

Teacher Shortage in New York State



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October 2018

In the past few years there has been increased attention paid to a national teacher shortage. While estimates regarding the severity of the shortage vary, there is consensus that demand for teachers is on the rise. The US Department of Education (USDOE) had estimated that 1.6 million new teachers would be needed nationally between 2012 and 2022, and a report by the Learning Policy Institute estimated the number at 300,000 new teachers per year by 2020.

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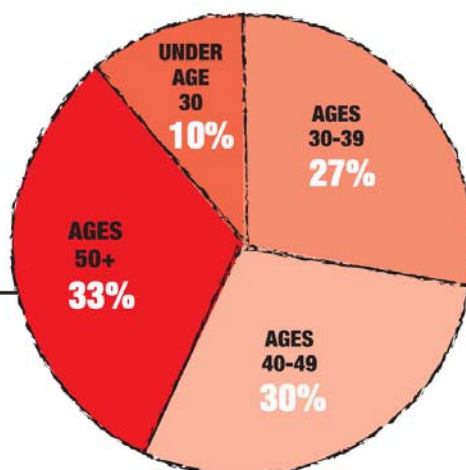
Similar to national projections, estimates for new teachers in New York fall within a range, from 10,000 new teachers to 18,000 annually. The increased demand for new teachers reflects trends in teacher retirements, expected increases in P-12 enrollments, fewer individuals entering the profession, and rates of teacher attrition. Available data indicates that New York will experience a teacher shortage in the near future, and in many parts of the state the shortage has already manifested itself.

THE IMPACT OF RETIREMENTS

264,761
Active members
in the NYSTRS as
of June 2017.

Active members
who could retire
within the next
five years.

SOURCE: NYSTRS

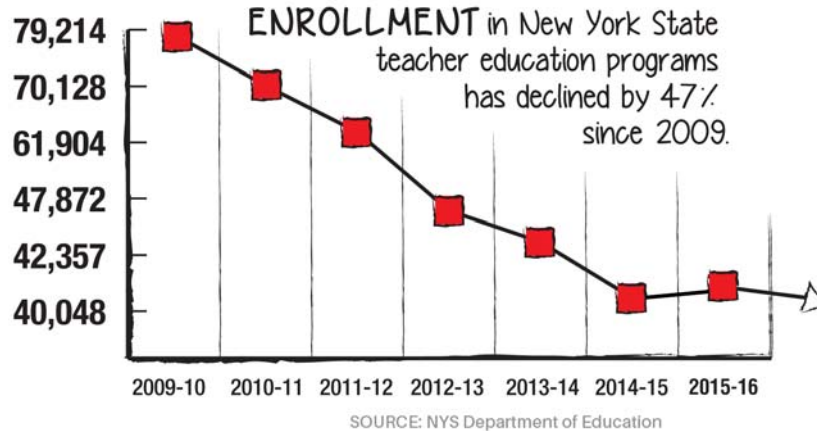


According to the 2017 NYS Teacher Retirement System (TRS) Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (June 2016), there were over 50,000 active TRS members over the age of 55. In addition, there were almost 35,000 active TRS members between the ages of 50-54. Within the next five years, one-third of the active members could be eligible to retire.

PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION OF TEACHERS

With many veteran teachers on the verge of retirement, recruiting students with the academic and personal qualities that are associated with successful teaching has become increasingly urgent. Unfortunately, teacher education programs in New York State are still dealing with the impact of the Great Recession: sharp declines in state revenue that resulted in massive layoffs and graduates of teacher education programs facing one of the worst job markets in recent history. This legacy, coupled with changes to working conditions, certification requirements, and increased demands on teachers have all contributed to the declining attractiveness of a career in teaching.

Since 2009-2010, enrollment in teacher education programs in New York State have decreased by roughly 47%, from over 79,000 students in 2009-10 to just over 41,000 students in 2015-16.



RECOGNIZED SHORTAGE AREAS

The US Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education provides annual lists of teacher shortage areas. A decade ago the USDOE identified two shortage areas for NY; currently the USDOE has identified 16 teacher shortage areas throughout New York. For 2016-17, identified shortage areas for the state include:

- Bilingual Education
- Special Education, All Grades
- English as a Second Language
- Early Childhood
- Visual Arts
- Dance
- Reading/Literacy
- Social Studies
- Career and Technical Education
- Special Education, Bilingual
- English Language Arts
- Elementary Education
- Music
- Mathematics
- Sciences
- Theater

These shortage areas vary in degree across regions and districts within the state. Growing anecdotal evidence demonstrates that teacher shortages already exist in other certificate titles, with an increasing number of rural districts experiencing difficulty attracting appropriately certified individuals.

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