses than teachers in traditional public schools.

In community schools, there are nearly 45 long-term substitute licenses per 100 teachers. The number of long-term substitute licenses in traditional public schools is 2 per 100 teachers.

Table 3
Ratio of Teachers to Long-term Substitute Licenses

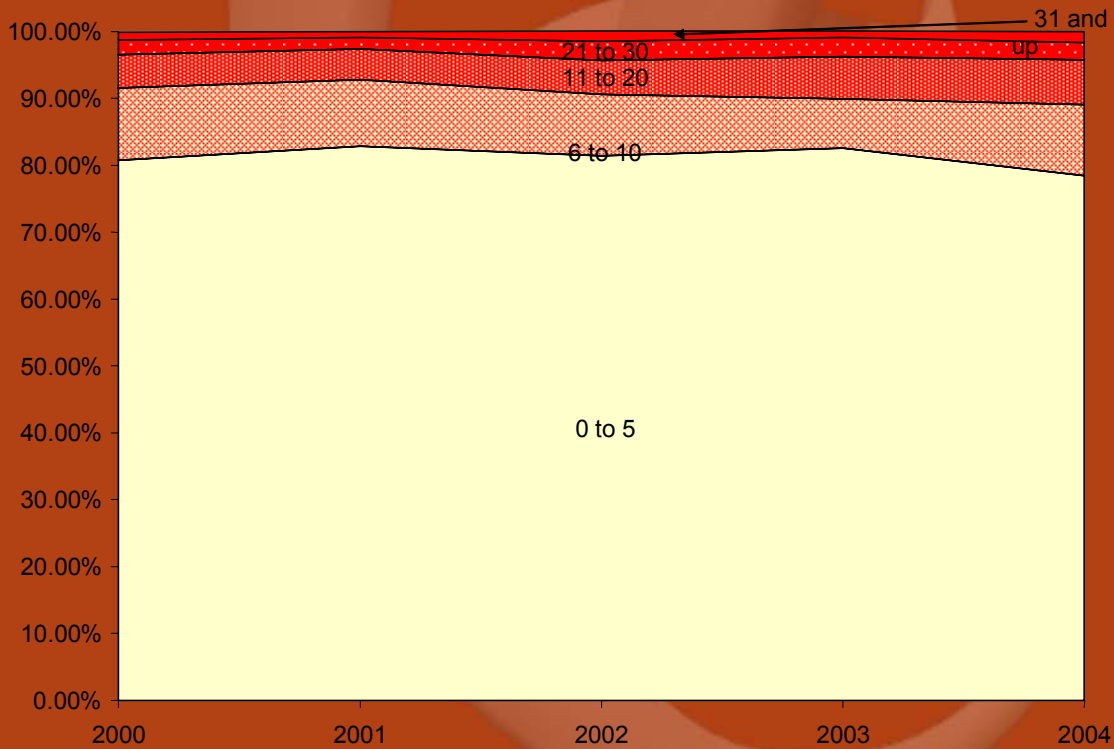
Position Type	2004
Long-term Substitutes in Community Schools	45:100
Long-term Substitutes in Traditional Public Schools	2:100

Experience of Community School Teachers

Existing data indicates that teachers in community schools are considerably younger, less experienced and have less credentials than their public school counterparts.

Approximately 78 percent of teachers in community schools have five or fewer years of experience in teaching. In contrast, regular school districts report that only 27 percent of their teachers fall in the five or fewer years of experience in teaching.

Table 4
Community School Teachers by Years of Experience – 2000 – 2004



A comparison of 2003 and 2004 shows some increase in the percentage of community school teachers with 6 to 10 years of experience.

Further, teachers in community schools tend to be younger than teachers in regular school districts. While just over 40 percent of teachers in regular school districts were under 40 years old in 2004, about 65% of community school teachers were under 40 years old in the same year.

One of three community school teachers is in his or her twenties. In regular school districts, about one in six teachers is in that age group.

Race of Community School Teachers

Community schools in Ohio show a higher percentage of minority teachers than any of the categories used in the Department of Education school district typology.

Additionally, community schools also enroll a much higher percentage of minority students than do the 612 regular school districts as a whole.

Table 5
Percentage of Teachers and Students by Racial Group in Community Schools and Traditional Public Schools, 2003 and 2004

Community Schools	Percent White Teachers	Percent White Students	Percent Black Teachers	Percent Black Students	Percent Other Minority Teachers	Percent Other Minority Students
2003	68.20%	33.10%	30.00%	62.10%	1.80%	4.80%
2004	71.38%	38.01%	26.50%	56.25%	2.13%	5.75%
Traditional Public Schools						
2003	92.40%	79.20%	6.70%	15.80%	.90%	5.00%
2004	93.55%	78.85%	5.53%	15.65%	.92%	5.50%

There is a positive relationship between race of students and race of teachers in community schools. Community schools show a higher ratio of black and minority students to teachers than traditional public schools.

For Further Information

For more information about this study, please contact the Ohio Collaborative at ohiocollab@osu.edu or the authors of this study.

V. Darleen Opfer, opfer.6@osu.edu, (614) 292-1286

Dwan Robinson, robinson.568@osu.edu, (614) 292-1286