



Leaving Schools or Leaving the Profession: Setting Illinois' Record Straight on New Teacher Attrition

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Purpose of the Study

- Do 50 percent of new teachers in Illinois flee the profession within five years?
- To what extent does new teacher attrition differ across schools?



Data

- **TSR data from 1971 to 2006**
- **New Teacher Cohorts – 1st year teachers, full- and part-time**
- **Attrition at Two Levels**
 - From Profession (IPS)
 - From Schools
- **Focus primarily on attrition after first five years following entry into profession**
- **Track cohorts for up to 35 years**

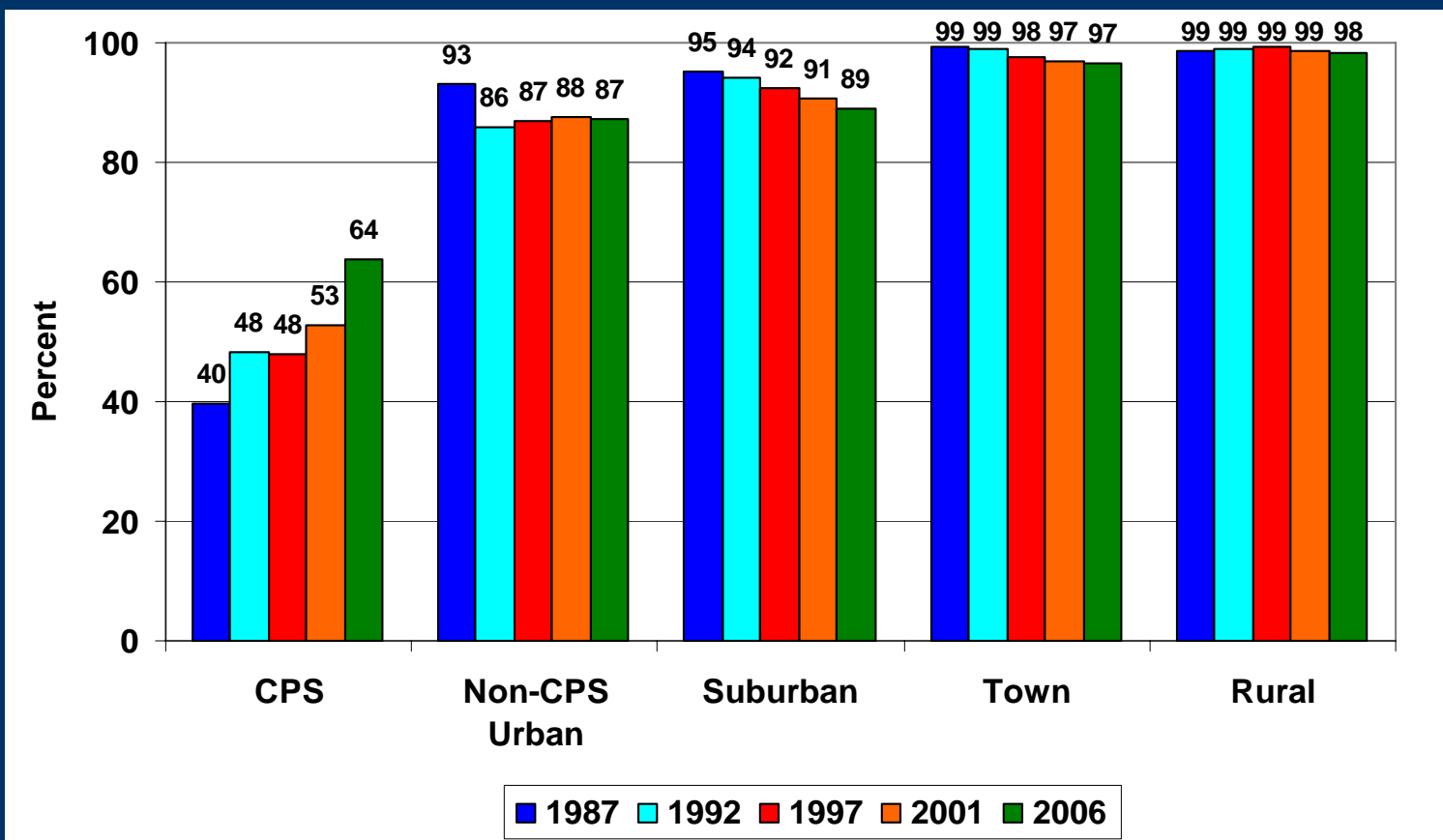


Defining Attrition

- Profession: departure of new teachers from teaching in Illinois public schools (IPS)
 - Five-Year Attrition Rate
 - Return-Adjusted Attrition Rate
- School: departure of new teachers from teaching in their initial school (includes those who leave teaching in IPS, move to another school to teach, and change to a non-teaching position in IPS)

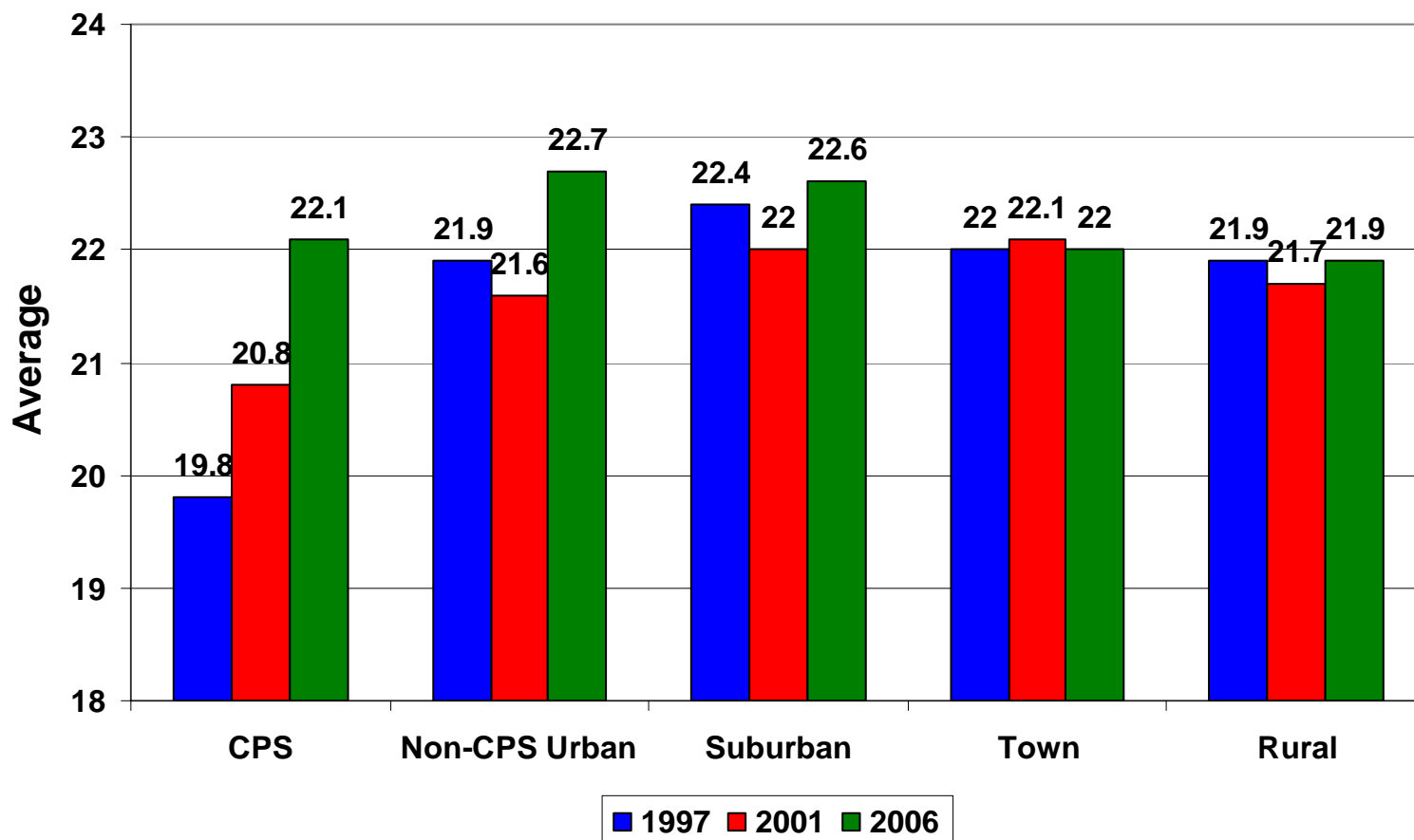


Percent of New White Teachers By Locale and Selected Cohort Years





Average ACT Composite Scores of New Teachers By Locale and Selected Cohort Years

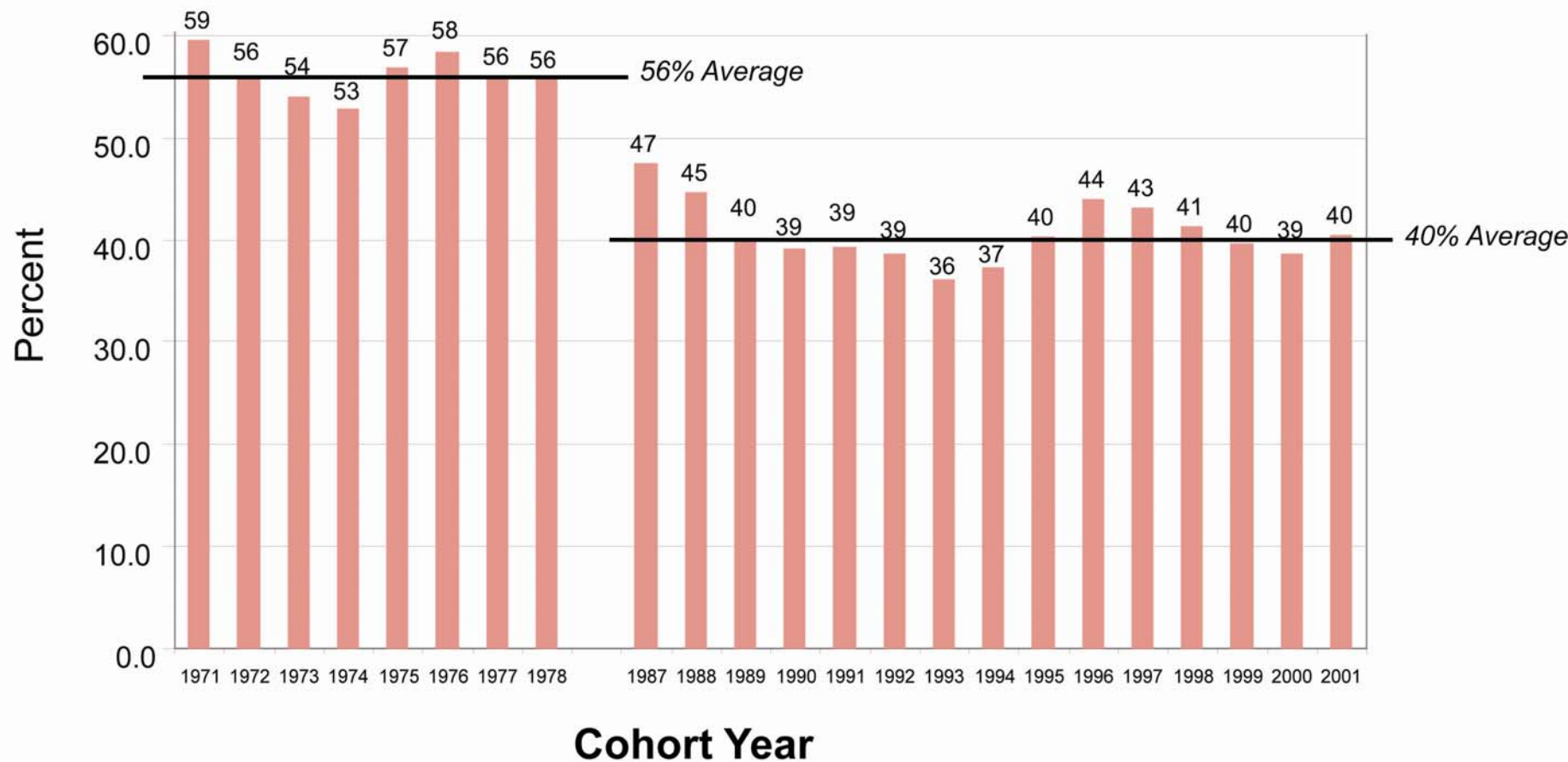




Attrition from the Profession

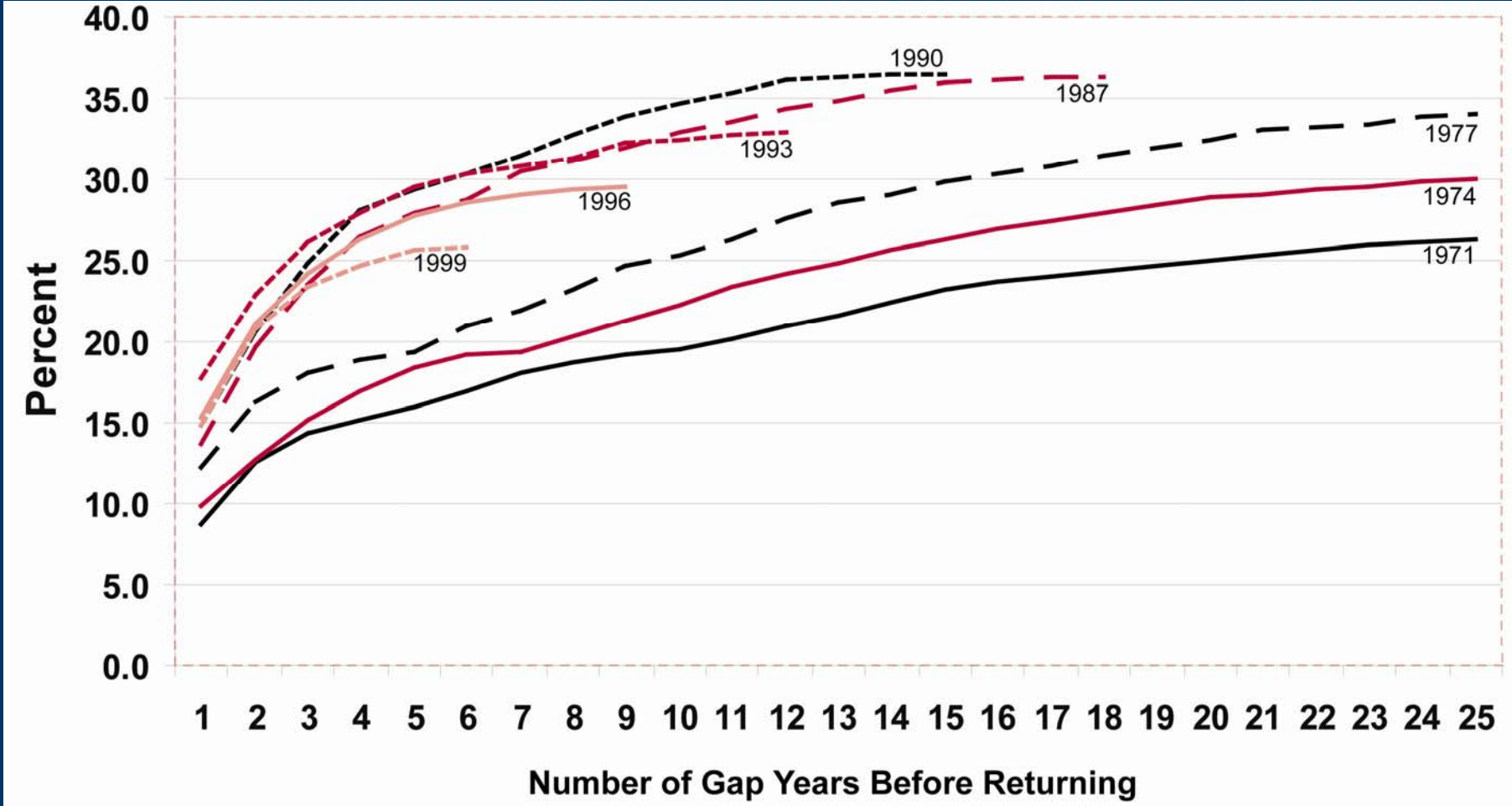


Five-Year Attrition Rates of New Teachers From Teaching in IPS



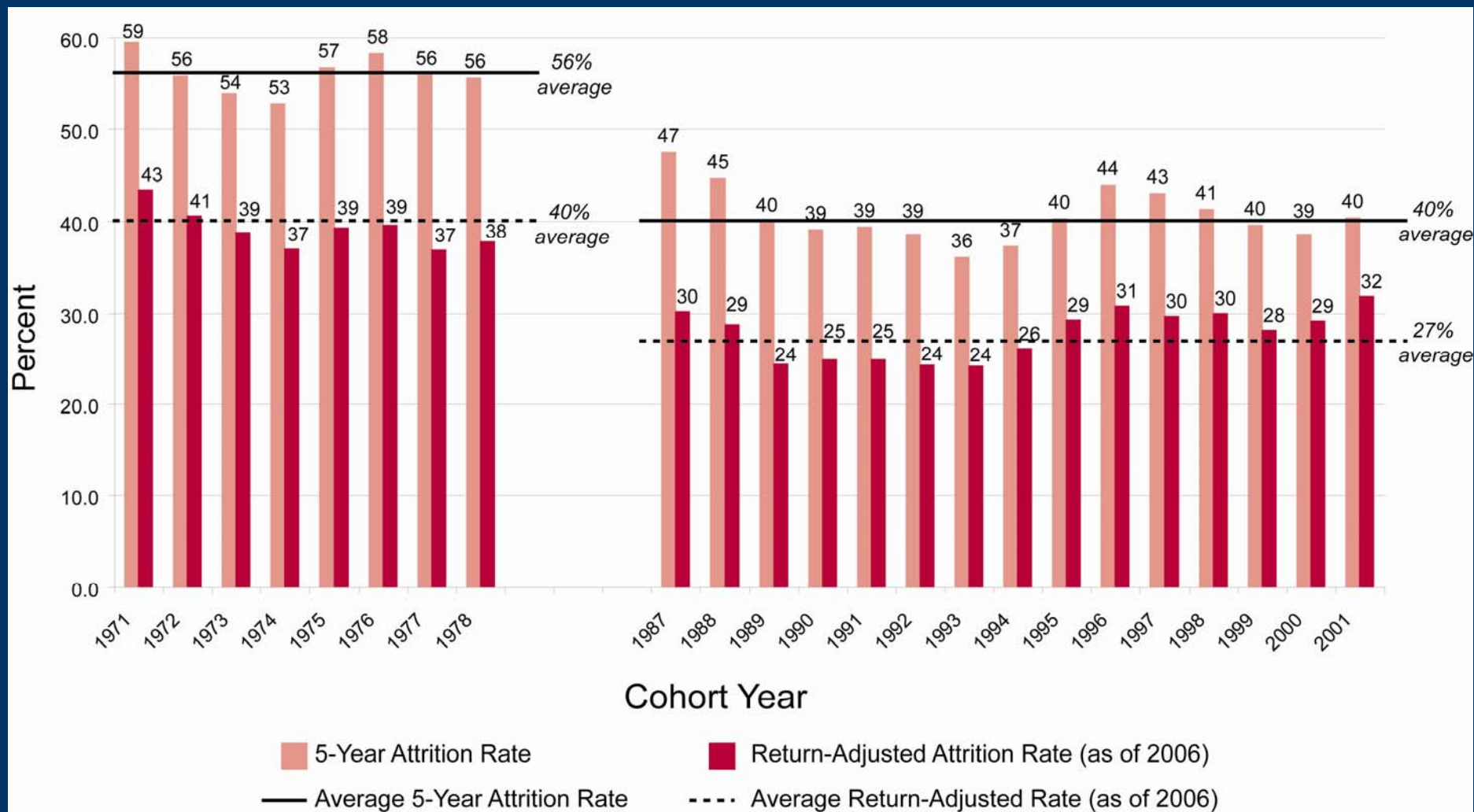


Cumulative Percentages of Leavers Who Return to IPS as Teachers



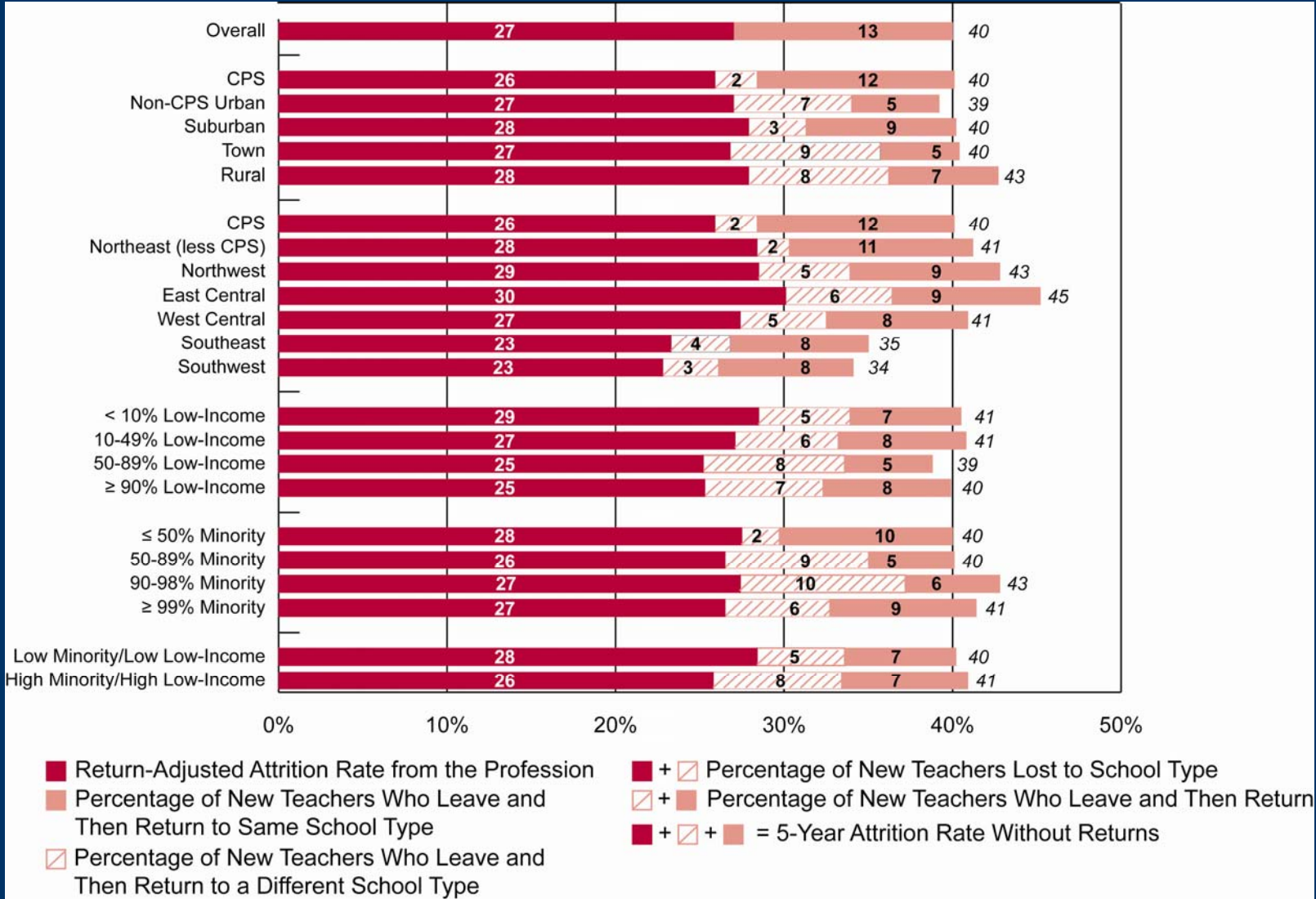


Five-Year and Return-Adjusted Attrition Rates of New Teachers from Teaching in IPS



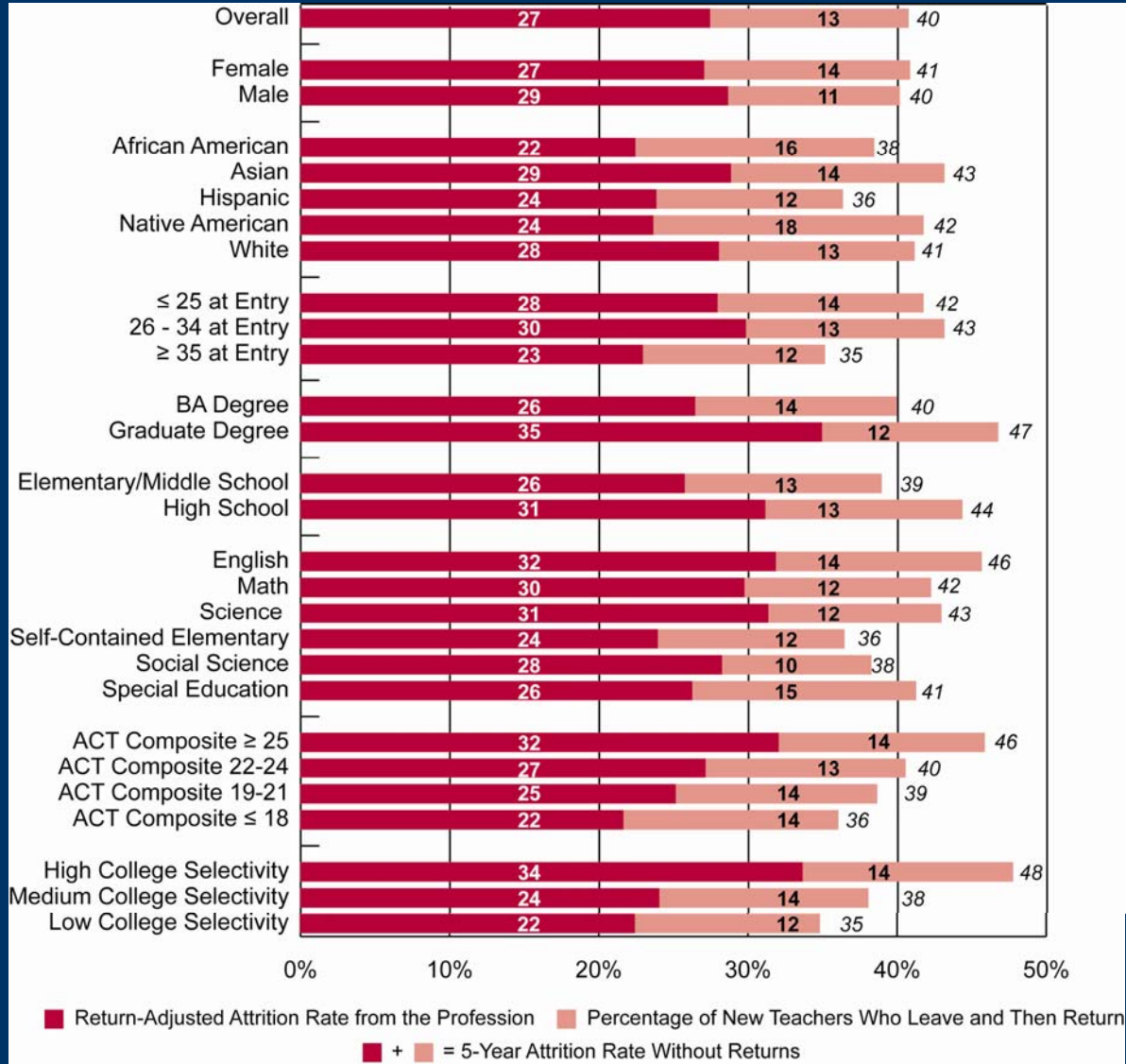


Five-Year and Return-Adjusted Attrition Rates By School Characteristics





Five-Year and Return-Adjusted Attrition Rates By Teacher Characteristics





Key Findings:

Attrition from the Profession

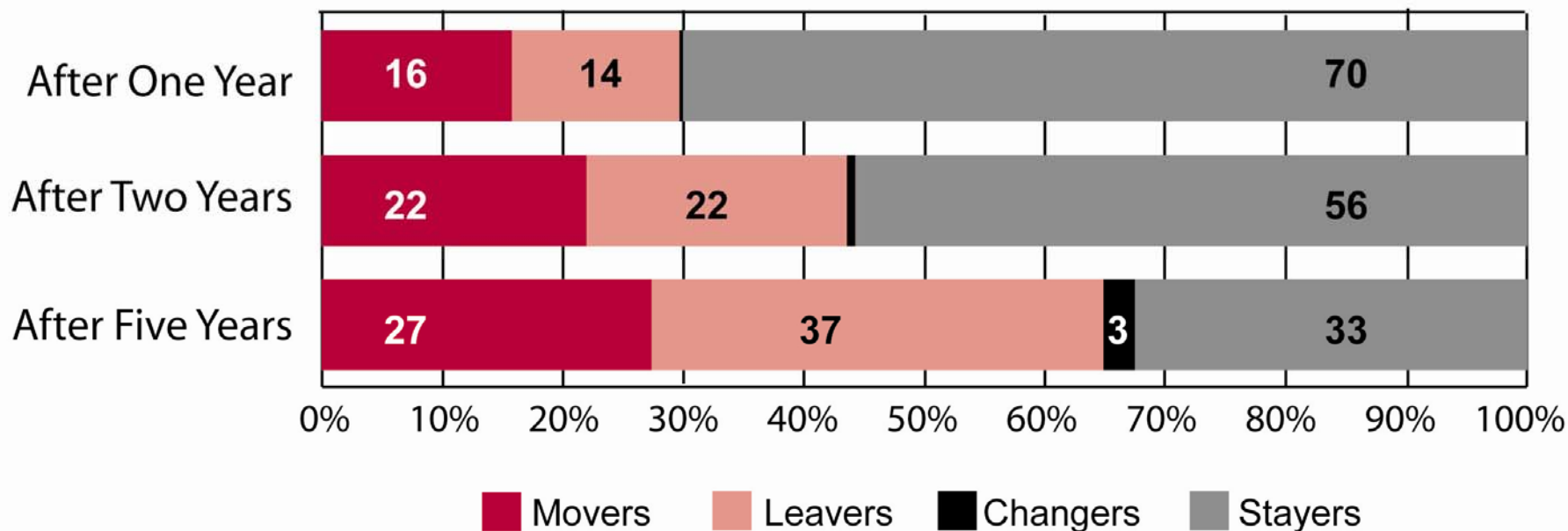
- **New teachers' commitment to the profession has improved and is stronger than conventional wisdom would suggest.**
- **Roughly 1 in 4 new teachers in Illinois leave during their first five years and do not return, not 1 in 2.**
- **There exists little variation in new teacher attrition rates by school type.**
- **The teaching profession (along with health occupations) is more stable than other occupations.**



Attrition from Schools

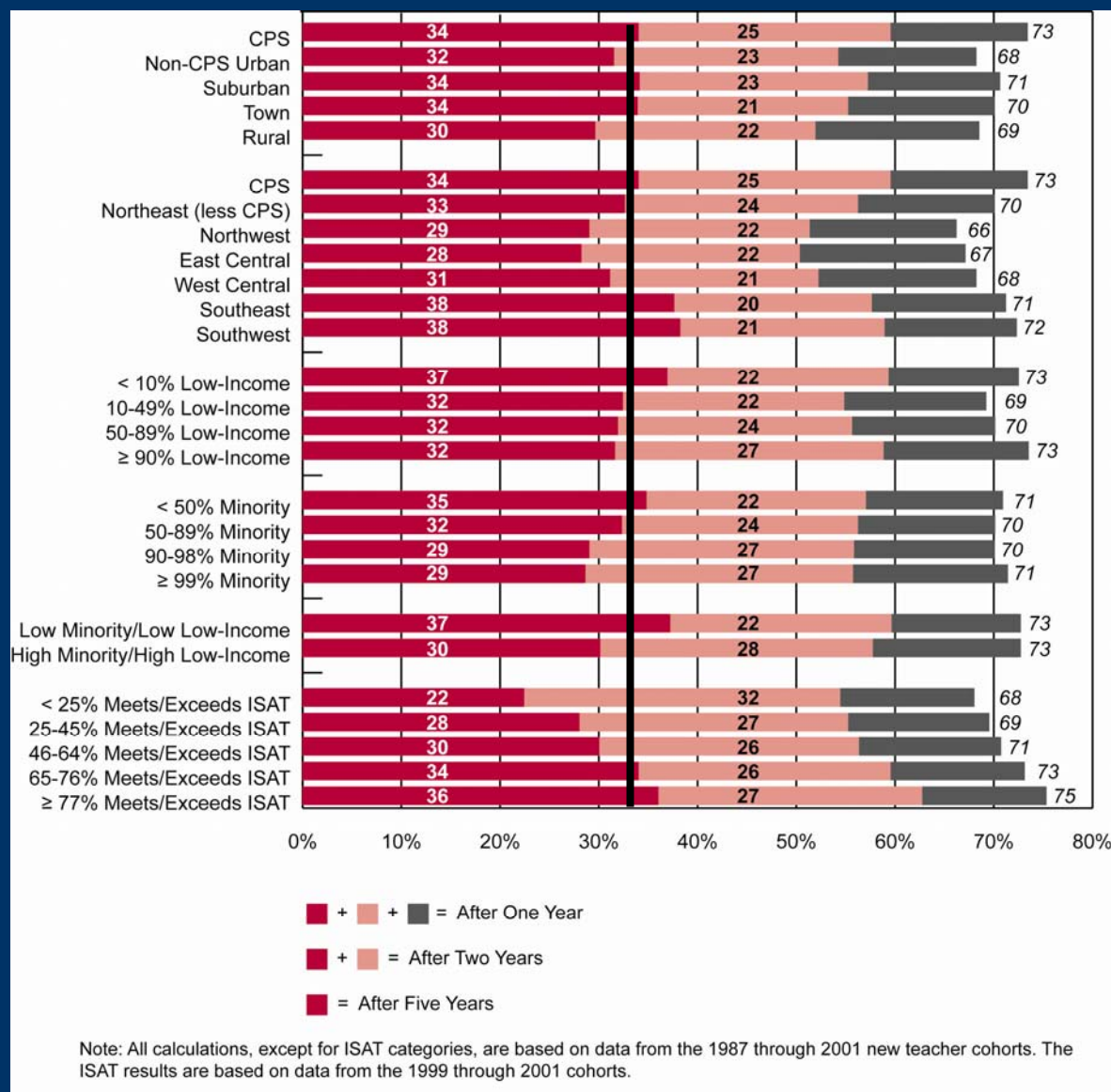


Status of New Teachers After One, Two, and Five Years Following Entry





Stay Rates of New Teachers in Initial School By School Characteristics





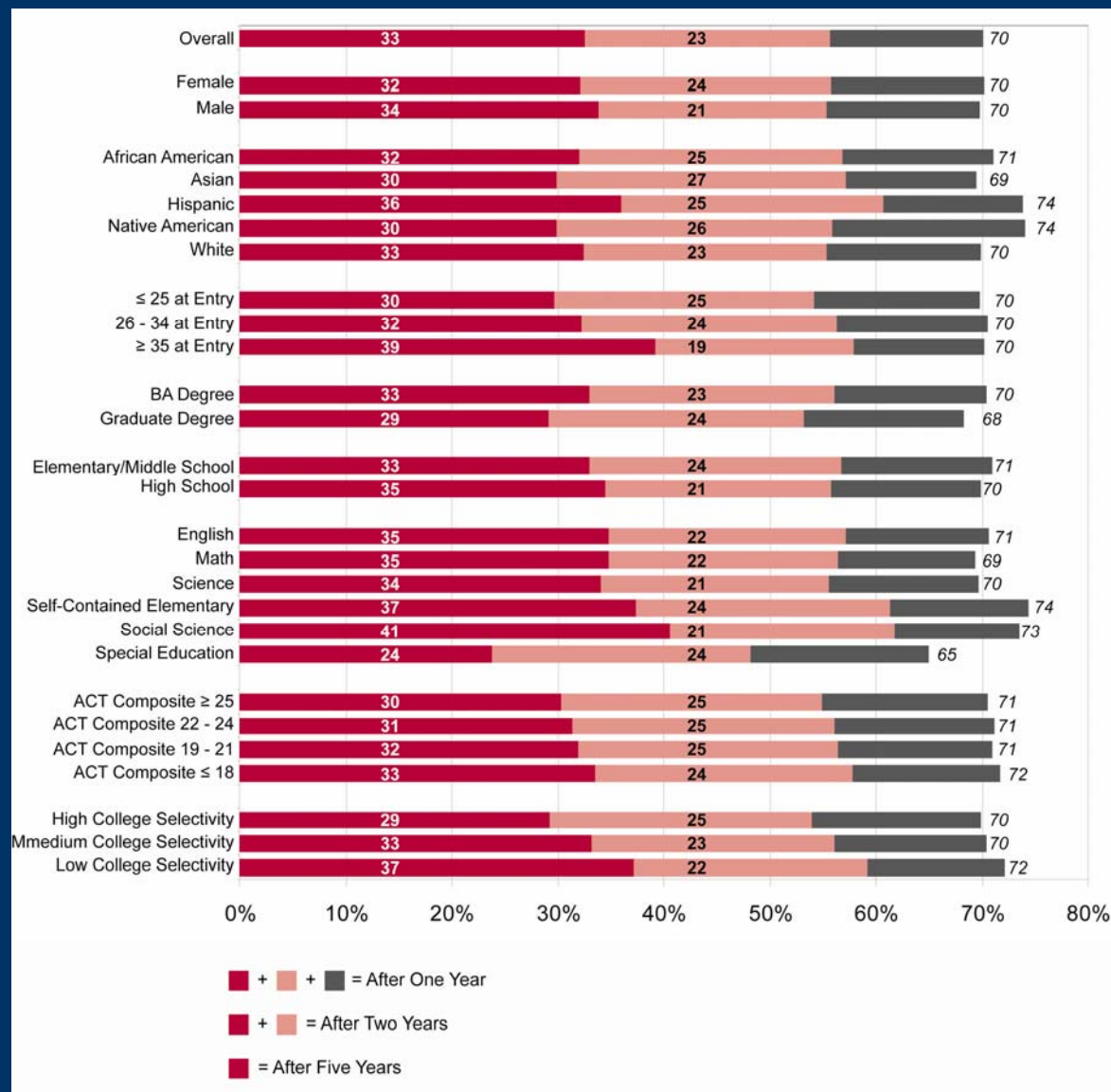
School-Level Percentages of New Teachers Who Stay in Their Initial Schools

School Type	Percent of New Teacher Stayers By School Type After Two Years			Percent of New Teacher Stayers By School Type After Five Years		
	10 th Percentile Schools	50 th Percentile Schools	90 th Percentile Schools	10 th Percentile Schools	50 th Percentile Schools	90 th Percentile Schools
Overall	33.3	56.7	78.6	8.3	32.1	56.5
CPS	40.0	61.1	80.0	15.0	33.3	56.3
Non-CPS Urban	30.0	53.8	77.3	6.5	30.5	54.5
Suburban	33.3	58.3	80.0	10.0	33.3	57.1
Town	33.3	57.1	83.3	9.1	33.3	60.0
Rural	27.8	52.4	77.8	5.6	30.0	55.6
CPS	40.0	61.1	80.0	15.0	33.3	56.3
Northeast (less CPS)	33.3	57.1	78.3	9.1	31.3	54.4
Northwest	25.0	53.3	75.5	0.0	28.6	50.0
East Central	27.8	50.0	75.0	0.0	27.3	50.0
West Central	29.4	52.2	75.4	7.4	30.4	55.6
Southeast	38.9	60.0	83.3	13.3	40.0	63.2
Southwest	33.3	60.0	82.3	12.5	37.8	62.5
< 10% Low-Income	36.4	60.0	80.6	13.3	36.1	59.5
10 – 49% Low-Income	30.8	55.6	80.0	9.1	31.8	57.5
50 – 89% Low-Income	26.3	57.1	80.0	0.0	30.0	58.6
≥ 90% Low-Income	36.4	60.0	80.0	12.1	30.8	53.8
< 50% Minority	33.3	57.1	80.0	10.0	33.3	58.3
50 – 89% Minority	30.8	57.3	80.0	5.6	32.4	57.1
90 – 98% Minority	29.4	57.1	80.0	0.0	28.6	52.2
≥ 99% Minority	33.3	56.6	76.9	12.5	28.6	50.0
Low Minority/Low Low-Income	36.4	60.0	81.3	13.3	36.4	60.0
High Minority/High Low-Income	35.7	58.8	80.0	11.5	29.1	50.0
< 25% Meets/Exceeds ISAT	20.0	54.5	80.0	0.0	18.8	42.9
25 – 45% Meets/Exceeds ISAT	27.3	57.1	80.0	0.0	25.0	57.1
46 – 64% Meets/Exceeds ISAT	31.3	60.0	83.3	0.0	30.8	60.0
65 – 76% Meets/Exceeds ISAT	33.3	60.0	86.7	0.0	33.3	60.0
≥ 77% Meets/Exceeds ISAT	35.7	60.0	100.0	11.1	37.5	63.6

Note: All calculations, except for ISAT categories, are based on data from the 1987 through 2001 new teacher cohorts. The ISAT results are based on data from the 1999 through 2001 cohorts.

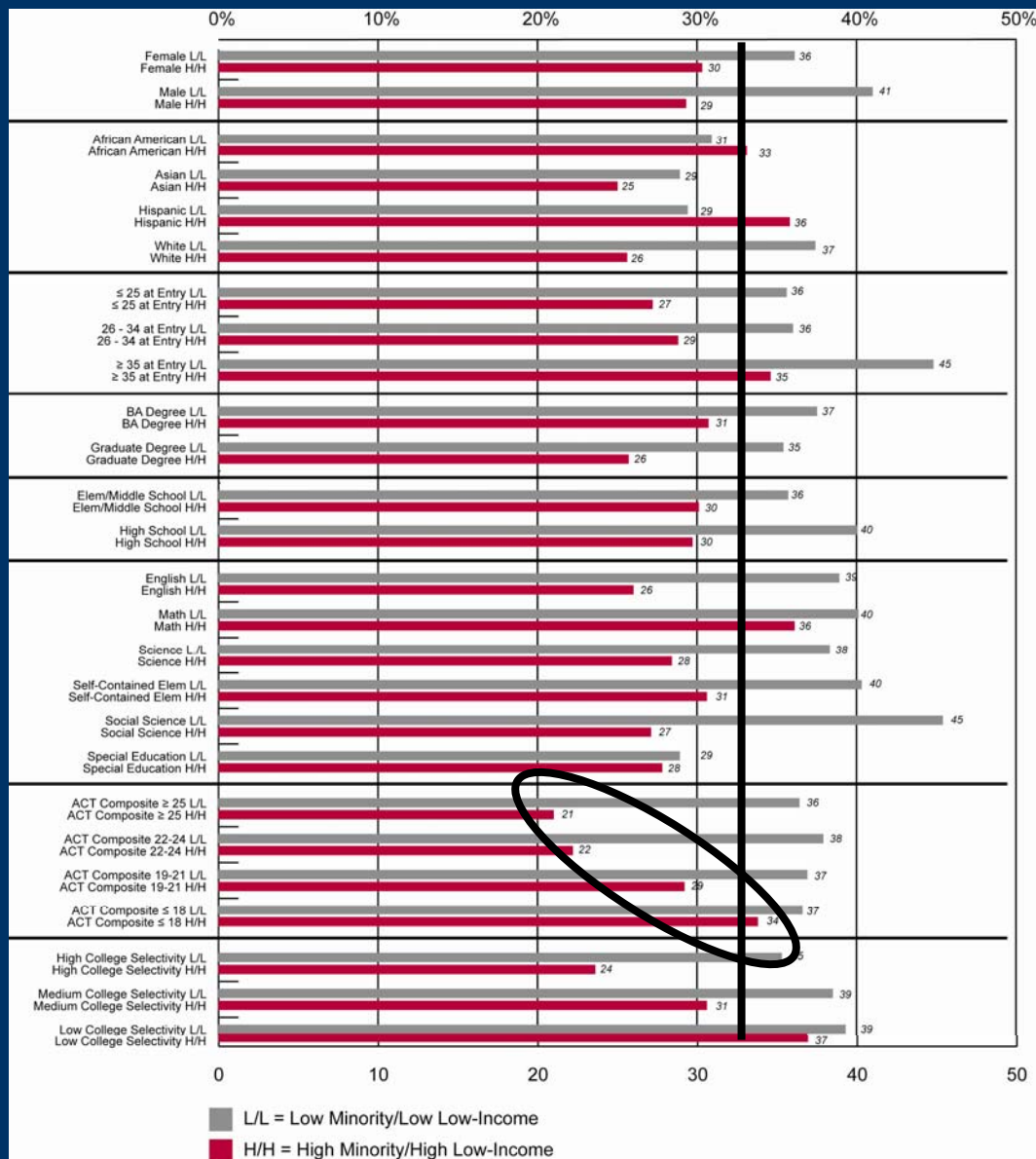


Stay Rates of New Teachers in Initial School By Teacher Characteristics





New Teachers' Stay Rates in Low Minority/Low Low-Income Versus High Minority/High Low-Income Schools





Key Findings:

Attrition from Schools

- On average, over 4 out of 10 (44%) and 2 out of 3 (67%) new teachers leave their initial school during their first two and five years, respectively.
- More variation in new teacher stay rates *within* school type than across school type.
- The sorting of new teachers across schools helps explain the modest differences across school type.



Teacher Movement and the Academic Characteristics of New Teachers in Schools

Compared to Stayers...

- Leavers have higher average academic qualifications, regardless of school type.
- Out-of-District Movers also tend to have higher average academic qualifications.
- Within-District Movers generally have similar or lower academic qualifications.



Average Characteristics of Initial Versus Receiving Schools For New Teacher Movers

- Out-of-District Movers: Move to schools with lower percentages of minority, low-income, and low-performing students.
- Within-District Movers: Move to schools with similar or slightly lower percentages of minority, low-income, and low-performing students.



Key Findings:

Teacher Movement

- **Out-of-District moves facilitate a sorting process.**
 - Teachers with stronger academic qualifications move to seemingly more attractive schools.
- **Within-District moves facilitate a shuffling process.**
 - Teachers with similar or lower academic qualifications move to schools with similar or slightly better student characteristics.



Implications of Study

- The teaching profession in Illinois is not in crisis.
- It may be difficult to reduce overall new teacher attrition.
- Conditions in disadvantaged schools will have to change if they are to keep more academically skilled new teachers.
- School conditions other than those considered in this study appear to strongly influence new teachers' decisions to stay in a school.