

Teacher Shortage in New York State



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November 2019

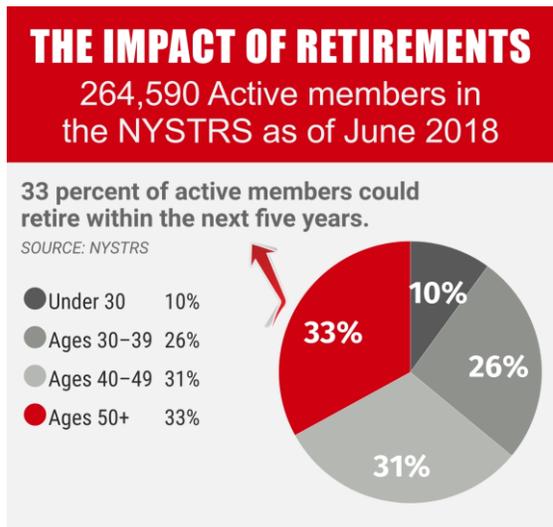
In the past several years, the national teacher shortage has captured the attention of educators, researchers, policymakers and the media. While estimates regarding the severity of the shortage vary, there is widespread consensus that demand for teachers is certainly on the rise. The U.S. Department of Education has estimated that 1.6 million or approximately 160,000 new teachers per year would be needed nationally between 2012 and 2020. A report from the Learning Policy Institute estimated the number even higher, predicting that schools will need approximately 300,000 new teachers per year by 2020.

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In New York, state officials estimate we will need approximately 180,000 new teachers over the next decade -- or up to 18,000 new teachers annually. The increased demand 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 is already experiencing a teacher shortage in a growing number of subject areas and in high poverty schools. Big city and rural districts are reporting severe staffing challenges.

THE IMPACT OF RETIREMENTS

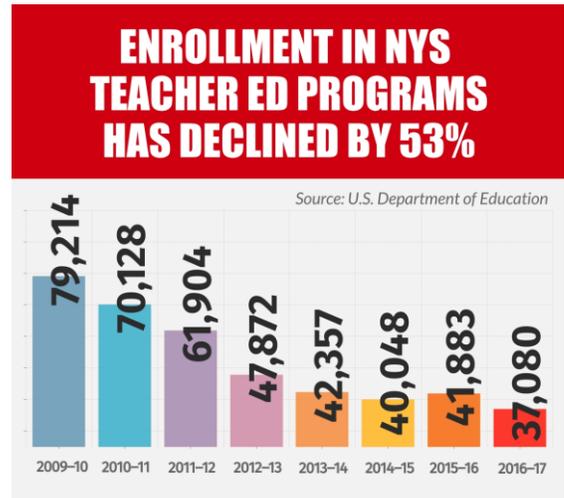
According to the November 2018 New York State Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, there were more than 51,000 active TRS members over the age of 55. In addition, there were nearly 36,000 active TRS members between the ages of 50-54. This means approximately one-third of the 264,590 active TRS members are eligible or will soon be eligible to retire.



PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION OF TEACHERS

With many veteran teachers on the verge of retirement, it is urgent to recruit more candidates with the academic background and personal qualities that are associated with becoming a successful teacher. Teacher education programs in New York are still dealing with the fallout of the Great Recession when state cutbacks resulted in massive layoffs and a poor job market for aspiring teachers. This legacy, coupled with changes in working conditions, new certification requirements, and increased demands on teachers, have all contributed to the declining

attractiveness of a career in teaching. Since 2009-10, enrollment in teacher education programs in New York State has declined by 53 percent, from more than 79,000 students in 2009-10 to just more than 37,000 students in 2016-17. Note: This data covers undergraduate and graduate teacher prep programs.



RECOGNIZED SHORTAGE AREAS

The U.S. Department of Education has designated 17 teacher shortage areas in New York for 2019-20, according to the Nationwide Teacher Shortage Area website. While the federal agency’s classifications have varied from year to year, the number of teacher shortage areas in New York has increased every year in the last decade based on data reported by the State Education Department. These are the state’s 2019-20 shortage areas:

- Art and Music Education
- Blind/Visually Impaired
- Career and Technical Education, grades 7-12
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- ESL with Bilingual Extension
- English Language Arts, grades 7-12
- Health and Physical Fitness
- Language and Speech
- Library Media Specialist Staff
- Literacy
- Mathematics, grades 7-12
- Science, grades 7-12
- Social Studies, grades 7-12
- Special Education with Bilingual Extension
- Students With Disabilities, all grades
- World Languages

These shortage areas vary in degree across regions and districts within the state. Since federal titles don't align exactly with New York state certificate titles, some categories such as Art and Music education now include specialty areas like Theater and Dance that used to be listed separately. Growing anecdotal evidence demonstrates that teacher shortages are hitting many other certificate titles as well, with high-need and rural districts experiencing the most difficulty attracting appropriately certified individuals.

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