

Teacher Retention in Augusta School District

2023-24 School Year



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About This Report

Teachers are the [largest school-based factor](#) in student's academic success, but teacher retention has long been a challenge for districts across Arkansas and teacher turnover is [costly for districts](#) and may [harm student learning](#). Concerns about the health of the teacher workforce have only grown following the [increased stress](#) and [burnout](#) experienced by teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic and [approaches to teacher compensation are changing](#) following the LEARNS Act of 2023. In previous work at OEP and the Department of Education Reform, we've highlighted [changes in teacher retention](#) since the beginning of the pandemic and [how districts are adapting](#) to the new requirements of the LEARNS Act at the state-level.

In this report, we examine teacher retention and compensation in Augusta School District.

We include comparisons between how well Augusta School District is retaining teachers and other school districts in the Wilbur D. Mills Educational Service Cooperative (ESC) and across the state. Our goal is to provide information that leaders and school boards will find useful in addressing the unique challenges that their districts may face.

Throughout this report we focus on **teacher retention**, which we define as an individual who worked in Augusta School District in one school year returning to work in the district during the next school year. Because school districts often make staffing decisions based on their specific needs, we consider a teacher as retained even if they move schools within the district or change from a teaching to a non-teaching role (e.g., instructional coach). This definition is slightly different than what we've used in our previous work and, so, the results here may differ somewhat from those reports. However, we believe that this definition provides information that is most useful for district leadership.

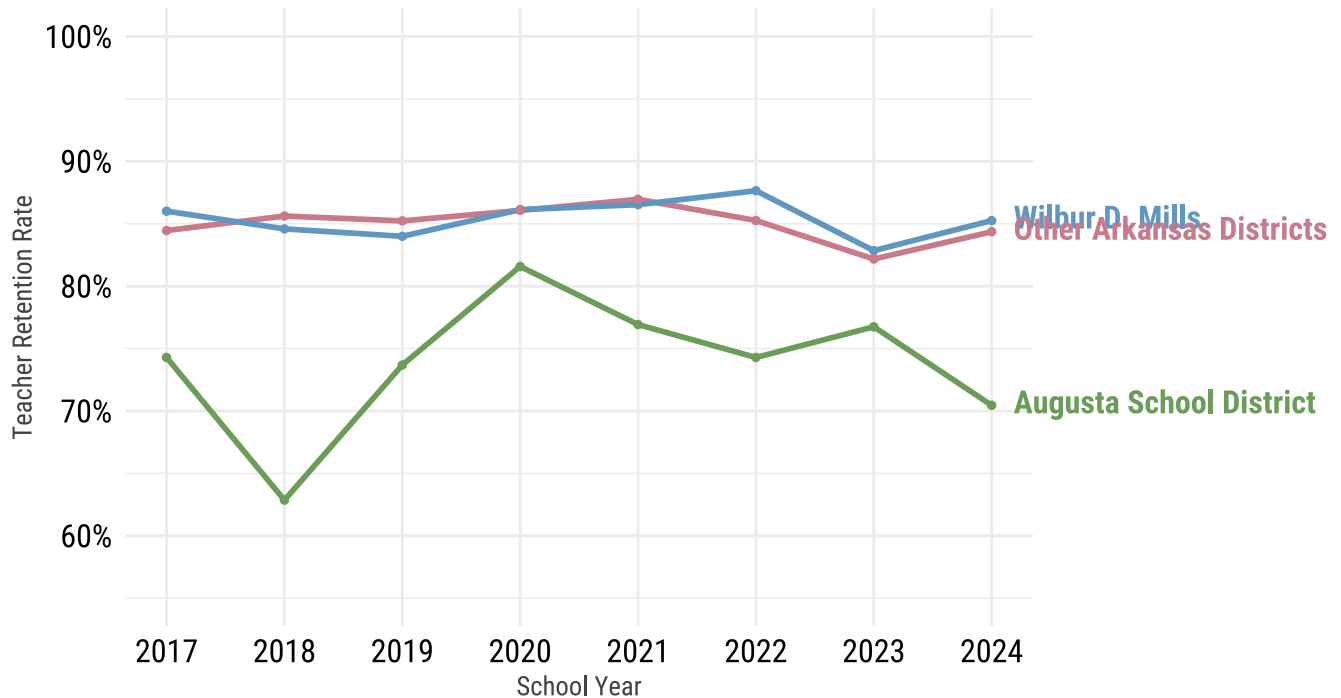
We are excited to be able to offer this analysis to your district and hope that the report and accompanying presentation will spark discussion among Augusta School District leadership and stakeholders about how to ensure that all students in Arkansas have an effective teacher to guide their learning.

Note: This is part of a series of procedurally generated reports. We conduct several quality checks to make sure that the information presented here is correct. Please contact oepr@uark.edu if you have any questions or believe that data used in your district's report may be incorrect.

Teacher Retention in Augusta School District is Average for the Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative.

Between the 2016-17 and 2023-24 school years, 73.9% of Augusta School District teachers remained in the district each year. During the same period, the average retention in the Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative (ESC) was 85.4% and the average retention across the state was 85.0%.

Teacher Retention in Augusta School District
vs. the Wilbur D. Mills ESC and Statewide Averages.



Compared to other districts in the Wilbur D. Mills cooperative, Augusta School District ranks 16th out of 16 for teacher retention.

The average retention rate in the Wilbur D. Mills ESC over the past 8 school years was 85.4%.

Compared to all districts in the state, **Augusta School District ranks 225th out of 234 for average teacher retention.**

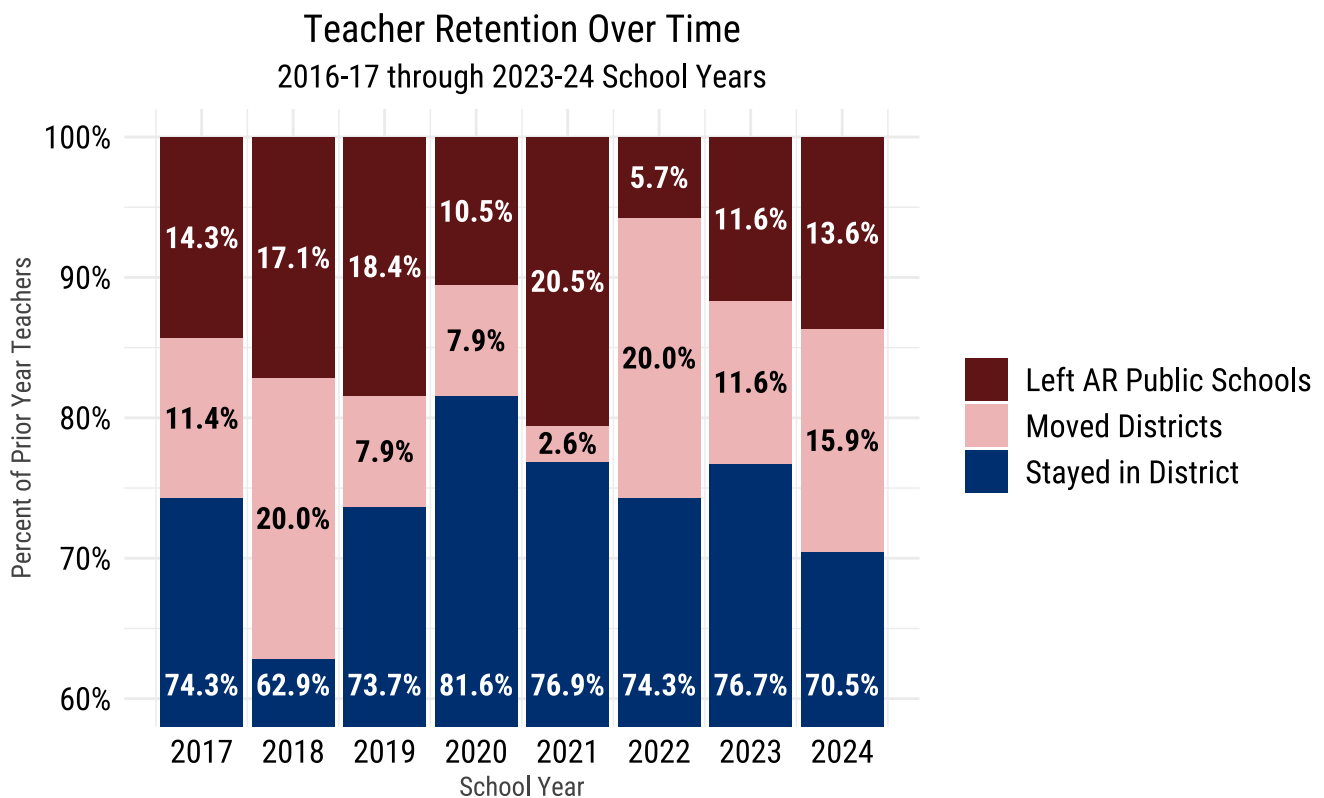
Teacher Retention in the Wilbur D. Mills ESC

School District	Average Retention	Rank in ESC	Rank in State
Cabot	90.6%	1st	22nd
Searcy	90.2%	2nd	31st
Bald Knob	90.0%	3rd	35th
Pangburn	89.9%	4th	39th
Beebe	87.8%	5th	84th
Rose Bud	87.2%	6th	96th
Des Arc	86.8%	7th	105th
Bradford	86.4%	8th	115th
McCrory	86.2%	9th	119th
Hazen	86.0%	10th	125th
White Co. Central School Dist.	85.5%	11th	133rd
Riverview	84.7%	12th	147th
Lonoke	83.4%	13th	170th
Carlisle	80.6%	14th	195th
England	76.9%	15th	214th
Augusta	73.9%	16th	225th

Retention Entering the 2023-24 School Year Was Below Average Compared to Previous Years.

Among Augusta School District teachers from the 2022-23 school year, 70.5% (31) returned to work in district for the 2023-24 school year. **This retention rate is lower than last year's retention rate of 76.7%.**

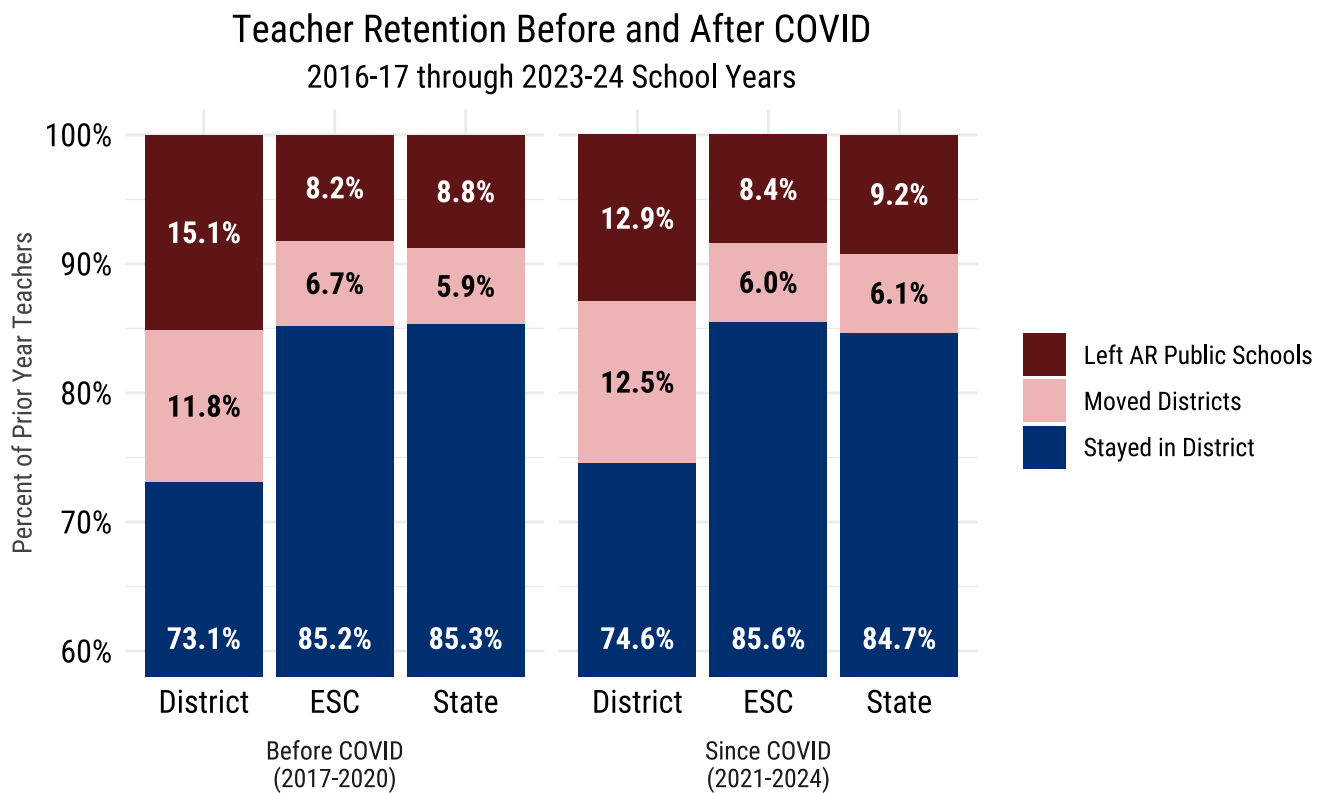
At the start of the current school year, 29.5% (6) of Augusta School District teachers from the 2022-23 school year did not return to Augusta School District for the current school year. Of those who left, the majority (15.9%) worked in other school districts during the 2023-24 school year. Among the 15.9% of teachers who moved districts, 15.9% remained in teaching roles while 0.0% moved into non-teaching roles.



Teacher Retention in Augusta School District has Increased Since the Start of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

During the 4 years prior to COVID, the retention rate in Augusta School District (73.1%) was lower than the retention rate for school districts in the Wilbur D. Mills ESC (85.2%) before the COVID-19 pandemic and lower than the retention rate for school districts in Arkansas (85.3%).

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the retention rate in Augusta School District has increased by 1.5% while the retention rate for districts in the Wilbur D. Mills has remained relatively stable and the retention rate for districts across the state has remained relatively stable.



The Salaries for Beginning Teachers in Augusta School District Have Increased by \$14,000 (BA) and \$9,350 (MA) in 2023-24.

During the 2022-23 school year, beginning teachers in Augusta School District earned \$36,000 if they held a bachelor's degree and \$40,650.00 if they held a master's degree. These salaries were the 12th and 12th highest beginning teacher salaries in the Wilbur D. Mills, respectively.

Now, during the 2023-24 school year, beginning teachers in Augusta School District earn \$50,000 if they hold a bachelor's degree and \$50,000 if they hold a master's degree. Beginning teacher salaries in Augusta School District rank the 1st (BA) and 3rd (MA) in highest salaries among districts in the Wilbur D. Mills ESC.

Beginning Teacher Salaries in the Wilbur D. Mills ESC

District	Bachelor's Degree			Master's Degree		
	2022-23	2023-24	Increase	2022-23	2023-24	Increase
Augusta	\$36,000	\$50,000	\$14,000	\$40,650.00	\$50,000	\$9,350.00
Bald Knob	\$40,280	\$50,000	\$9,720	\$43,530.00	\$50,000	\$6,470.00
Beebe	\$44,750	\$50,000	\$5,250	\$47,990.00	\$50,000	\$2,010.00
Bradford	\$36,000	\$50,000	\$14,000	\$40,650.00	\$50,000	\$9,350.00
Cabot	\$44,500	\$50,000	\$5,500	\$47,155.00	\$50,000	\$2,845.00
Carlisle	\$36,000	\$50,000	\$14,000	\$40,650.00	\$50,000	\$9,350.00
Des Arc	\$36,000	\$50,000	\$14,000	\$40,650.00	\$50,000	\$9,350.00
England	\$37,000	\$50,000	\$13,000	\$41,650.00	\$50,000	\$8,350.00
Hazen	\$36,000	\$50,000	\$14,000	\$40,650.00	\$50,000	\$9,350.00
Lonoke	\$38,750	\$50,000	\$11,250	\$41,937.50	\$51,000	\$9,062.50
McCrory	\$37,800	\$50,000	\$12,200	\$41,100.00	\$50,000	\$8,900.00
Pangburn	\$37,000	\$50,000	\$13,000	\$41,650.00	\$50,000	\$8,350.00
Riverview	\$40,750	\$50,000	\$9,250	\$44,875.00	\$50,000	\$5,125.00
Rose Bud	\$37,750	\$50,000	\$12,250	\$41,875.00	\$50,000	\$8,125.00
Searcy	\$44,000	\$50,000	\$6,000	\$46,700.00	\$51,350	\$4,650.00
White County Central	\$36,500	\$50,000	\$13,500	\$41,150.00	\$50,000	\$8,850.00

The Salaries for Experienced Teachers Have Also Increased.

Teachers with ten years of experience and a bachelor's degree earned a base salary of \$40,750 for the 2022-23 school year and now earn \$50,000 during the 2023-24 school year, an increase of \$9,250. Similarly, teachers with ten years of experience and a master's degree earned a base salary of \$45,900.00 last year and now earn \$50,000, an increase of \$4,100.

As a result of these increases and increases in other districts, Augusta School District now pays the 5th (BA) and 8th (MA) highest salaries for teachers with ten years of experience in the Wilbur D. Mills.

Experienced (10 years) Teacher Salaries in the Wilbur D. Mills ESC

District	Bachelor's Degree			Master's Degree		
	2022-23	2023-24	Increase	2022-23	2023-24	Increase
Augusta	\$40,750	\$50,000	\$9,250	\$45,900.00	\$50,000	\$4,100
Bald Knob	\$44,960	\$50,000	\$5,040	\$48,834.00	\$50,834	\$2,000
Beebe	\$50,500	\$52,500	\$2,000	\$53,740.00	\$55,740	\$2,000
Bradford	\$40,500	\$50,000	\$9,500	\$45,650.00	\$50,000	\$4,350
Cabot	\$51,400	\$52,710	\$1,310	\$54,055.00	\$55,365	\$1,310
Carlisle	\$40,750	\$50,000	\$9,250	\$45,650.00	\$50,000	\$4,350
Des Arc	\$40,500	\$51,000	\$10,500	\$45,650.00	\$53,000	\$7,350
England	\$41,770	\$50,000	\$8,230	\$46,704.00	\$50,000	\$3,296
Hazen	\$40,500	\$50,000	\$9,500	\$45,650.00	\$50,000	\$4,350
Lonoke	\$44,750	NA	NA	\$48,937.50	NA	NA
McCrory	\$42,800	\$50,000	\$7,200	\$46,100.00	\$50,000	\$3,900
Pangburn	\$42,500	\$50,000	\$7,500	\$47,150.00	\$50,000	\$2,850
Riverview	\$45,750	\$50,000	\$4,250	\$49,875.00	\$51,875	\$2,000
Rose Bud	\$43,250	\$50,000	\$6,750	\$47,375.00	\$51,000	\$3,625
Searcy	\$49,750	\$52,000	\$2,250	\$52,450.00	\$54,550	\$2,100
White County Central	\$41,500	\$50,000	\$8,500	\$46,150.00	\$50,000	\$3,850

The Student-Teacher Ratio in Augusta School District is Below for the Wilbur D. Mills ESC

Staffing ratios play a major role in district budgets. Salaries are typically a district's largest expenditure and the amount of state funding a district receives is based upon student enrollment. The school funding matrix makes assumptions about the student-teacher ratio for an average district (between 20 and 25 students per teacher). However, we find that the majority of public school districts in Arkansas choose to maintain lower staffing ratio.

In Augusta School District, there are about 8.2 students for every teacher, 29.6 students for every licensed-non-teacher (e.g. instructional coach, principal, etc.), and 9.9 students for every classified employee.

Staffing Ratios in the Wilbur D. Mills ESC
2023-24 School Year

District	Licensed Staff		
	Teachers	Other	Classified
Augusta	8.2	29.6	9.9
Bald Knob	9.8	29.8	14.3
Beebe	13.9	70.6	17.9
Bradford	10.8	35.8	11.6
Cabot	12.9	44.2	14.1
Carlisle	9.9	37.6	14.3
Des Arc	13.5	41.5	15.6
England	11.2	37.2	12.4
Hazen	12.3	37.6	13.5
Jacksonville North Pulaski	14.3	43.5	15.5
Lonoke	14.0	35.9	17.2
McCrory	11.3	46.2	13.5
Pangburn	13.5	42.8	11.3
Riverview	11.0	36.6	13.2
Rose Bud	12.1	35.8	11.5
Searcy	14.3	42.7	19.7
White Co. Central School Dist.	11.4	41.1	15.5

Recommendations for Teacher Retention in Augusta School District

Maintaining a stable and effective teaching workforce is an ongoing challenge for many districts in Arkansas. This report has highlighted the teacher workforce in Augusta School District in comparison with teachers across the state and in the Wilbur D. Mills ESC. We hope that the data provided here can foster conversations with district leadership and school board members to identify ways to better recruit and retain teachers in Augusta School District.

Going forward, there are opportunities for districts to make substantial changes to their retention and compensation policies to better retain effective teachers and support student learning. Specifically, we encourage all districts to consider:

1. **Teacher working conditions** play a major role in both how satisfied existing teachers are and how likely a potential teacher is to accept a job offer. Surveys indicate that [teachers prefer working for principals who take a supportive approach](#) rather than “hands off” approach. Districts may wish to evaluate their current structures for mentoring and supporting teachers with the aim of improving recruitment and retention.
2. **Moving away from salary schedules** may help recruit more effective teachers. Districts in Wisconsin that moved from traditional salary schedules towards more flexible pay schemes (e.g., merit pay, individual negotiations, etc.) were [better able to recruit teachers who were highly effective at boosting student learning](#). The LEARNS Act both introduced a new \$50,000 minimum teacher salary and has also given districts the ability to be more flexible with how they structure teacher compensation. Districts in Arkansas may wish to consider moving away from a traditional salary schedule to more innovative ways to compensate their teachers.
3. **Reexamine staffing ratios** may be required to ensure that districts can better recruit and retain teachers. While many families and teachers have a preference for smaller class sizes, it is important to note that smaller student-teacher ratios might result in a district struggling to offer salaries that are competitive with nearby districts. There is no perfect answer or “correct” student-teacher ratio, so we encourage districts to think how their staffing ratios compare to other nearby districts.