



Michigan is Losing Teachers. Here's How to Stop It

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When my son's favorite teacher resigned to become a nanny, it felt like a personal loss. In other years, both of my kids had teachers leave classrooms midyear to focus on family. These experiences are not just unfortunate — they reflect a growing crisis in our education system.

Interest in teaching, and teachers' job satisfaction, have **reached their lowest levels in 50 years**, with just 12% reporting high satisfaction in 2022 compared to 52% in 2001. Unsurprisingly, these perceptions about teaching have led to **chronic teacher shortages and record rates of teacher turnover**.

What have we done about this problem? As a researcher who studies school leadership, teacher retention, and **recent teacher shortages in Michigan**, I've seen the **same pattern play out** again and again: We ring the alarm about teacher shortages and address them by making it easier to become a teacher — waiving certain requirements and opening alternate routes to teaching. The problem is that these teachers **often receive less training and support, leave at higher rates** than traditionally certified teachers, and are **replaced by novice teachers**. That creates lasting, negative effects on schools and students. This is often called the **"leaky bucket" problem**: you pour in new people to keep it full, but end up creating new holes in the process.