

SOUTH CAROLINA ANNUAL EDUCATOR SUPPLY & DEMAND REPORT

NOVEMBER 2021



**Center for Educator Recruitment,
Retention, & Advancement**

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Executive Summary

At the beginning of each school year, the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA) administers the South Carolina (SC) Annual Educator Supply and Demand Survey to collect information on teachers entering the profession, those leaving their classrooms or the profession altogether, and positions that remain vacant. A total of 83 SC public school districts, career and technology centers, and state agencies submitted a survey for the 2021-22 school year. Below are some key findings from the survey:

- Districts¹ reported more departures overall.
 - Approximately 6,900 teachers² from 2020-21 did not return to a teaching/service³ position in the same district in 2021-22. This is a 15.5% increase compared to the number of departures reported last year.
 - Departure reasons: 34% left for external reasons (personal/family); 18.5% retired; and 27% did not provide a reason or the district did not collect/report the information.
 - Regardless of departure reason, 23% are teaching in another SC public school district.
- Districts reported fewer early-career teacher departures.
 - 35% of all teachers who left had five or fewer years of classroom experience; 12% had only one year or less. These percentages are down from 42% and 16% last year.
 - 30% of first-year teachers hired for 2020-21 did not return to a teaching/service position in the same district in 2021-22. This percentage is down from 36% last year.
- Districts reported more vacant teaching/service positions.
 - Approximately 1,060 teaching/service positions were still vacant in September-October 2021. This is an increase of more than 50% compared to last year and the largest number of vacancies reported by districts since the Supply and Demand Survey was first administered in 2001.
- Districts reported more teachers hired to fill vacancies.
 - Just over 7,000 teachers were hired for the 2021-22 school year. This is an 11% increase compared to the number of hires reported last year.
 - 22% of new hires are recent graduates from a SC teacher education program. This percentage was 24% last year.
 - International visiting teachers accounted for about 4% of all new hires, compared to only 1% last year and 5% several years prior to that.

¹“Districts” include all SC public school districts, career and technology centers, and state agencies that submitted a 2021-22 survey.

²“Teachers” include certified classroom-based educators as well as other certified educators who provide instructional and support services directly to students (school counselors, school librarians, school psychologists, speech language pathologists, etc.).

³Teaching positions are held by certified educators who provide instruction in a classroom setting, and service positions are held by certified educators who provide instruction and support in a school setting (school counselors, school librarians, school psychologists, speech language pathologists, etc.).

I. Introduction

Since 2001, CERRA has administered the SC Annual Educator Supply and Demand Survey to all public school districts in the state. The number of districts has changed over the years with several consolidations and the addition of charter school districts. Currently, there are 77 traditional public school districts and two public charter school districts in South Carolina. Data from 75 traditional districts are included in this report, leaving only two small districts that did not submit a survey. Both charter school districts, the SC Public Charter School District and the Charter Institute at Erskine, also completed a survey. In addition, CERRA identified eight career and technology centers that serve multiple districts and/or function independently from the district in which the center resides. Most centers in the state operate within a school district and their information is already accounted for in district surveys. Four of the centers completed a separate survey. Finally, data also were collected from two state agencies that employ certified teachers, the SC Department of Juvenile Justice and the Palmetto Unified School District, bringing the total number of respondents to 83 for the 2021-22 school year.

Districts have about one month to complete the survey, as it is extremely comprehensive. Once responses are submitted, the data are analyzed and summarized in a statewide report. Data from the report are used to inform numerous legislative, regulatory, and policy decisions regarding teacher recruitment and retention in South Carolina. CERRA would like to thank district representatives who completed the survey each year. Without their full cooperation, this process would not be possible.

Note: When completing the survey, districts are asked to report positions in full-time equivalents (FTEs), based on 1.0 for full-time positions and 0.5, 0.75, etc. for part-time positions. For example, if one full-time and three half-time art teachers are hired, the district would report a total of 2.5 FTEs filled rather than four teachers hired.

II. Teaching/Service Positions

South Carolina school districts reported 56,166 full-time and part-time certified teaching/service positions for the 2021-22 school year. This number includes all authorized FTEs, but at CERRA's request, omits vacant positions as this information is collected in another survey question and reported in section V. of this report. Compared to 2020-21 data, this is a small increase of just over 2% or about 1,200 FTEs. For districts that reported more teachers this year, some indicated that positions were created using money from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund. The ESSER Fund provides emergency relief to elementary and secondary schools across the nation to address the impact that COVID-19 has had and continues to have on students. According to SC districts, ESSER funds were used to create new positions that were necessary to meet student demand in schools.

Each year, about one-third of all teachers are those certified in elementary and/or early childhood. These are classroom-based educators who teach core subjects to students who range from pre-kindergarten (PK) through 5th grade. At the request of the SC Department of Education, CERRA asked districts to separate their early childhood/elementary teachers this year based on the grades of students served. The numbers were similar as 16.5% of all teachers were reported as serving PK through 2nd grade students and 14.5% are serving 3rd through 5th graders.

The "other" category in Table 1A consists mainly of multi-subject fields like STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and STEAM (STEM plus arts), while this category in Table 1B includes certified educators who provide students with general academic assistance and support for social emotional learning. Overall, educators reported in Table 1B, which are those who provide students with instructional and/or behavioral support, make up 9% of all SC educators accounted for in this report.

III. Teacher Departures

CERRA collects departure data by asking districts to provide the number of teachers who leave their position, reasons why they left, and the years of public school teaching experience earned before the departure occurred. In prior years, districts were asked to provide information on years of experience only in SC classrooms, but this year, the survey question instructed respondents to report years of experience in any state. This small modification should better assess early-career departure data.

The number of SC teacher departures rose this year by nearly 16% (~930 teachers). Approximately 6,900 teachers from 2020-21 did not return to a teaching/service position in the same district in 2021-22. Similar to last year, retirements made up about 18% of all departures. This category includes first-time retirees, active retirees who did not return to the classroom for any reason, and those who previously retired from another state and have just “retired” in South Carolina. According to districts, many retirees with ten or fewer years of experience can be explained by circumstances such as teachers with other SC experience, but not in education and were eligible for retirement, career changers who retired as PACE (Program of Alternative Certification for Educators) teachers, and disability retirements.

In addition to retirements, 34% of departures reportedly left for external reasons such as personal health, family issues, spouse relocation, or to take a job closer to home. It is known, through CERRA’s data collection efforts and an abundance of anecdotal evidence, that teachers often select this category on their district’s exit survey as more of a default response rather than the actual reason for leaving to avoid any conflict or controversy. With so much negativity spreading throughout public education, especially during a pandemic, many would find it questionable that less than 3% of all teacher departures in SC is attributable to reasons such as school climate, workload, and salary.

For almost 1,900 teacher departures (27%), districts did not provide a reason for leaving, either because teachers did not give one or the district did not collect or report it. In addition, according to district respondents, approximately 200 teachers indicated on an exit survey that they were leaving to teach elsewhere – in another SC district, a private school, college/university, or another state/country. Although these responses are not considered distinct reasons for leaving a position, these teachers did select an option from their district’s exit survey as instructed and, therefore, were not categorized with teachers who did not provide a reason at all.

Last year, CERRA inquired about the employment status of teachers after leaving a position. It became obvious that, in many cases, this information is unknown. Therefore, this question was removed and districts were asked to indicate how many teachers, regardless of their reason for leaving, transferred to another school district in the state. Twenty-three percent of teachers from 2020-21 who left their position are currently teaching in another SC public school district, charter school, or special school.

Although the number of departures increased overall, resignations among early-career teachers were not as prevalent this year. Specifically, 35% of teachers from 2020-21 who left their position had five or fewer years of classroom experience compared to 42% from 2019-20. Twelve percent of teachers had experience of only one year or less; last year, 16% fell into this category. The same trend occurred among first-year teachers hired for 2020-21 with 30% not returning to a teaching/service position in the same district for 2021-22. This percentage is down from 36% last year.

As previously mentioned, the departure question in this year’s survey asked for years of teaching experience in any state rather than SC only. For teachers with out-of-state experience prior to their tenure in SC, this minor change in the survey question would have prompted districts to report these departures in categories that reflected more time spent in the classroom. This, in turn, would cause a slight reduction in the number of teachers leaving with no more than five years of classroom experience, potentially explaining a portion of the data presented above.

IV. Teachers Hired

Districts hired 7,014 teachers for the 2021-22 school year, an increase of 11% and approximately 700 teachers compared to data from last year. With more teacher departures reported this year, it was anticipated that additional hires would be necessary to fill those voids. The number of hires includes both new and experienced teachers, with 41% currently serving as first-year teachers. Most of the new hires are classroom teachers, while about 8% are educators filling service fields in school settings such as librarians, counselors, psychologists, and speech language pathologists.

For each new hire, districts are asked to identify the preparation program completed by the teacher if they are new to the profession or the source from which the teacher came if they are only new to the district but not the profession. Nearly 30% came directly from another SC public school district, charter school, or special school. Twenty-two percent of hires are recent graduates from a SC teacher education program. Out-of-state teachers, both veterans and new graduates from teacher preparation programs, contributed to 22% of all hires in the state. The number of international visiting teachers hired for 2021-22 made up about 4% of all hires compared to only 1% last year 5% several years prior to that.

Included in the hires who are new to the profession are first-year participants in an alternative certification program or those who recently completed a CTE work-based certification program in South Carolina. This group accounted for 10.5% of all new hires for the 2021-22 school year and 10% last year. Finally, 19% of all new hires in the state are males and 23% are non-white teachers. In 2020-21, these percentages were 19% and 21%, respectively.

V. Vacant Teaching/Service Positions

At the beginning of the 2021-22 school year, September-October specifically, districts indicated that 1,063 teaching/service positions were still vacant in SC public schools. This number signifies an increase of 52% compared to last year and the largest number of vacancies reported by districts since the Supply and Demand Survey was first administered in 2001.

Districts reported more vacancies in nearly all teaching/service fields, with the exception of small decreases in a few areas such as art and school librarians. Fields with the largest escalation in vacant positions included early childhood/elementary, special education, mathematics, science, English/language arts, social studies, and literacy/reading. Vacancies in early childhood/elementary and social studies more than doubled this year, with unfilled literacy/reading slots almost reaching that level. The increase in vacancies among school psychologists also is noteworthy as this number multiplied by three, rising from 13 last year to 39.5 this year.

Like in any profession, positions can become vacant for a number of reasons. In schools, vacancies arise primarily because of teachers leaving a position. The more departures that occur, the more positions that are left empty. Some positions are filled right away, while others remain vacant for an extended period. If districts cannot secure a hire immediately, long-term substitutes will often assume the role until a permanent hire is made. In situations like this, although a person is technically filling the position, districts are asked to record it as a vacancy if actively pursuing a certified teacher to permanently fill the role.

Many factors can explain such a drastic increase in the number of vacant positions in SC schools. The most likely source is the rise in teacher departures. While most of the vacancies created by these departures are filled with new hires prior to the beginning of each school year, some remain empty as described in this section. Another possible explanation for the growing number of vacancies may be linked to positions newly created by districts that have yet to be filled. Finally, districts continue to struggle with hiring and keeping teachers, partially due to COVID and its overwhelming impact.

VI. Conclusion

In South Carolina, it can be anticipated that roughly 6,000-7,000 teachers will leave their position each year. On average, about 25% of these teachers transfer from one SC district to another. Another 18-20% of departures each year are teachers retiring from the profession. Taking into account the average number of teachers leaving each year and the number of vacancies typically filled by veteran teachers, that leaves approximately 40% of positions that are filled annually by new teachers (new = brand new to the profession, not just new to a district). This is an average of about 2,800 brand new teachers hired each year and includes recent graduates of SC and out-of-state teacher preparation programs, teachers who are in their first year after completing an alternative certification program like PACE or Teachers of Tomorrow, and newly certified CTE teachers.

These statistics are based on Supply and Demand Survey data collected from school districts over the past five years. Some of the data used to calculate these rates are displayed in the table below. The table provides a general summary about the teacher workforce in SC, during the years leading up to the pandemic as well as the most recent years when districts are feeling the effects of COVID. Even before the pandemic hit, SC (like many other states) experienced significant challenges with teacher recruitment and retention. This trend is evident when considering the number of teacher departures, the number of new hires necessary to fill vacancies created by departures, and the number of positions that remain vacant one to two months into each school year. As shown below, data from all five school years substantiate the increasing difficulties shared by districts to adequately fill vacancies.

Supply & Demand Data (in FTEs)	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
Positions (authorized FTEs, excluding vacancies)	56,166	54,961	52,525	51,995	52,596
Departures	6,927	5,996	6,650	7,339	6,705
Early-Career Departures (≤5 years teaching experience)	2,390	2,551	2,367	2,596	2,564
New Hires	7,014	6,308	6,709	7,600	7,311
Vacancies	1,063	699	556	621	550

CERRA will request mid-year data from districts again in February 2022 to assess any additional teacher departures and/or positions that may still be vacant at the time. This follow-up process was completed for the first time in February 2021, creating a comparison point moving forward. Ideally, there would be a minimal number of additional departures more than half way through the school year and significantly fewer vacancies. Once the February 2022 numbers are available, they will be compared to those obtained in February 2021 when districts reported almost 700 additional teacher departures and over 500 positions that were vacant six months after the start of the 2020-21 school year. A full account of this information is available on CERRA's website at <https://www.cerra.org/supply-and-demand.html> and will be updated as newer data become available.

Table 1A includes the number of certified teaching positions in SC public school districts for 2021-22.

Table 1A (excluding vacant positions)	Number of Teaching Positions, by Grades Served			
	PK – 5	6 – 8	9 – 12	Total
Agriculture		17.33	135.77	153.10
Art	653.67	288.34	388.86	1,330.87
Business & Marketing (includes Computer Technology/Science)	28.90	244.85	754.85	1,028.60
Career & Technical Education (CTE work-based fields)		101.50	1,078.56	1,180.06
Dance	35.63	49.66	57.84	143.13
Driver Training			58.20	58.20
Early Childhood/Elementary (grades PK-2)	9,254.60			9,254.60
Early Childhood/Elementary (grades 3-5)	8,118.30			8,118.30
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)	454.97	201.98	205.37	862.32
English/Language Arts		1,931.67	1,997.11	3,928.78
Family & Consumer Science		17.50	87.00	104.50
Gifted & Talented	356.79	83.28	32.43	472.50
Health	20.28	62.43	158.43	241.14
Industrial Technology		35.00	21.00	56.00
Literacy/Reading (includes interventionists)	1,442.24	211.38	54.65	1,708.27
Mathematics (includes interventionists)	402.57	1,977.86	1,920.84	4,301.27
Montessori	357.00	29.00	10.00	396.00
Music	690.65	507.26	469.70	1,667.61
Physical Education	827.51	509.91	692.18	2,029.60
Science (biology, chemistry, physics, etc.)		1,618.52	1,802.88	3,421.40
Social Studies (economics, history, psychology, etc.)		1,641.45	1,892.58	3,534.03
Special Education	2,720.40	1,408.41	1,627.84	5,756.65
Theater	19.50	61.50	86.75	167.75
World Language	146.90	243.80	763.14	1,153.84
Other	85.95	55.45	19.50	160.90
Total	25,615.86	11,298.08	14,315.48	51,229.42

Table 1B includes the number of certified service positions in SC public school districts for 2021-22.

Table 1B (excluding vacant positions)	Number of Service Positions
Service Fields	
School Librarian	1,087.75
School Counselor	2,256.20
School Psychologist	550.75
Speech Language Pathologist	939.21
Other	103.00
Total	4,936.91

TOTAL Positions Reported for 2021-22 (1A+1B)	56,166.33
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Table 2A includes the number of certified teachers from 2020-21 who did not return to a teaching/service position in the same district for the 2021-22 school year.

Table 2A Departure Reasons	Total years of teaching experience in a public school (in any state) at the time of departure				
	≤1	2 – 5	6 – 10	>10	Total
COVID-related	10.0	25.0	26.0	53.0	114.0
Retirement	5.0	16.0	28.0	1,229.4	1,278.4
Involuntary dismissal (termination, contract non-renewal, position elimination, etc.)	83.5	67.0	44.0	67.0	261.5
Internal (school climate, administration, additional non-instructional duties, salary, etc.)	23.0	45.0	42.0	67.0	177.0
External (personal health, family issues, spouse relocation, commute time, etc.)	283.0	716.4	638.0	720.5	2,357.9
Promotion/advancement within education	14.0	40.0	51.0	83.5	188.5
International visiting teacher work visa expired	2.0	30.0	24.0	32.0	88.0
Career change/other employment	63.5	91.0	91.3	127.8	373.6
Other	7.0	4.0	5.0	18.5	34.5
Teaching elsewhere but no actual departure reason given by teacher	30.0	61.0	35.0	68.0	194.0
Reason not given by teacher or district did not collect/report this information	299.0	474.2	372.9	578.6	1,859.7*
Total	820.0	1,569.6	1,357.2	3,045.3	6,927.1*

*One district reported 135 departures, but did not collect information on reasons for leaving or years of experience. Therefore, the numbers (with asterisks) in the total column do not equal the corresponding row totals.

Table 2B includes the number of departures from Table 2A who are currently teaching in another SC public school district, charter school, or special school.

Table 2B	Number of Departures
Still teaching in SC	1,568.60

Table 3A includes the number of newly hired certified teachers in SC public school districts for 2021-22.

Table 3A Teaching Fields	Number of Newly Hired Teachers, by Grades Served			
	PK – 5	6 – 8	9 – 12	Total
Agriculture		4.00	16.00	20.00
Art	57.30	31.80	45.50	134.60
Business & Marketing (includes Computer Technology/Science)	2.50	44.00	116.25	162.75
Career & Technical Education (CTE work-based fields)		13.00	141.50	154.50
Dance	6.70	8.80	8.50	24.00
Driver Training			3.00	3.00
Early Childhood/Elementary (grades PK-2)	1,093.50			1,093.50
Early Childhood/Elementary (grades 3-5)	1,185.00			1,185.00
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)	28.46	31.16	26.37	85.99
English/Language Arts		289.65	249.50	539.15
Family & Consumer Science		1.00	7.00	8.00
Gifted & Talented	11.50	2.00	1.20	14.70
Health	4.00	6.75	8.00	18.75
Industrial Technology		2.00	3.00	5.00
Literacy/Reading (includes interventionists)	94.50	31.50	14.50	140.50
Mathematics (includes interventionists)	66.55	266.25	254.50	587.30
Montessori	36.00	3.00	0.00	39.00
Music	89.58	85.43	54.50	229.51
Physical Education	63.40	68.75	82.00	214.15
Science (biology, chemistry, physics, etc.)		230.50	235.75	466.25
Social Studies (economics, history, psychology, etc.)		226.25	217.05	443.30
Special Education	313.30	201.48	198.45	713.23
Theater	2.00	8.00	11.50	21.50
World Language	20.70	44.30	96.00	161.00
Other	8.45	3.50	5.50	17.45
Total	3,083.44	1,603.12	1,795.57	6,482.13

Table 3B includes the number of new hires in each service field in SC public school districts for 2021-22.

Table 3B Service Fields	Number of New Hires
School Librarian	73.75
School Counselor	252.90
School Psychologist	72.50
Speech Language Pathologist	126.85
Other	6.00
Total	532.00

TOTAL New Hires Reported for 2021-22 (3A+3B)	7,014.13
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Table 3C includes the preparation program or source for each new hire reported in Tables 3A and 3B.

Table 3C	Number of New Hires
Preparation Program or Source	
<u>Preparation Program</u> (new to profession)	
Teacher education program graduate – In state	1,569.00
Internship Certificate (eligible teacher candidate hired as teacher of record)	45.00
Teacher education program graduate – Out of state	447.50
Teacher education program graduation – Online	69.00
Career & Technical Education (CTE) Work-Based Certification Program	95.50
Program of Alternative Certification for Educators (PACE)	325.10
American Board (ABCTE)	23.00
Teach For America	15.00
Teachers of Tomorrow	145.00
District- or college/university-based alternative certification program (APEC, CarolinaCAP, GATE, TeachCharleston, etc.)	133.00
Montessori Initial Certification Program	5.00
Adjunct Certification Program	4.00
Advanced Fine Arts Certification Program	1.00
<u>Source</u> (not new to profession)	
Teacher who returned to teaching after a gap in service in SC of one year or more	191.23
Teacher who was hired after serving in your district as a substitute or in a non-teaching position	303.20
Teacher coming directly from another SC public school district, charter school, or special school	2,032.00
Teacher previously employed in a SC college/university or SC private school	88.00
Teacher from another state	1,088.05
International visiting teacher	305.40
Contracted service provider (<u>excluding</u> international teacher placement service)	95.65
Other program or source	33.50
Total	7,014.13

Table 3D includes the number of newly hired male and non-white teachers for 2021-22.

Table 3D	Number of New Hires
Male teachers	1,330.50
Non-white teachers	1,601.78

Table 4A includes the number of vacant teaching positions in SC public school districts for 2021-22.

Table 4A Teaching Fields	Number of Vacant Teaching Positions, By Grades Served			
	PK – 5	6 – 8	9 – 12	Total
Agriculture		0.00	1.00	1.00
Art	15.38	9.13	8.00	32.51
Business & Marketing (includes Computer Technology/Science)	0.00	2.00	7.00	9.00
Career & Technical Education (CTE work-based fields)		5.00	24.00	29.00
Dance	2.00	1.00	1.00	4.00
Driver Training			1.00	1.00
Early Childhood/Elementary (grades PK-2)	77.00			77.00
Early Childhood/Elementary (grades 3-5)	115.00			115.00
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)	10.38	5.13	10.50	26.01
English/Language Arts		37.00	34.00	71.00
Family & Consumer Science		1.00	2.00	3.00
Gifted & Talented	7.50	1.25	1.25	10.00
Health	0.13	0.13	1.00	1.26
Industrial Technology		0.00	1.00	1.00
Literacy/Reading (includes interventionists)	30.00	7.50	6.00	43.50
Mathematics (includes interventionists)	5.50	44.50	67.00	117.00
Montessori	3.00	0.00	0.00	3.00
Music	11.00	7.00	6.50	24.50
Physical Education	9.71	10.71	9.34	29.76
Science (biology, chemistry, physics, etc.)		42.00	43.00	85.00
Social Studies (economics, history, psychology, etc.)		28.00	21.00	49.00
Special Education	41.00	55.00	66.50	162.50
Theater	2.00	1.25	5.00	8.25
World Language	4.50	6.00	20.00	30.50
Other	0.00	2.00	2.00	4.00
Total	334.10	265.60	338.09	937.79

Table 4B includes the number of vacant service positions in SC public school districts for 2021-22.

Table 4B Service Fields	Number of Vacant Service Positions
School Librarian	18.50
School Counselor	20.00
School Psychologist	39.50
Speech Language Pathologist	46.00
Other	1.00
Total	125.00

TOTAL Vacant Positions Reported for 2021-22 (4A+4B)	1,062.79
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