Though modern policy makers push ‘school choice’ as a method of improving schools, urban districts experience disturbingly high rates of student transfers, with up to 60% turnover in some Philadelphia high schools. Student mobility is the practice of non-promotional school transfers; this thesis examines how administrators and teachers in Philadelphia high schools address student mobility. High rates of student mobility lead to school destabilization and lower test scores for all of the students in the school, even the non-mobile students. District-wide policies have alleviated some of the administrative problems associated with mobility; digitized school records and the district-wide timed curriculum dramatically decrease problems administrators face when enrolling new students and helping students transfer to new schools. Though most school officials spoke about the importance of establishing personal contact with incoming students and maintaining relationships in order to encourage retention, none of the schools visited were instituting comprehensive policies or programs regarding student mobility.

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