

2023 Georgia K-12 Teacher & Leader Workforce Report

Policy, Research, and Evaluation

December 2025



**Governor's Office of
Student Achievement**



Governor's Office of Student Achievement

About Governor's Office of Student Achievement

As the state's P-20 education agency, the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) works to increase academic achievement and school completion across the state. GOSA uses data, research, and initiatives to improve student outcomes.

About Georgia K-12 Teacher and Leader Workforce Report

The 2023 Georgia K-12 Teacher and Leader Workforce Report, released by the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) in accordance with OCGA §20-14-27(a)(4), provides a comprehensive snapshot of Georgia's current education workforce. The report incorporates data from multiple sources including:

- Georgia's Academic and Workforce Analysis and Research Data System (GA-AWARDS)
- Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC)
- Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE)
- Teachers Retirement System of Georgia (TRS)

This report analyzes the current state of the educator workforce as well as production, retention, and retirement patterns for K-12 teachers and leaders during the 2022-23 school year. This report is intended to inform policymakers, educators, researchers, and the public about the state of Georgia's K-12 workforce.

The Georgia K-12 Teacher and Leader Workforce Report focuses on two distinct groups of Georgia educators: teachers and school-level leaders. For the purposes of this report, an educational leader serves for at least some portion of the day in one of the following positions; principal, pre-K director, alternative school director, assistant principal, instructional supervisor, community school director or coordinator, or Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) director.

Every year, GOSA seeks to improve data quality and methodology, as well as to explore new ways to analyze and display data. Therefore, the 2023 report may not be directly comparable to reports from previous years. For more information, please visit <https://gosa.georgia.gov/georgia-k-12-teacher-and-leader-workforce-report>.

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|| Executive Summary

Georgia's K-12 teacher and leader workforce shows staffing stability but faces challenges in composition, distribution, and sustainability.

The workforce pipeline produces substantial numbers of new teachers annually, and these new teachers are more demographically diverse than the current teacher workforce. However, new teacher certifications are concentrated in elementary and special education rather than secondary subjects, where certification gaps persist. Despite producing 4,754 teacher preparation program completers, only 258 were certified in secondary science and 190 in secondary mathematics—subjects where 11.4% and 8.4% of teachers respectively teach out-of-field.

Teacher experience and qualifications vary dramatically by school poverty level. High-poverty schools employ more first-year teachers and more teachers with only bachelor's degrees compared to low-poverty schools. This sorting pattern means students in the highest-need schools are less likely to have access to experienced, highly qualified teachers.

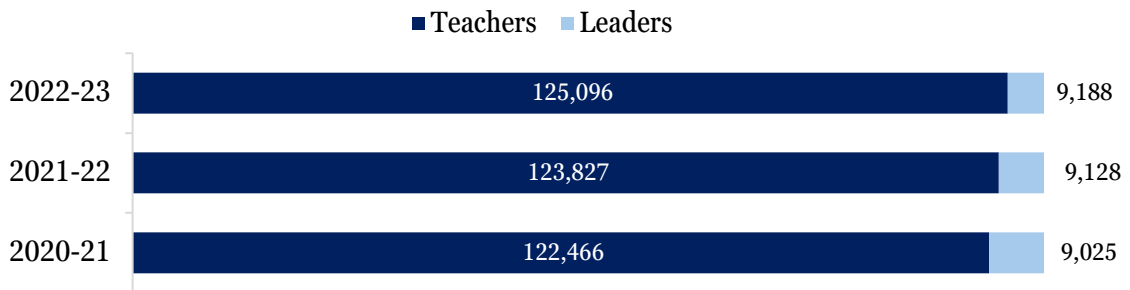
Retention represents perhaps the most critical challenge to Georgia's K-12 workforce. In core academic subjects, only 55-60% of teachers return to teach the same course the following year, with special education showing even lower rates (27-48%). Rural districts face compounding challenges: high teacher turnover, elevated rates of out-of-field teaching, and large proportions of new teachers. School leaders show different retention patterns. The leadership workforce is more diverse, more highly credentialed, and drawn from experienced educators. However, most leaders are relatively new to leadership roles, suggesting potential challenges with leadership retention despite strong recruitment of qualified candidates.

Together, these findings reveal that Georgia's educator workforce challenges center not on the overall quantity of educators but on strategic alignment: producing the right teachers with the right certifications for the right locations and retaining them. Addressing workforce sustainability will require targeted approaches to preparation pipeline development, recruitment and retention in rural and high-need subjects, and ongoing support for educators.

Teacher & Leader Characteristics

Georgia's educator workforce has demonstrated notable stability in recent years. During the 2022-23 school year, there were 125,096 teachers and 9,188 leaders serving K-12 students, representing modest growth of 1.02% and 0.66% respectively from the prior year. This stability, while encouraging, masks important questions about workforce composition, and long-term sustainability that this report examines.

Figure 1: Distribution of Teachers and Leaders, 2022-23



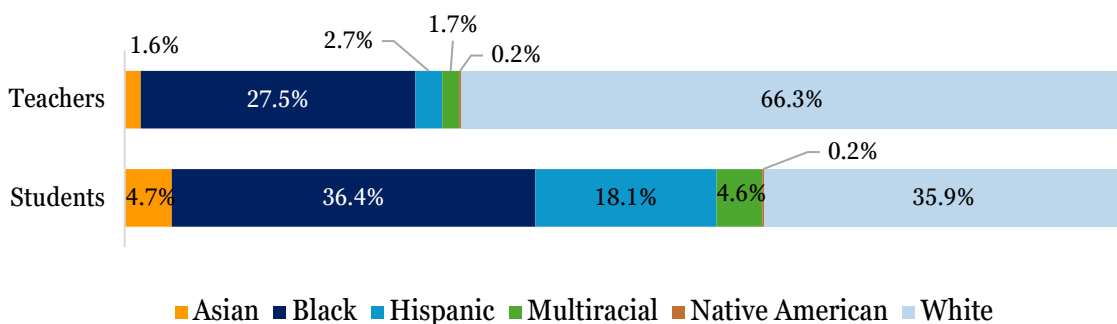
Source: Certified/ Classified Personnel Information (CPI) Reports 2020-21, 2021-22, & 2022-23.
 Note. Teachers are those designated as PK-12 teachers. Leaders are those designated as administrators in a school for some portion of the school day.

Teacher Workforce Characteristics

Demographic Composition

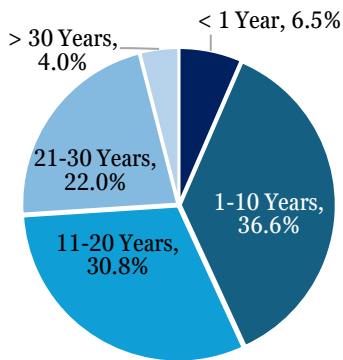
Georgia's teacher workforce differs demographically from the student population. While 66.3% of teachers are White, 35.9% of students are White. Black educators represent 27.5% of teachers compared to 36.4% of students. Hispanic representation shows the largest gap, with 2.7% of teachers being Hispanic compared to 18.1% of students.

Figure 2: Teachers and Students by Race, 2022-23



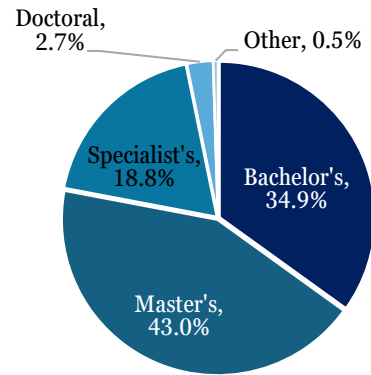
Source: CPI Report 2022-23 (Teachers), GOSA Enrollment by Subgroup Program 2022-23 (Students)
 Note. Teacher percentages were calculated using the total teachers for which race/ethnicity was reported in the CPI report.

Figure 3: Teachers by Experience Level, 2022-23



Source: CPI Report 2022-23.

Figure 4: Teachers by Degree Level, 2022-23



Source: CPI Report 2022-23.

Note. Other includes High School/GED or Associates.

Years of Experience

The teacher workforce reflects a mix of experience levels. More than one-third of teachers (36.6%) have 1-10 years of experience, while 30.8% have 11-20 years. Veteran teachers with more than 20 years of experience comprise 26% of the workforce, with 22% having 21-30 years and 4% having more than 30 years.

Educational Attainment

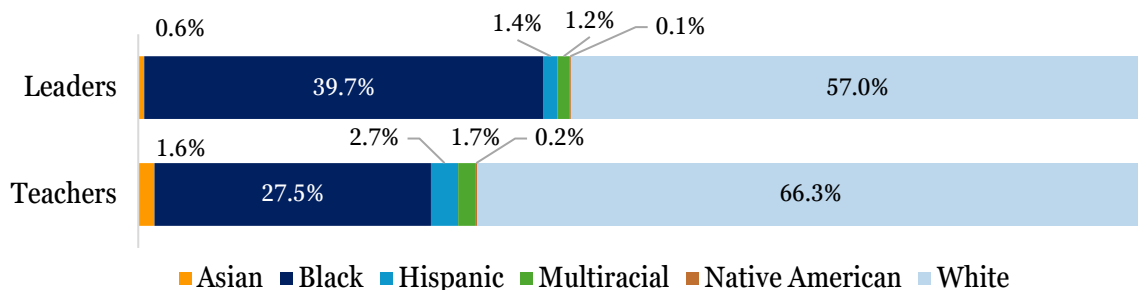
Georgia's teacher workforce is highly credentialed. Nearly two-thirds hold advanced degrees, 43% have a master's degree, 18.8% hold a specialist degree, and 2.7% have earned a doctorate. Just over one-third (34.9%) hold a bachelor's degree as their highest credential.

Leader Workforce Characteristics

Demographic Composition

The 9,188 school leaders serving Georgia's schools are more racially diverse than the teacher workforce. Black educators comprise 39.7% of leaders compared to 27.5% of teachers, while White leaders represent 57% compared to 66.3% of teachers. Hispanic representation remains low among both groups (1.4% for leaders and 2.7% for teachers).

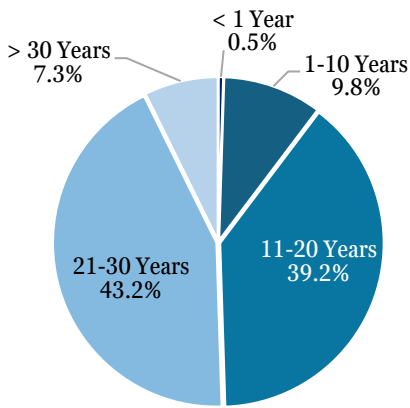
Figure 5: Leaders by Race, 2022-23



Source: CPI Report 2022-23.

Note. Teachers are those designated as PK-12 teachers. Leaders are those designated as administrators in a school for some portion of the school day.

Figure 6: Leaders by Experience Level, 2022-23



Source: CPI Report 2022-23.

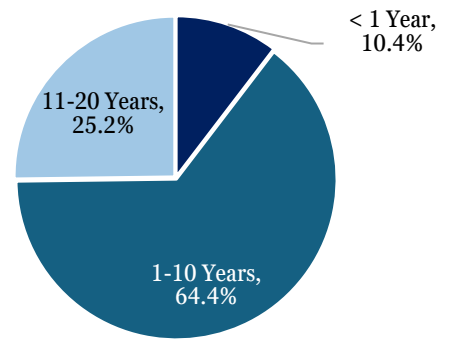
Years of Leadership Experience

School leaders in Georgia are experienced educators who are relatively new to leadership roles. Nearly 90% have more than 10 years of overall experience in education (Figure 6), with 43.2% having 21-30 years. However, three-quarters of leaders (74.8%) have been in leadership positions for 10 years or less, and 10.4% are in their first year of leadership (Figure 7). Only one-quarter have more than 10 years of leadership experience (Figure 7).

Years of Experience

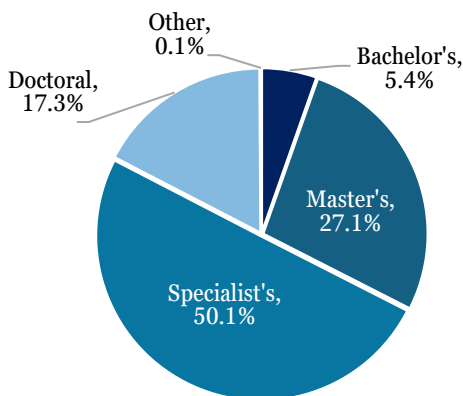
School leaders are drawn overwhelmingly from veteran educators, with the largest concentration (43.2%) having 21-30 years of experience in education. Another 39.2% have 11-20 years of experience. Leaders with 10 or fewer years in education represent just 10.3% of the workforce.

Figure 7: Leaders by Leadership Experience Level, 2022-23



Source: CPI Report 2022-23.

Figure 8: Leaders by Degree Level, 2022-23



Source: CPI Report 2022-23.
 Note: Other includes High School/GED or Associates.

Educational Attainment

Education leaders hold significantly higher credentials than the broader teacher workforce. Half of all leaders (50.1%) hold a Specialist degree, and an additional 17.3% have earned a Doctorate. Just over one-quarter (27.1%) hold a master's degree as their highest credential while only 5.4% hold a bachelor's degree.

Teacher Sorting & Poverty

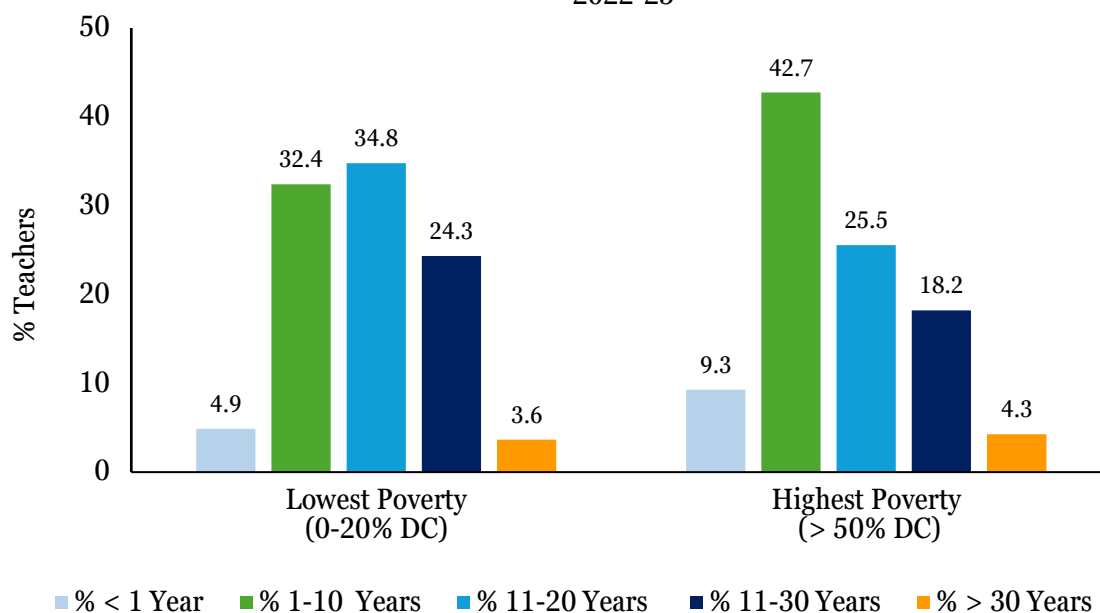
Teacher sorting refers to the non-random distribution of teachers across schools. In Georgia, like many states, teacher qualifications and experience are not evenly distributed. Instead, certain types of teachers are concentrated in particular schools. This sorting correlates with school poverty levels: schools serving higher proportions of economically disadvantaged students tend to employ less experienced teachers with fewer advanced credentials. Understanding these patterns is essential for ensuring all students have access to qualified educators, regardless of the schools they attend.

Direct certification (DC) is used to measure poverty levels of students in Georgia. DC students are identified as homeless, unaccompanied youth, foster or migrant, students living in a family unit receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits, and/or students living in a family unit with a Medicaid income that does not exceed free or reduced-price lunch eligibility standards.

Years of Experience

Teachers in high-poverty schools have less experience than those in low-poverty schools. In schools where more than half of students are economically disadvantaged, 52% of teachers have 10 or fewer years of experience, compared to 37.3% in schools with the lowest poverty rates. High-poverty schools also have twice the proportion of first-year teachers (9.3% vs. 4.9%).

Figure 9: Teacher Experience by School Poverty Level, 2022-23



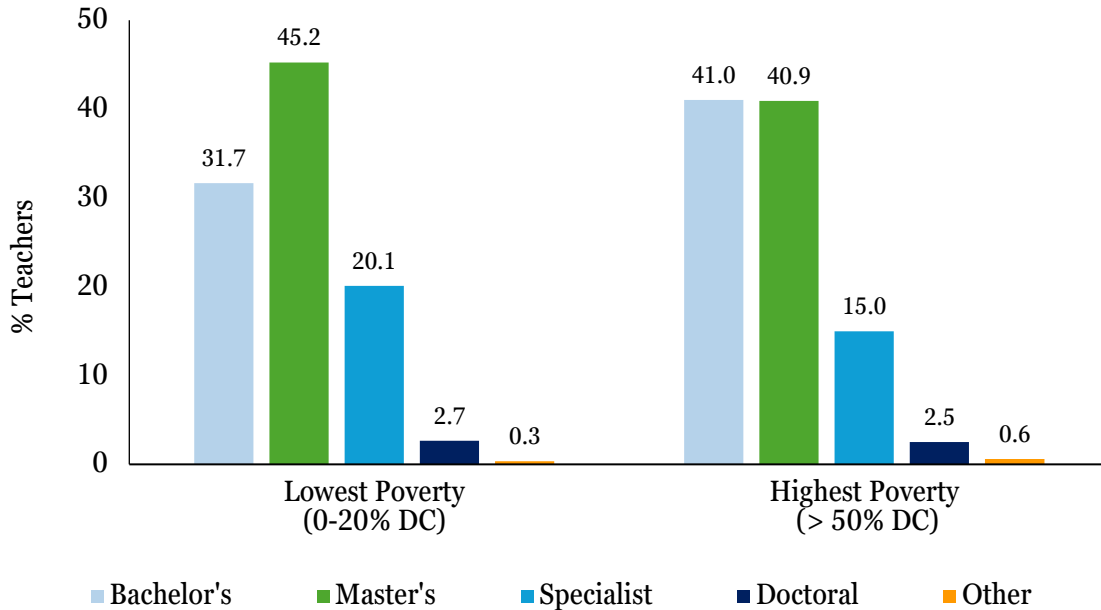
Source: CPI Report 2022-23, GOSA Direct Certification Data 2022-23.

Note. Poverty level is defined by schools' direct certification rates. Higher percentages of direct certification in schools indicate higher levels of student poverty.

Educational Attainment

Teachers in high-poverty schools also hold fewer advanced degrees. In the highest-poverty schools, 41% of teachers hold only a bachelor's degree compared to 31.7% in the lowest-poverty schools. Conversely, teachers with specialist degrees are more concentrated in lower-poverty schools (20.1%) than higher-poverty schools (15%).

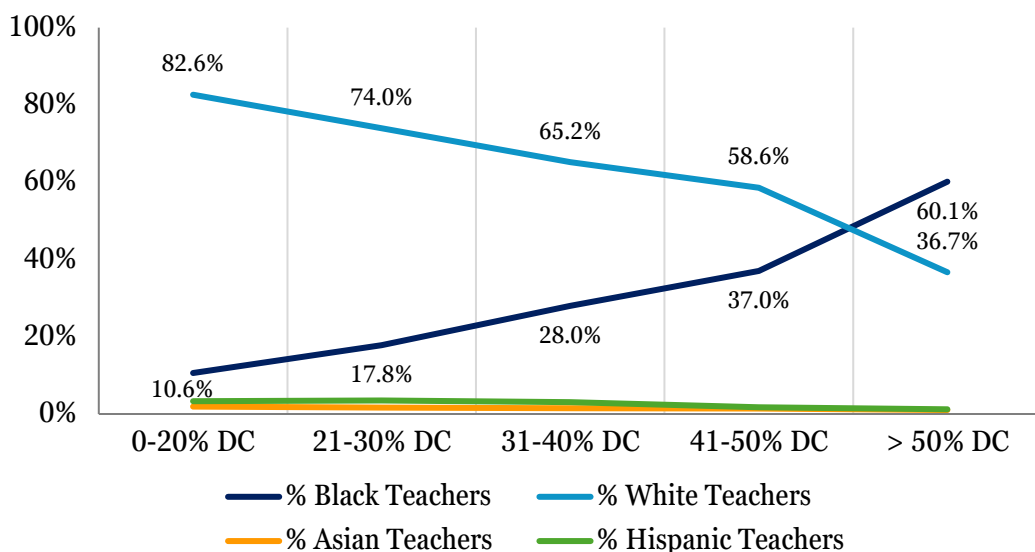
Figure 10: Teacher Degree by School Poverty Level, 2022-23



Source: CPI 2022-23, GOSA Direct Certification Data 2022-23.

Note. Poverty level is defined by schools' direct certification rates. Higher percentages of direct certification in schools indicate higher levels of student poverty.

Figure 11: Teacher Race by School Poverty Level, 2022-23



Source: CPI 2022-23, GOSA Direct Certification Data 2022-23.

Note. Poverty level is defined by schools' direct certification rates. Higher percentages of direct certification in schools indicate higher levels of student poverty.

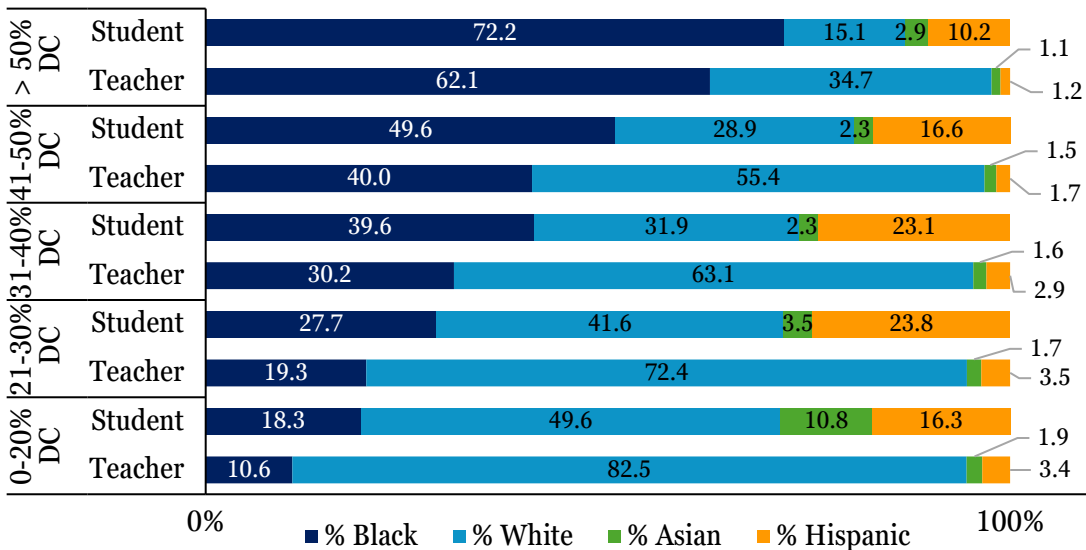
Demographic Composition

The racial and ethnic composition of teachers varies by school poverty level. In schools with the lowest poverty rates (0-20% direct certification), 82.6% of teachers are White and 10.6% are Black. This pattern reverses in the highest-poverty schools (>50% direct certification), where 36.7% of teachers are White and 60.1% are Black. Asian and Hispanic teacher representation remain low across all poverty levels.

Teacher-Student Mismatch

The distribution of teachers by race and ethnicity differs from student demographics at all poverty levels. In the lowest-poverty schools, 82.5% of teachers are White while 49.6% of students are White. In the highest-poverty schools, where 72.2% of students are Black, 62.1% of teachers are Black. These patterns reflect both the overall teacher workforce composition and the concentration of teachers by race in schools serving different student populations.

Figure 12 : Teacher and Student Race by School Poverty Level, 2022-23



Source: CPI 2022-23, GOSA Student Enrollment Data, GOSA Direct Certification Data 2022-23.

Note. Poverty level is defined by schools' direct certification rates. Higher percentages of direct certification in schools indicate higher levels of student poverty.

Together, teacher characteristics differ systematically by school poverty level. High-poverty schools employ more early-career teachers and teachers with bachelor's degrees, while low-poverty schools employ more experienced teachers and those with advanced credentials. The racial and ethnic composition of teachers also varies, with Black teachers more concentrated in high-poverty schools and White teachers more concentrated in low-poverty schools. These disparities in teacher qualifications and experience compound the existing challenges facing students in high-poverty schools.

Teacher & Leader Preparation

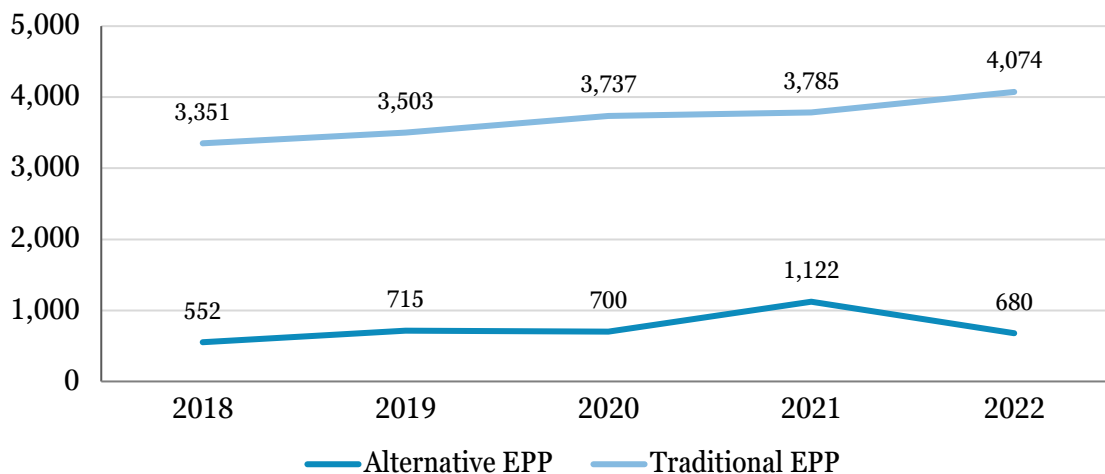
Georgia prepares teachers and school leaders through two primary pathways: traditional university-based preparation programs and alternative certification routes. Educator Preparation Programs (EPP) in Georgia play a critical role in developing the state’s teacher and school leader workforce.

Georgia’s EPP relies primarily on traditional university programs for volume, while alternative certification routes serve a smaller but highly employed population. Both pathways play distinct roles in the educator workforce pipeline.

Teacher EPP Completers

The number of teachers completing EPP has grown over the past five years, driven primarily by traditional university programs. In 2022, an increase of 21.8% was observed for total teacher EPP completers (traditional and alternative) from 2018. Traditional programs produced six times as many teacher candidates as alternative routes in 2022.

Figure 13: Teacher EPP Completers by Pathway



Source: GA-AWARDS, 2018-22 Program Participant Data.

Alternative certification completers peaked in 2021 but declined sharply in 2022, returning to near-2020 levels. This follows a 60% increase from 2020 to 2021, suggesting 2021 may have been an anomaly in alternative EPP completers rather than 2022 being a decline from a stable baseline.

Employment Status of EPP Completers

Despite producing fewer completers, alternative certification routes show higher employment rates. Among 2022 completers, 90% of alternative route teachers were employed in certificate positions compared to 73.4% of traditional program graduates. For school leaders, employment rates are notably lower overall: 38.3% of alternative route leaders and 21.9% of traditional program leaders were employed in leadership positions.

Although alternative route teachers showed a higher employment rate compared to traditional program completers, it is important to note that traditional programs placed substantially more teachers in absolute terms: 2,989 teachers from traditional programs compared to 612 from alternative routes.

The lower employment rates for leaders may reflect differences in program structure and career pathways. Many educator preparation programs include leadership certification as an additional credential for practicing teachers who may not immediately move into administrative roles.

The higher employment rate among alternative route teachers, combined with their smaller cohort sizes, suggests that these programs may be more directly aligned with public school employment within Georgia. Alternative preparation programs are typically job-embedded and closely connected to Georgia public school districts or RESAs, resulting in higher documented in-state public school employment rates than those observed for traditional preparation programs. A deeper examination of these distinct preparation pathways may yield valuable insights for informing future teacher preparation and recruitment strategies.

Table 1: Employment Status of EPP Completers, 2022-23

Educator Type	Provider Type	# Total	# Employed in Certificate Position	Employment %
Teachers	Alternative	680	612	90.0%
	Traditional	4,074	2,989	73.4%
Leaders	Alternative	141	54	38.3%
	Traditional	777	170	21.9%

Source: GA-AWARDS, 2022-23 Educator Employment Data and 2021-22 Program Participant Data

Note. An educator is identified as employed if their unique ID is present in the Educator Employment Data. A leader is identified as an employed leader if they are present in and identified as a leader in the Educator Employment Data.

EPP Provider Landscape

Traditional teacher preparation is concentrated in public universities distributed across the state, while alternative teacher certification is provided through Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESAs) and large school districts, with notable concentration in the Metro Atlanta region. Leadership preparation follows similar patterns, with traditional programs housed in universities and alternative programs delivered primarily through RESAs.

Table 2: Top EPP Institutions by Educator Type, 2021-22			
Educator Type	Provider Type	EPP Institutions	# Educators Produced
Teachers	Traditional	Georgia Southern University	421
		University of Georgia	392
		Kennesaw State University	382
		University of West Georgia	325
		University of North Georgia	268
	Alternative	Griffin RESA	65
		Metro RESA	63
		Gwinnett County Public Schools	60
		Clayton County Public Schools	53
		Northwest Georgia RESA	52
Leaders	Traditional	University of West Georgia	294
		Kennesaw State University	103
		Piedmont University	64
		Georgia Southern University	62
		Valdosta State University	57
	Alternative	Griffin RESA	52
		Metro RESA	34
		Middle Georgia RESA	32
		Southwest Georgia RESA	16
		Pioneer RESA	14

Source: GA-AWARDS, 2021-22 Program Participant Data

Note. The source data do not include Georgia educators enrolled in EPPs out-of- state. The EPP completers included in this sample are receiving initial certifications only, wherein initial certification means obtaining a Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) certificate to teach or lead for the first time.

Teacher Certifications

Teacher certification provides insight into teacher workforce preparedness and subject-area coverage. This section examines the distribution of teacher certifications, the extent of out-of-field teaching in core subjects, and where certification gaps are most pronounced.

Certification Fields Distribution

Elementary Education and Special Education represent the largest certification areas, accounting for 70% of all educator certifications. Secondary subject certifications are more distributed. Specialized areas represent a small fraction of certifications.

Certification Fields	# of Teachers	% of Teachers
Elementary Education	49,329	41.4%
Special Education	34,206	28.7%
Social Studies (4-8)	17,691	14.8%
English Language Arts (4-8)	15,600	13.1%
Mathematics (4-8)	12,859	10.8%
Science (4-8)	10,495	8.8%
Social Studies (6-12)	8,079	6.8%
Health/Physical Education (P-12)	7,952	6.7%
English Language Arts (6-12)	7,386	6.2%
Science (6-12)	6,272	5.3%
Mathematics (6-12)	6,103	5.1%
Arts (P-12)	5,561	4.7%
Reading (4-8)	4,869	4.1%
ESOL (P-12)	4,171	3.5%
Foreign Languages (P-12)	2,977	2.5%
Career, Technical and Agricultural Specialization	2,437	2.0%
Business Education	2,312	1.9%
Reading (P-12)	1,666	1.4%
Engineering and Technology	817	0.7%
Agriculture Education	719	0.6%
Family and Consumer Science	705	0.6%
Early Childhood Education (Birth-k)	599	0.5%
Computer Science (P-12)	384	0.3%
Gifted Education	150	0.1%
Speech	57	0.0%
Middle Grades (4-8)	44	0.0%

Source: GA-AWARDS 2022-23 Education Certification Details Data

Note. Certification fields in the current report do not include endorsements. The 2021-22 Teacher and Leader Workforce Report did include endorsements. The percentages do not add up to 100% because some teachers hold multiple certifications or have missing certification information.

Out-of-Field Teaching

‘In-field’ teachers refers to the assignment of educators to positions for which they have been prepared and certified (in-field). ‘Out-of-field’ teachers are those who are not teaching in their field of certification or in the subject and/or grade level(s) assigned; or, for charter/strategic waiver districts, teachers who are not teaching in a field in which they hold equivalent content qualifications. Because Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and schools may change teacher assignment(s) each year and during the school year, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) ‘in-field’ is verified at a point-in-time.

In Georgia, 8-11% of teachers in core subject areas teach out-of-field. Science shows the highest rate of out-of-field teaching at 11.4%, followed by ELA (10.0%), Social Studies (8.6%), and Mathematics (8.4%).

Core Subjects	% Out-of-Field Teachers	Total # of Teachers
ELA	10.0%	52,783
Mathematics	8.4%	46,200
Science	11.4%	49,387
Social Studies	8.6%	45,200

Source: Georgia Department of Education 2022-23 In-Field Data

Note. A teacher can teach multiple subjects. For the purposes of ESSA reporting, ‘out-of-field’ will reflect the entirety of the school year using Certification Records and all three CPI and Student Class data collections cycles.

Geographic Distribution of Out-of-Field Teaching

Out-of-field teaching is not evenly distributed across the state. Several district, primarily small, rural counties, show extreme out-of-field teaching, with 40-60% of teachers in core subjects lacking proper certification. Hancock County, for example, has out-of-field rates of 48.3% in ELA, 57.6% in Mathematics, 46.7% in Science, and 48.9% in Social Studies.

These patterns are most pronounced in rural districts but also appear in some larger systems. Bibb County, a mid-sized urban district, has 895 Mathematics teachers (39.6%) and 1,128 Social Studies teachers (46.4%) teaching out-of-field.

The concentration of out-of-field teaching in specific districts suggests localized challenges in recruiting and retaining certified teachers in core subject areas, particularly in science and in rural communities.

Table 5: Districts with Highest Out-of-Field Teaching Rates, 2022-23

ELA		
District	% Out-of-Field Teachers	# Out-of-Field Teachers
Hancock County	48.3%	58
Dooley County	48.2%	110
Quitman County	46.7%	30
Early County	45.5%	99
Sumter County	41.8%	213
Mathematics		
District	% Out-of-Field Teachers	# Out-of-Field Teachers
Hancock County	57.6%	33
Dooley County	52.5%	59
Chattahoochee County	45.5%	33
Bibb County	39.6%	895
Calhoun County	37.1%	35
Science		
District	% Out-of-Field Teachers	# Out-of-Field Teachers
Chattahoochee County	50.0%	50
Hancock County	46.7%	45
Dooley County	46.3%	54
Pelham County	45.1%	71
Grady County	43.8%	162
Social Studies		
District	% Out-of-Field Teachers	# Out-of-Field Teachers
Macon County	54.8%	42
Hancock County	48.9%	47
Bibb County	46.4%	1128
Stewart County	45.5%	22
Quitman County	45.0%	20

Source: Georgia Department of Education 2022-23 In-Field Data

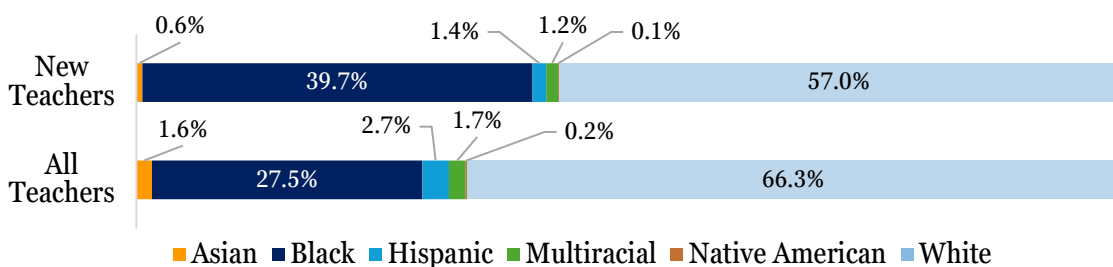
New Teacher Characteristics

Understanding who enters teaching such as their backgrounds, credentials, and certification areas, provides insight into the sustainability and composition of Georgia's educator workforce. This section examines the characteristics of new teachers who entered Georgia's public schools in 2022-23.

Demographic Composition

New teachers are more racially diverse than the current workforce. Black teachers represent 39.7% of new hires compared to 27.5% of all teachers, while White teachers comprise 57.0% of new hires compared to 66.3% overall. This suggests Georgia's teaching workforce will potentially become more diverse as veteran teachers retire and are replaced by more diverse cohorts of new educators.

Figure 14: New Teachers by Race, 2022-23

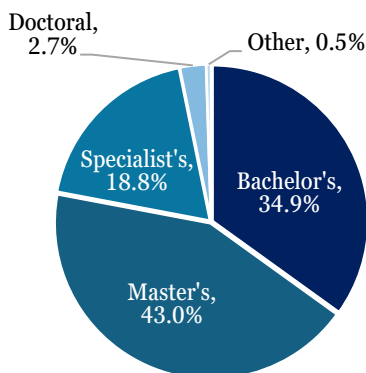


Source: GA-AWARDS, 2022-23 Education Employment Details and 2022-23 Educator Demographics Details.

Educational Attainment

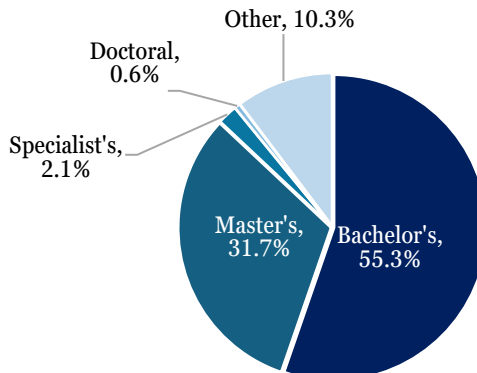
New teachers enter with fewer advanced degrees than the overall workforce. More than half (55.3%) hold bachelor's degrees as their highest credential, compared to 34.9% of all teachers. Just 31.7% have master's degrees. This pattern reflects that teachers typically pursue advanced degrees during their careers.

Figure 15: Teachers by Degree Level, 2022-23



Source: CPI Report 2022-23.
 Note: This figure reproduces Figure 4 for ease of comparison. Other includes High School/GED or Associates.

Figure 16: New Teachers by Degree Level, 2022-23



Source: GA-AWARDS, 2022-23 Education Employment Details, 2022-23 Educator Demographics Details.
 Note: Other includes High School/GED or Associates.

Certification Fields

Many new teachers are certified in Elementary Education (26.9%) and Special Education (25.7%), mirroring the overall workforce distribution. Secondary subject certifications remain limited: Science certifications (4-8 and 6-12 combined) represent 6.5% of new teachers (527), Mathematics 6.4% (515), English Language Arts 7.6% (615), and Social Studies 8.0% (646).

The pipeline for specialized areas remains extremely constrained. Only 17 new teachers were certified in computer science, 11 in engineering and technology, and 258 in secondary science, despite science having the highest statewide out-of-field teaching rate (11.4%).

Table 6: New Teachers by Certification Field, 2022-23

Certification Fields	# of New Teachers	% of New Teachers
Elementary Education	2,169	26.9%
Special Education	2,078	25.7%
Social Studies (6-12)	330	4.1%
Mathematics (4-8)	325	4.0%
Social Studies (4-8)	316	3.9%
English Language Arts (6-12)	309	3.8%
English Language Arts (4-8)	306	3.8%
Arts (P-12)	302	3.7%
Science (4-8)	269	3.3%
Science (6-12)	258	3.2%
Health/Physical Education (P-12)	228	2.8%
Mathematics (6-12)	190	2.4%
Foreign Languages (P-12)	115	1.4%
ESOL (P-12)	110	1.4%
Career, Technical And Agricultural Specialization	97	1.2%
Business Education	66	0.8%
Agriculture Education	58	0.7%
Early Childhood Education (Birth-k)	56	0.7%
Reading (4-8)	41	0.5%
Family And Consumer Science	19	0.2%
Computer Science (P-12)	17	0.2%
Reading (P-12)	17	0.2%
Engineering And Technology	11	0.1%
Speech	1	0.0%

Source: GA-AWARDS, 2022-23 Education Certification Details Data

Note. Certification fields in the current report do not include endorsements. The 2021-22 Teacher and Leader Workforce Report did include endorsements. The percentages do not add up to 100% because some teachers hold multiple certifications or have missing certification information.

Geographic Distribution

New teachers are not evenly distributed across districts. Several small, rural counties hired new teachers for 18-24% of their teaching positions, with Dooly County (23.6%), Twiggs County (21.2%), and Macon and Jeff Davis Counties (20.0% each) showing the highest proportions. Some districts with high percentages of new teachers also showed elevated rates of out-of-field teaching, suggesting interconnected challenges with recruitment and retention.

Notably, some of these districts, particularly Dooly and Quitman Counties, also appeared in the Teacher Certifications section as having the highest rates of out-of-field teaching (40-60% across core subjects). This suggests these districts may face interconnected challenges: they must hire a large percentage of new teachers while simultaneously struggling to recruit teachers with appropriate certifications. The result is a cycle of high turnover and persistent gaps in teacher quality.

Table 7: Districts with Highest Percentage of New Teachers, 2022-23		
Districts	% of New Teachers	Total # of Teachers
Dooly County	23.6 %	76
Twiggs County	21.2 %	57
Macon County	20.0 %	70
Jeff Davis County	20.0 %	209
Quitman County	18.3 %	27

Source: GA-AWARDS, 2022-23 Education Certification Details Data

Note. The districts presented above represent the top 5 districts with new teachers.

New Leader Characteristics

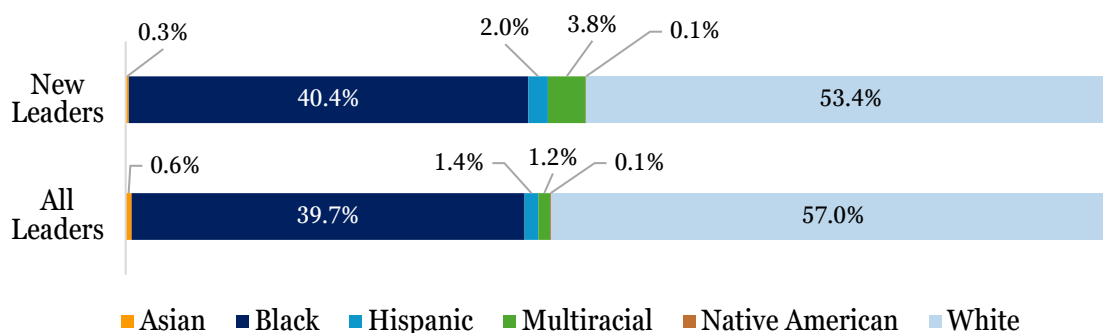
School leadership positions require both advanced credentials and substantial experience, creating a pipeline that differs from teacher recruitment. This section examines the characteristics of new leaders entering Georgia's schools in 2022-23.

Demographic Composition

New leaders entering the workforce show slightly greater racial diversity than the current leadership population. Black educators represent 40.4% of new leaders compared to 39.7% of all leaders, while White leaders comprise 53.4% of new leaders compared to 57.0% overall.

This represents a more modest demographic shift than observed among new teachers, where Black representation increased by 12.2 percentage points compared to the overall teaching workforce. The smaller shift in leadership demographics may reflect that leaders are drawn from more experienced educators, a population that reflects the demographics of teachers who entered the profession 10-30 years ago.

Figure 17: New Leaders by Race, 2022-23



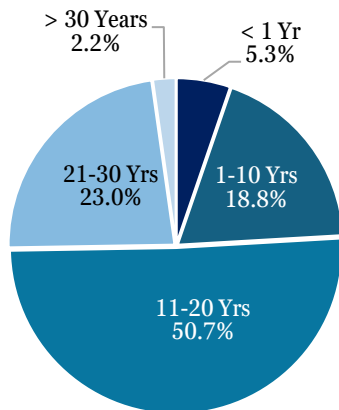
Source: GA-AWARDS, 2022-23 Education Employment Details, 2022-23 Educator Demographics Details.

Years of Experience

New leaders are drawn predominantly from mid-career educators. More than half (50.7%) have 11-20 years of education experience, and 23.0% have 21-30 years. However, nearly one-quarter (24.1%) have 10 or fewer years in education, including 5.3% in their first year—suggesting multiple pathways into school leadership.

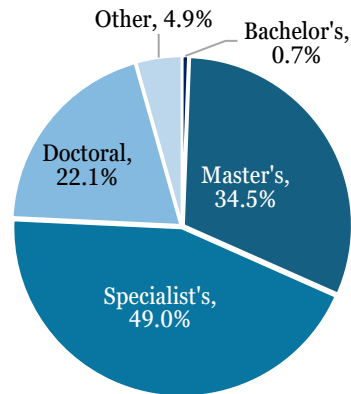
As shown earlier, while 89.7% of all leaders have more than 10 years of education experience, only 25.2% have been in leadership positions for more than 10 years. This pattern suggests leaders typically spend substantial time as teachers before moving into administration, but they may not remain in leadership roles long-term.

Figure 18: New Leaders by Years of Experience, 2022-23



Source: GA-AWARDS, 2022-23 Education Employment Details, 2022-23 Educator Demographics Details.

Figure 19: New Leaders by Degree Level, 2022-23



Source: GA-AWARDS, 2022-23 Education Employment Details, 2022-23 Educator Demographics Details.
 Note: Other includes High School/GED or Associates.

Educational Attainment

New leaders are exceptionally credentialed. Nearly half (49.0%) hold Specialist degrees, mirroring the overall leadership workforce (50.1%). Notably, 22.1% of new leaders hold Doctoral degrees—far exceeding the 5.3% of all leaders with doctorates. Only 0.7% of new leaders have just a bachelor's degree as their highest credential.

Teacher Retention

Teacher retention, the extent to which teachers return to the same position or remain in the same school district year-over-year, is a critical indicator of workforce stability. High turnover disrupts student learning, increases school district expenditures, and can signal underlying challenges with working conditions, compensation, or support. This section examines teacher retention rates across Georgia, by subject area, and by district, revealing significant variation in workforce stability.

Overall Retention by Content Area

Teacher retention rates vary by subject area, defined as teachers instructing the same course across the previous year and current year's student class files. The rate remains below 60% for most core academic subjects. ELA shows the lowest retention at 55.0%, followed by Mathematics (56.9%), CTAE (57.5%), Social Studies (57.6%), and Science (58.2%). This means that in core academic subjects, 4-5 out of every 10 teachers do not return to teach the same course the following year. Only Fine Arts (68.9%) and World Languages (62.6%) show retention rates above 60%.

Special Education Retention Crisis

Special Education (SPED) teachers face particularly acute retention challenges. Across all subject areas, SPED teachers show retention rates 8-10 percentage points lower than general education teachers. Just 46.0% of SPED ELA teachers, 48.4% of SPED Mathematics teachers, and 47.5% of SPED Science teachers return to teach the same course year-over-year. Given that special education represented 25.7% of new teacher certifications (the second-largest certification area), this high attrition suggests a revolving door in special education positions.

Table 8: Teacher Retention Rate by Subject, 2022-23

Course Content Area	% Teachers Retained	Total # of Teachers in 2021-22	% SPED Teachers Retained	Total # of SPED Teachers in 2021-22
ELA	55.0%	151,579	46.0%	67,625
Mathematics	56.9%	96,679	48.4%	46,913
CTAE	57.5%	37,316	42.1%	3,499
Social Studies	57.6%	75,430	47.3%	28,654
Science	58.2%	75,618	47.5%	27,962
Health/Physical Ed	59.2%	43,321	41.4%	5,440
World Languages	62.6%	9,066	26.5%	147
Fine Arts	68.9%	41,631	43.9%	1,393

Source: GaDOE 2022-23 Teacher Retention and Attrition at Course Level.

Note. A teacher can be counted more than once in a course content area. Retained teachers are in the same course across the previous year and current year's student class files.

Geographic Disparities

Georgia's average teacher retention rate among school districts from the 2021-22 to 2022-23 school years was 84.2%, meaning they remain in the same district from one year to the next. Retention rates vary across Georgia's school districts. While some small districts retain nearly all teachers (Glascoc County at 100%, Chickamauga City at 97.6%), others struggle with severe turnover. The five districts with the lowest retention, Hancock (68.2%), Pelham City (68.1%), Macon (67.1%), Twiggs (66.7%), and Baker Counties (65.4%), are all small, rural systems where one-third of teachers leave the district each year.

Table 9: Districts with Highest Teacher Retention, 2022-23

District	Teacher Retention Rate	Total # of Teachers 2021-22
Glascoc County	100.0%	45
Chickamauga City	97.6%	84
Commerce City	94.4%	125
Buford City	93.9%	347
Telfair County	93.4%	122

Source: GaDOE 2022-23 Teacher Mobility Data

Note. Retention is determined by CPI termination codes.

Table 10: Districts with Lowest Teacher Retention, 2022-23

District	Teacher Retention Rate	Total # of Teachers 2021-22
Hancock County	68.2%	44
Pelham City	68.1%	119
Macon County	67.1%	79
Twiggs County	66.7%	48
Baker County	65.4%	26

Source: GaDOE 2022-23 Teacher Mobility Data

Note. Retention is determined by CPI termination codes.

These retention challenges compound other workforce issues identified earlier. Hancock, Macon, and Twiggs Counties not only have the lowest retention but also show the highest percentages of new teachers (18-24% of their workforce) and the highest rates of out-of-field teaching (40-60% in core subjects). This creates a challenging cycle: high turnover necessitates hiring large numbers of new teachers, many of whom lack proper certification, which may contribute to continued retention difficulties.

Teacher Mobility

Teacher mobility, movement between districts or between schools within a district, provides additional context for understanding retention patterns. Teachers who leave a position may exit education entirely, move to another district, or transfer to a different school within the same district. This section examines these mobility patterns and their implications for workforce stability.

Inter-District Mobility

Inter-district mobility refers to the movement of teachers to another district. Some teachers who leave a district remain in the profession by moving to teach in another Georgia district. Among districts with the highest inter-district mobility, 18-21% of teachers left to teach elsewhere. Randolph County saw 20.8% of its teachers move to other districts, while Pelham City (19.3%) and Twiggs County (18.8%) also experienced substantial out-migration of teachers.

Notably, Pelham City and Twiggs County appeared earlier among the five districts with the lowest overall retention rates (68.1% and 66.7% respectively). The mobility data reveals that roughly one-third of their teacher departures involved movement to other districts rather than leaving education entirely. This pattern suggests these rural districts face challenges competing with other systems for teacher retention, possibly due to compensation, working conditions, or geographic isolation.

Table 11: Districts with Highest Inter-District Teacher Mobility, 2022-23

District	Inter-District Teacher Mobility Rate	Total # of Teachers 2021-22
Randolph County	20.8%	48
Pelham City	19.3%	119
Twiggs County	18.8%	48
Meriwether County	18.2%	176
Griffin-Spalding County	18.2%	702

Source: GaDOE 2022-23 Teacher Mobility Data.

Note. Retention is determined by CPI termination codes.

Intra-District Mobility

Intra-district mobility is defined as the movement of teachers between schools within the same district in which they teach. Within-district teacher movement shows even greater variation. Tattall County stands out with 51.2% of teachers changing schools within the district, meaning more than half of all teachers worked at different schools from one year to the next. This level of internal movement far exceeds other districts and may indicate school consolidations, major reorganization, or significant district-level changes.

Other districts show more modest but still notable intra-district mobility: Calhoun City (29.2%), Appling County (18.1%), Crawford County (17.4%), and Floyd County (17.1%). While some teacher movement between schools is normal as districts adjust staffing to enrollment or program needs, elevated rates may signal challenges with school-level working conditions, leadership stability, or teacher assignment practices.

Table 12: Districts with Highest Intra-District Teacher Mobility, 2022-23

District	Intra-District Teacher Mobility Rate	Total # of Teachers 2021-22
Tattall County	51.2%	284
Calhoun City	29.2%	227
Appling County	18.1%	249
Crawford County	17.4%	118
Floyd County	17.1%	632

Source: GaDOE 2022-23 Teacher Mobility Data.

Note. Retention is determined by CPI termination codes.

Together, retention and mobility data paint a complex picture of workforce stability. The overall retention rates presented earlier (55-68% in many districts and subjects) reflect all departures, whether teachers leave education, move to other districts, or transfer within districts. For districts like Pelham City and Twiggs County, inter-district mobility accounts for a significant share of teacher departures, suggesting retention strategies should focus on competitiveness with neighboring systems. For districts like Tattall County, high intra-district mobility suggests the need to examine school-level conditions and district assignment practices.

Teacher & Leader Retirement

Teacher and leader retirement patterns influence long-term workforce planning and pipeline needs. Understanding how many educators are approaching retirement helps policymakers anticipate future hiring demands and prepare for potential knowledge and experience loss. This section examines retirement eligibility among Georgia's educators.

Among Georgia's 220,896 active Teacher Retirement System (TRS) members, 10.5% are currently eligible to retire either with full benefits (5.4%) or reduced benefits (5.1%). This represents 23,256 educators who could retire immediately, though eligibility does not necessarily predict when individuals will retire. Many educators work beyond initial eligibility for professional or financial reasons.

Among active educators, 43.0% are vested (having accumulated sufficient service credit to receive retirement benefits when they reach retirement age), while 57.0% have not yet vested. This distribution reflects the workforce composition shown earlier, where 36.6% of teachers have 1-10 years of experience (generally not yet vested) and 56.8% have more than 10 years (generally vested).

Table 13: Status of All 2022-23 TRS Members		
Status	All TRS Members Total	% of All TRS Members
Active	220,896	73.0%
Vested	104,067	34.4%
Eligible for Retirement	14,192	4.7%
Eligible for Reduced Retirement Benefits	11,300	3.7%

Source: TRS, 2022-23 Membership Data

Note. Percentages do not add up to 100% because members can be both active and vested or vested and eligible to retire.

Table 14: Status of Active 2022-23 TRS Members		
Status	Active TRS Members Total	% of Active TRS Members
Vested	94,898	43.0%
Not Vested	125,998	57.0%
Eligible for Retirement	11,978	5.4%
Eligible for Reduced Retirement Benefits	11,278	5.1%

Source: TRS, 2022-23 Membership Data

Note. Percentages do not add up to 100% because members can be both active and vested or vested and eligible to retire.

Retirement challenges vary by district. While 10.5% of active educators statewide are currently retirement-eligible, some districts have substantially older workforces that will face sustained retirement pressure over the next decade. Taylor County (36.2% of employees age 50+), Baker County (35.8%), and Terrell County (33.2%) lead districts with the highest proportions of older educators—all small, rural systems where one-third of the workforce is approaching potential retirement.

Notably, most districts with low retention rates do not appear among those with the oldest workforces. Hancock, Pelham City, Macon, and Twiggs Counties, which retain only 65-68% of teachers annually are losing younger and mid-career teachers rather than experiencing retirement-related departures. This suggests their retention challenges may largely stem from working conditions, compensation, or other factors rather than predictable retirement patterns.

Table 15: Districts with Highest Percentage Employees Ages 50+, 2022-23

District	Active 50+ Employees Total	Active Employees Total	% of Active 50+ Employees
Taylor County	76	210	36.2%
Baker County	29	81	35.8%
Terrell County	72	217	33.2%
Stewart County	44	133	33.1%
Talbot County	36	110	32.7%
Schley County	60	189	31.7%
Atkinson County	83	269	30.9%
DeKalb County	4,980	16,343	30.5%
Calhoun County	40	132	30.3%
Fayette County	1,066	3,565	29.9%

Source: TRS, 2022-23 Membership Data

Note. Active members of TRS are defined as those who have made at least one contribution to TRS in the past four years.

Retirement patterns reveal district-level variation in workforce sustainability challenges. While statewide retirement eligibility (10.5%) suggests modest immediate pressure, districts with aging workforces face longer-term but substantial retirement waves over the next 10-15 years. Critically, retirement and retention challenges affect different districts: most low-retention rural districts are losing younger teachers, not primarily experiencing retirement, while districts with older workforces face more predictable succession planning needs. Baker County represents an exception, facing both immediate retention challenges and an aging workforce, a combination requiring urgent attention to recruitment, retention, and knowledge transfer strategies.

Appendix A. Abbreviations

CPI	Certified/Classified Personnel Information
CTAE	Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education
DC	Directly Certified
ELA	English Language Arts
EPP	Educator Preparation Program
ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act
ESOL	English to Speakers of Other Languages
GA-AWARDS	Georgia’s Academic and Workforce Analysis and Research Data System
GaDOE	Georgia Department of Education
GaPSC	Georgia Professional Standards Commission
GaTAPP	Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy
GOSA	Governor’s Office of Student Achievement
K-12; P-12	Kindergarten through 12th Grade; Pre-Kindergarten through 12th Grade
LEA	Local Education Agency
RESA	Regional Education Service Agency
SPED	Special Education
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
TRS	Teacher’s Retirement System of Georgia

Appendix B. Technical Note

Teacher & Leader Characteristics

- Years of experience using CPI Data refers to the total number of years teachers or leaders have had in education overall. The years of experience CPI reports do not necessarily correspond with years of experience as either a teacher in a teaching position or a leader in a leadership position.
- To determine the total years a leader had in a leadership position, GOSA uses the individual-level Education Employment Details Data file sourced from GA-AWARDS, which defines leaders as individuals with a leader-administrator level of 1 (0 = not leader, 1 = leader). The leader sample only included individuals present in employment data with CPI years of experience as a leader.
- CPI data might be updated.

Teacher & Leader Preparation

- Traditional EPP completers are defined as completing an in-state EPP program (and therefore obtaining a GaPSC certificate) between January 1st, 2022, to December 31st, 2022, and do not hold a previous teaching certification in another field.
- Alternative EPP completers are defined as completing an in-state EPP program (and therefore obtaining a GaPSC certificate) between January 1st, 2022, to December 31st, 2022, and do not hold a previous teaching certification in another field.
- GOSA considers a completer eligible to enter the educator workforce the school year after in which they complete an EPP program. This report assumes that those who complete between January 1st, 2022, to December 31st, 2022, are eligible to work in the 2022-23 school year, which is the timeframe of this report.
- The EPP completers included in this sample are receiving initial certifications only, wherein initial certification means obtaining a GaPSC certificate to teach or lead for the first time.
- Only “teacher” or “leader” certificate types are included in the sample. EPP completers with certificate types designated as “service” are not included in the sample. For more information on programs included in each certificate type, visit <https://www.gapsc.com/Commission/Rules/Current/EducatorPreparation/EdPrepRules.aspx>.
- Institutions of higher education primarily operate traditional EPPs and completers typically earn a degree (e.g., Bachelor’s or Master’s) and a GaPSC certificate to teach or lead in Georgia K-12 schools upon completion of a traditional EPP. RESAs primarily operate alternative EPPs, and GaTAPP is Georgia’s only alternative route to initial teacher certification. GaTAPP programs only offer certificates and are not designated as degree-granting programs (e.g., Bachelor’s or Master’s).

Teacher & Leader Certifications

- Certification buckets were determined in collaboration with GA-AWARDS and GaPSC to include the most updated course codes offered in GA public schools within each bucket.
- The total numbers of certifications by field include certifications held by teachers and leaders. The numbers reported reflect only non-obsolete certifications. Obsolete certifications are defined as having a certification end date prior to the 2022-23 school year.

New Teacher Characteristics

- New teachers are defined as having 0 years of experience in the Education Employment Details Data file sourced from GA-AWARDS.

Teacher Mobility

- Teachers are identified as intra-district movers if:
 - They are present in employment period 1 in both the 2021-22 and 2022-23 Educator Employment data;
 - They are reported as having the same district code in 2021-22 and 2022-23, and as having a different school code in 2022-23 than reported in 2021-22.
- Teachers are identified as inter-district movers if:
 - They are present in employment period 1 in both the 2021-22 and 2022-23 Educator Employment Data;
 - They are reported as having different district codes in 2022-23 than reported in 2021-22.

Teacher & Leader Retirement

- Active members of TRS are defined as those who have made at least one contribution to TRS in the past four years.
- Members are vested when they have at least 10 years of service credit.
- Members are eligible for retirement if they are 60 years old and have at least 10 years of service credit, or if they have at least twenty-five years of service credit at any age.
- Members are eligible for a reduced retirement benefit if they retire prior to age 60 with 25 to 29 years of service.



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