

THE PRINCIPAL'S PLAYBOOK FOR



NEW TEACHER RETENTION

Research, Coaching Strategies, and Action Steps
for New Teacher Success

CLEARPATH TEACHING SOLUTIONS

THE REAL PICTURE IN YOUR BUILDING

You already know the challenge. You hired great people, you watched them work hard, and some of them still did not come back. This guide is not about making you feel worse about that. It is about giving you the clearest possible picture of why it happens and what actually works to prevent it.



44%

CAP, 2025

Nearly half of all new teachers leave the profession within their first five years. In high-need schools, the number is even higher. This is not a talent problem. It is a support problem.

30%

ERS, 2024

In the 2022 to 2023 school year, 30 percent of teachers with fewer than three years of experience left their school. Many of them left during or after the window when front-loaded orientation support had already ended.

\$20K

LPI, 2024

Replacing a single teacher costs up to \$20,000 when recruiting, hiring, onboarding, and lost productivity are accounted for. That is a cost your school absorbs every time a new teacher walks out the door.

WHAT IS ACTUALLY HAPPENING IN YOUR NEW TEACHERS' CLASSROOMS

Most school leaders focus support on the beginning of the year. That is exactly right for Stage 1 of a teacher's development. But the most critical window, the stage when professional habits form and doubt peaks, comes after orientation ends. It is the stage most programs miss entirely

The Clearpath Framework describes four observable stages of new teacher development. Understanding these stages helps you see your new teachers more clearly, walk classrooms with more precision, and provide support that actually meets them where they are.



STAGE 1: EMERGING CLASSROOM READINESS

What you see in walkthroughs: routines that exist in the teacher's plan but have not yet been taught to students. A classroom that is set up but not yet optimized. A teacher working hard but not always strategically.

What they need most: practical, concrete support on routines, transitions, and day-one structures before students arrive. Not more content. More structure.

STAGE 2: DEVELOPING TEACHING INSTINCTS

What you see in walkthroughs: routines that exist but slip under pressure. Lesson delivery that is correct but rigid. A teacher who is reacting to the day rather than designing for it. This is the highest-risk stage for attrition.

What they need most: classroom observation with specific, timely feedback. Coaching during this window is the highest-leverage investment you can make. Most programs are not present here. Clearpath is built for exactly this stage.



STAGE 3: PRACTICING TEACHING FLUENCY

What you see in walkthroughs: routines running automatically. Instruction is becoming more responsive. A classroom that has a culture, not just rules. A teacher who is starting to feel like themselves.

What they need most: coaching that shifts from management to instructional quality. Productive challenge rather than validation. This is when great teachers start to emerge.



STAGE 4: PROFICIENT PROFESSIONAL EFFICACY

What you see in walkthroughs: a classroom that is clearly this teacher's. Intentional, warm, productive. A teacher who can tell you specifically what they are working on and why.

What they need most: recognition that is specific and evidence-based. A clear vision for what comes next. This is the teacher who stays and eventually mentors the next generation.





WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS ACTUALLY WORKS

Not all professional development is equal. Here is what the evidence shows about the approaches that produce the strongest outcomes for teachers and their students.

**85% vs
74%**

Ingersoll & Strong, 2011

Teachers in structured induction programs had an 85 percent retention rate after year one. Teachers without structured support had a 74 percent retention rate. That 11-point difference represents real teachers, real students, and real dollars.

**5 to 10
Years**

Kraft & Blazar, 2018

Structured coaching improves a teacher's instructional practice by as much as the difference between a first-year teacher and one with five to ten years of experience. Coaching accelerates development in ways that time alone cannot.

**2x the
Impact**

ScienceDirect, 2025

Generic professional development produces a modest effect on student achievement. Structured coaching produces twice the impact. The difference is not the content. It is the coaching.

YOUR ACTION PLAN

WHAT YOU CAN DO STARTING THIS WEEK

You do not need a district mandate to start making a difference for your new teachers. Here are five things you can do right now.

✓ **Conduct a stage assessment for each new teacher.**

Before your next walkthrough, ask yourself: which stage is this teacher in? Use the Emerging, Developing, Practicing, Proficient framework as your lens. What you see changes when you know what to look for.

✓ **Protect coaching time.**

New teacher support cannot happen in stolen moments between duties. Block protected time for coaching conversations. Even 20 minutes of focused, specific feedback changes the trajectory of a teacher's development.

✓ **Make positive contact before you make critical contact.**

Research on teacher credibility shows that the relationship is the foundation of effective feedback. Before your next formal observation of a new teacher, find one specific thing to acknowledge. Genuine, specific recognition builds the trust that makes coaching possible.

✓ **Focus your walkthroughs on Stage 2 teachers first.**

Your teachers in the habit-formation stage are your highest-risk and highest-leverage group. They are forming the patterns that will define their practice for years. A 10-minute walkthrough with specific written feedback within 24 hours can shift a trajectory.

✓ **Create the conditions for a Clearpath engagement.**

If you have five or more new teachers and want structured, practical coaching support that ties directly to retention outcomes, ask about the Clearpath New Teacher Coaching Program. It is designed for exactly your context.

A QUICK REFERENCE FOR FRAMEWORK-ALIGNED WALKTHROUGHS

The next time you walk a new teacher's classroom, use this reference. Each question helps you see the stage the teacher is in and what they need next.

STAGE	WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO ASK AFTER
Stage 1: Emerging	Are routines posted and taught? Do students know what to do during transitions?	What is working in your first week? What do you want to establish before anything else?
Stage 2: Developing	Is the teacher adjusting to what students are doing, or following the plan regardless? Are routines holding under pressure?	Tell me about a moment this week when something surprised you. What did you do?
Stage 3: Practicing	Is the classroom culture visible? Is instruction responsive? Are students thinking, not just complying?	What are you working on instructionally right now? What evidence are you using to guide that?
Stage 4: Proficient	Is this classroom distinctly this teacher's? Is there visible student growth and genuine connection?	What do you want to build on next year? What would it take to get there?

READY TO BRING STRUCTURED COACHING TO YOUR NEW TEACHERS?

Every Clearpath partnership begins
with a free 20-minute conversation.

**BOOK A DISCOVERY CALL AT
[CPTEACHINGSOLUTIONS.COM](https://cpTeachingSolutions.com)**



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