Teacher and Principal Retention Report Fact Sheet

- **DCPS system-level turnover:** Annual teacher turnover at the DCPS system level over the last ten years has ranged from 15–22 percent, with an overall average of 18 percent. Across the nation, studies have found annual teacher turnover rates of 8–11 percent. For large urban districts, a recent study found an average annual departure rate of 13 percent.

- **Annual turnover rates:** Average annual teacher turnover at the school level in both DCPS and charter schools is—and has consistently been—about 25 percent. Nationally the rate is about 16 percent.

- **Three- and five-year turnover rates:** At the DCPS system level, 54 percent of teachers leave after three years and 70 percent leave after five years. For other large urban districts, three-year rates are reported at 43 percent and five-year rates at 58 percent.

- **Turnover rates by ward:** Teacher turnover in DCPS neighborhood schools is highest in Wards 5 and 8—a little over 30 percent—and lowest in Wards 1 and 3—about 20 percent. Charter school rates do not match up with wards in any particular way.

- **Turnover rates by grade level:** DCPS middle schools lose a higher percentage of teachers each year—32 percent—than elementary or high schools, which are closer to 25 percent.

- **Turnover rates and at-risk students:** In both DCPS and charter schools, the rate of annual teacher departure rises with the percentage of students considered at-risk. DC teachers leave schools where fewer than 20 percent of students are designated at-risk at an annual rate of 18–20 percent while schools with the highest percentages lose almost a third of their teachers each year.

- **IMPACT rating:** Teacher departures in DCPS is largely correlated with their IMPACT rating. Almost all DCPS teachers rated as “Ineffective” and a little over half of teachers rates as “Minimally Effective” leave DCPS, compared with 10 percent of teachers rated as “Highly Effective”.

- **Principal turnover:** Annual principal turnover levels in both DCPS and charter schools are generally similar—about 25 percent. National and urban principal turnover run at similar levels.

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1 The following facts were compiled from findings in a September 28, 2018 report commissioned by the DC State Board of Education, titled *Teacher and Principal Retention in Public Schools in the District of Columbia* and an October 24, 2018 follow-up piece, titled School-Level Turnover of DCPS ET-15 Staff Over Three- and Five-Year Periods. A copy of the commissioned report is accessible at: [https://sboe.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/sboe/publication/attachments/SBOE%20Teacher%20Turnover%20Report%20FINAL.pdf](https://sboe.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/sboe/publication/attachments/SBOE%20Teacher%20Turnover%20Report%20FINAL.pdf)

2 At-risk is defined by students who are homeless, in foster care, recipients of welfare and/or food stamps, and overage for grade level in high school.