



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** CSRC Members and Gayle Peay  
**FROM:** Aza Baylor  
**CC:** Andrea Bogie and Sarah Covington  
**SUBJECT:** Proposed Change to Teacher Retention and Return Information  
**DATE:** January 12, 2023

This memo outlines Evident Change's recommended changes to language and qualified exemptions for the teacher retention and return expectations.

### CURRENT TEACHER RETENTION AND RETURN EXPECTATIONS

The following are the current year-to-year expectations set by the Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) on February 6, 2020.

- Evident Change will report teacher retention and return information. The return rate will be the percentage of teachers who are eligible to return who actually return the subsequent year.
- A teacher is not eligible to return if the teacher moves farther than 25 miles from any Milwaukee County border due to a transfer of a family member or if the school does not offer the teacher a continuing contract.
- The retention rate is the percentage of eligible teachers who are present on the third Friday of September who remain at the school through the last day of student attendance.

- Teachers whose contracts are terminated during the school year or who move farther than 25 miles from any Milwaukee County border due to a transfer of a family member are not considered eligible for retention.

## PROPOSED CHANGES

### NEW TERMINOLOGY: CERTIFIED STAFF

Current monitoring procedures require the collection of data for all individuals holding a certified position (i.e., teachers, principals, counselors, social workers, speech pathologists, and special education paraprofessionals), and all individuals in these roles are included in the retention and return rate calculations. Therefore, Evident Change believes it is more accurate to refer to this group as “certified staff” to clarify that these calculations include all individuals who hold or are currently applying for a state license.

### DEFINING EXEMPTION FOR RETIREMENT

Technically, when certified staff decide to retire, they exempt themselves from the list of individuals eligible to return for the upcoming school year. Recently it has come to Evident Change’s attention that some certified staff leave the profession to pursue alternative careers, and this is sometimes considered “retiring” from the profession. For certified staff retention and return rate calculations, Evident Change recommends clearly defining “retirement” to ensure fair and reliable standards are applied across all schools. Federal eligibility for retirement benefits begins at age 62.<sup>1</sup> It seems appropriate to follow this age guideline, as some certified staff may consider retirement at age 62 for various personal reasons. These staff decisions should not negatively impact the school’s return rate.

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<sup>1</sup> Social Security Administration. (n.d.). *Starting Your Retirement Benefits Early*. SSA. Retrieved January 10, 2023, from <https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/retirement/planner/agereduction.html>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue to apply the current retention and return rate criteria. Specifically, certified staff are not eligible to return if the staff person moves farther than 25 miles from any Milwaukee County border due to a transfer of a family member or if the school does not offer the staff person a continuing contract.

To clarify which staff are included in retention and return rate calculations, Evident Change recommends updating the language in the expectation to say “certified staff” rather than “teacher.”

Additionally, we believe it is appropriate to add certified staff who are entering retirement as defined by the Social Security Administration to the list of those not eligible to return for the subsequent year. Evident Change recommends exempting certified staff who retire from the year-to-year return rate calculation as reported on the school’s annual scorecard.