How Bad Is the Teacher Shortage And What’s the Solution?
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How Bad Is the Teacher Shortage—and What’s the Solution?

Expert Presenters:

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Kate Walsh, president, National Council on Teacher Quality

Related Opinion:

Understanding the Teacher Shortage Crisis and the Solutions to Fix it
How to End Teacher Shortages. Really.
Let's Talk Solutions to the Teacher Shortage Problem
An on-demand archive of this webinar will be available at www.edweek.org/go/webinar in less than 24 hrs.
A Coming Crisis in Teaching?
Teacher Supply, Demand, and Shortages in the U.S.
Teacher shortage keeps area schools scrambling
Washington not alone in hunt for teachers, new report says
Oklahoma school districts look to fill 500 teacher vacancies

Teacher shortage at public schools
Fewer qualified applicants to fill certified teaching positions
Florida facing teacher shortages in many districts as new school year begins

In Utah, schools can now hire teachers with no training whatsoever
RPS dealing with teacher shortage as first day of school looms

Teacher, staff shortage looms as school begins
Teacher Preparation Enrollments Down Nationally

35%
National Supply and Demand Imbalance

The graph illustrates the national supply and demand imbalance in teachers over the years from 2005 to 2025. The supply line shows a steady increase, while the demand line reflects a decrease, leading to a projected shortfall of 100,000 teachers by 2025.
Shortages Vary by Subject Area

Special Education

- Reported Shortages: 48+DC
- No Shortages: NA

Mathematics

- Reported Shortages: 42+DC
- No Shortages: NA

Science

- Reported Shortages: 40+DC
- No Shortages: NA
Shortages Vary by State

Arizona

- Low-salary competitiveness
  62% of non-teacher salary

- Below-average working conditions

- High teacher attrition—19%

Oregon

- Above average salary competitiveness 75%

- Top working conditions

- Low teacher attrition—7%
Shortages Vary By School Type
(% uncertified teachers – OCR data)

Low-Minority Schools: 0.9%
High-Minority Schools: 3.6%

3.6% is 4x more than 0.9%.
States Vary in Attractiveness and Equity

Percent of Teachers Not Certified by Minority Quartile

**Colorado**

- High Minority Schools: 21.0%
- Low Minority Schools: 4.5%

**Washington D.C.**

- High Minority Schools: 22.9%
- Low Minority Schools: 20.7%
Teaching Attractiveness Varies Across States

- Compensation
- Turnover Rates
- Teaching Conditions
- Qualifications

Quintile

1 2 3 4 5

Lowest… Highest
What Matters in Recruiting and Retaining Teachers

• Compensation
• Preparation
• Mentoring and Induction
• Teaching Conditions
Compensation

• U.S. teachers make about 20% less than other college graduates; 30% by mid-career.

• Salaries have lost ground since the 1990s

• Average starting salaries in 2013 ranged from $27,000 (MT) to $44,000 (AK)

• In more than 30 states, a mid-career teacher heading a family of 4 is eligible for several forms of government assistance
Preparation and Mentoring

• Preparation and early mentoring strongly influence teacher effectiveness and retention:
  - Teachers who are unprepared leave within a year at 2-3 times the rates of those who are well-prepared.
  - Those who receive high-quality mentoring and induction stay at twice the rate of those who receive little.

• Funding for both has declined:
  - The debt load for preparation has increased.
  - Only about 2/3 of teachers receive comprehensive preparation before entering.
  - Fewer teachers receive mentoring + principal support (down from 75% in 2008 to 59% by 2012).
Teaching Conditions

• U.S. teachers have more teaching hours and less planning time than others in the world
• Only 15% of teachers report collaborative work environments, down from 30% in 2000
• Resources for teaching declined during the recession; most states are still spending less in constant dollars than in 2007
• Growth in child poverty, homelessness, and trauma makes teaching more challenging
Alishia Morris, a 4th-grade teacher who transferred from Oklahoma to an Arkansas district 15 miles away:

“It wasn’t the school’s fault. If it was, it wouldn’t have been so difficult for me to leave. It’s just that Arkansas has more resources—they just make teaching easier.”

• A 25% + increase over her $33,500 previous salary
• Reading and math facilitators to support instruction
• $500 annual allowance for classroom materials.
Teacher Attrition Drives Teacher Demand

- **2015-16**: 97%
- **2019-20**: 87%

- **2015-16**:
  - Retirement Attrition: 31%
  - Pre-retirement Attrition: 66%
  - <1%

- **2019-20**:
  - Retirement Attrition: 28%
  - Pre-retirement Attrition: 59%
  - Workforce Growth due to Pupil/Teacher Ratio Reduction: 7%
  - Workforce Growth due to Student Enrollment Increases: 6%
The Importance of Attrition

![Graph showing the number of teachers from 2005 to 2025. The graph includes lines for Estimated Total Supply, Actual New Hires Demanded, Projected Estimated Total Supply, Projected New Hires (8% Attrition), and Projected New Hires (4% Attrition).]
The Importance of Attrition

![Graph showing the number of teachers over time, with estimated supply, actual new hires demanded, projected estimated total supply, projected new hires with 8% attrition, and projected new hires with 4% attrition. The graph highlights a significant drop in the number of teachers from 2005 to 2013, followed by a recovery. The attrition rate is discussed in relation to the projected numbers.]
Types of Reasons Given by Teachers for Leaving the Profession

- Accountability pressures: 55%
- Administration: 43%
- Working conditions: 31%
- Family or personal reasons: 31%
- Retirement: 31%
- To pursue another job: 31%
- Financial reason: 18%
What would bring leavers back?

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<td>State certification reciprocity</td>
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<td>Forgiveness of student loans</td>
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<td>Housing incentives</td>
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- Ability to maintain teaching retirement benefits: 60%
- An increase in salary: 80%
- Smaller class size or smaller student load: 80%
- Easier and less costly renewal of certification: 80%
- State certification reciprocity: 60%
- Availability of part-time teaching positions: 40%
- Availability of suitable child care options: 40%
- Forgiveness of student loans: 20%
- Housing incentives: 20%
Better compensation packages:
• Competitive, equitable salaries
• Financial incentives
  ✓ Housing
  ✓ Child care

Build lasting teacher supply:
• Forgivable loans, scholarships
• High-retention preparation pathways
  ✓ Strong clinical teacher education
  ✓ Grow Your Own programs
  ✓ Teacher Residencies

Improve retention:
• High-quality mentoring
• Collegial work environments
• Administrator training

Enhance mobility:
• License reciprocity
• Pension portability

Policy recommendations
This Problem Has Been Solved Before

In the 1990s, CT and NC both eliminated shortages and increased achievement by:

• Increasing and equalizing salaries
• Offering service scholarships and loans
• Raising standards for teacher preparation
• Introducing strong mentoring systems
• Offering high-quality professional development
• Training principals to support teaching
“For the past decade, I’ve worked at a school where 97 percent of the children qualify for free and reduced-price lunch. I stay because the school climate is good for children and teachers alike. I stay because my principal is wonderful, supports us, does what’s best for children, and because I trust her. I stay because my colleagues are gifted teachers and good company and because I continually learn from them.”

-- Kirsten Ragatz, 20-year Minneapolis teacher
A Critical Examination of Teacher Shortages

Kate Walsh

National Council on Teacher Quality
The shortage may not be nearly as bad as feared

Claims of shortages today ignores past

Production and Hiring of Teachers
New to Profession (Selected Years)

Class size is still at near-record lows

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Table 208.20. (This table was prepared March 2015.)
Not all teaching areas have a shortage. Teacher prep programs produce far more elementary school teachers than schools need.
Signs of reversal in teacher prep enrollment/new licensing

**California:** Teacher prep enrollment up nearly 10 percent 2013-14 to 2014-15

*EdSource, October 31, 2016*

**Indiana:** Licenses to new teachers went up 18 percent from 2014-15 to 2015-16

*State Impact, October 31, 2016*
Shortages and surpluses vary by subject

Teacher vacancies and efforts to fill them

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Surveys.

Want to learn more?

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How Bad Is the Teacher Shortage—and What’s the Solution?

Required Reading from *Education Week*:

**Recruiting and Hiring Effective Teachers: A Behavior-Based Approach**
This "how-to" guide provides help in recruiting, hiring, and retaining high-quality teachers. The book concludes with strategies for acclimating new teachers to the school and greater community and implementing new teacher induction programs.

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