

At First Glance: Teachers in Utah

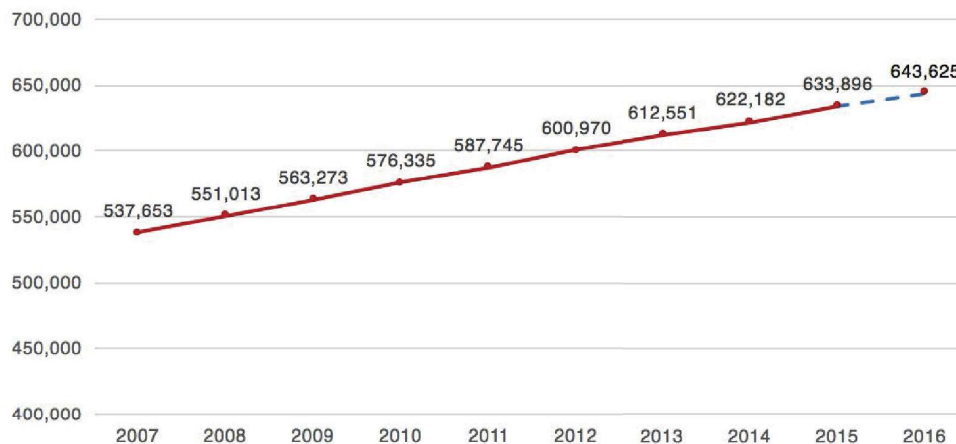


In collaboration with Office of the Utah State Board of Education, the Utah Education Policy Center is exploring the topic of the teaching labor force in Utah through multiple data and research briefs. This first brief gives a general overview of the topic of teacher shortages and compiles existing data into one document to help policymakers and the public understand the issue.

Teacher shortages are typically understood to be an insufficient supply of potential teachers to meet the demands of a state, district, or school. Teacher shortages are impacted by demand issues such as growing student enrollment, teacher retirement, and teacher turnover, and supply issues such as the number of newly-trained teachers entering the profession. The causes of teacher shortages are complex, nuanced, and are impacted by factors such as teachers' working conditions, salary, and the perception of the profession.

Utah K-12 Public School Enrollment

Utah has enjoyed significant population growth as well as a diversification in its population. Between 2010 and 2015, Utah was the 5th fastest growing state. Utah's school age population is expected to continue to increase over the next 20 years, which translates to ever-increasing demand for teachers.



10%
Increase in student enrollment between 2010-2015

Source: Superintendents Annual Reports (2016 is a projection)

Teacher Shortages in Utah

It is difficult to quantify the exact number of a teacher shortage in Utah: teacher shortage data in Utah are not centrally collected currently. Nationally, research suggests that, for the most part, a widespread supply of teachers is not a perennial problem for most districts and schools. Instead, specific districts and schools may discover there are not enough qualified teachers at all subject areas and grade levels.

School District Survey

In Fall 2015, the Utah School Boards Association surveyed all 41 school districts, asking questions related to their teaching workforce. They received responses from 31 districts, representing almost 80% of the total student population in Utah, and almost 90% of the students enrolled in district schools.

Of the 31 districts that responded:

48%

The percentage that reported starting the school year without a certified teacher in every classroom.

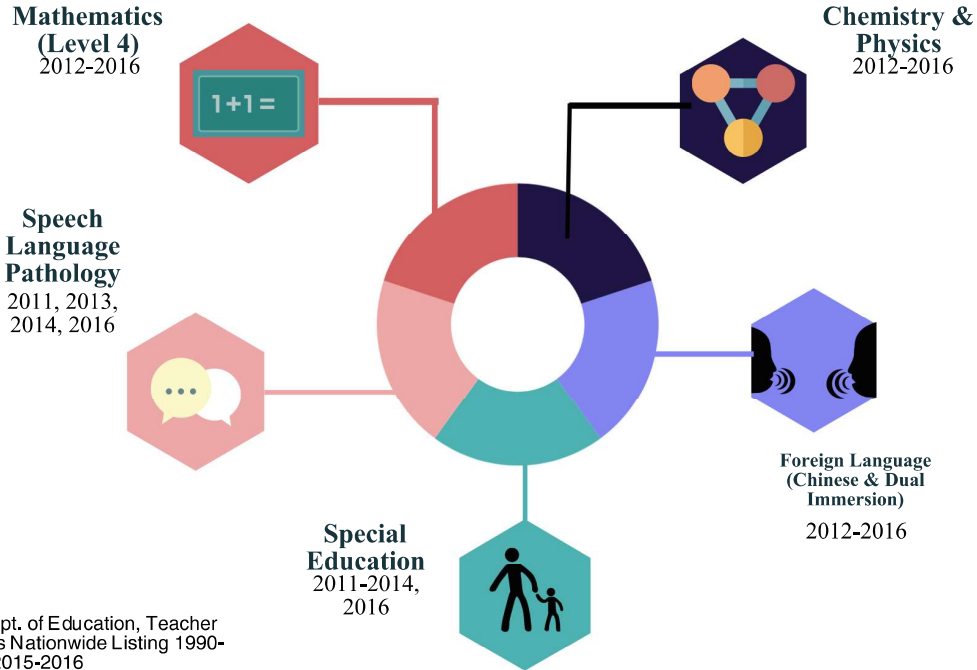
90%

The percentage that reported the pool of qualified applicants has been shrinking

Source: Utah School Boards Association Survey (2015)

Persistent Shortages in Utah: 2011-2016

Each year, the Utah State Board of Education reports to the U.S. Department of Education the subject areas in which the state is experiencing or expected to experience shortages. These findings are based on an annual survey of school districts and charter schools. While these data identify shortage areas, they do not clarify the magnitude of shortages.



Source: US Dept. of Education, Teacher Shortage Areas Nationwide Listing 1990-1991 through 2015-2016

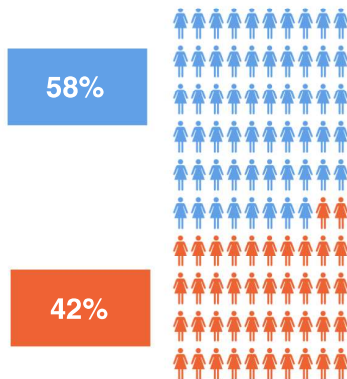
Teacher Demand

Teacher shortages are impacted by demand forces such as an increase in student enrollment, teacher retention, teacher retirement, or expanding specific programs or content areas such as early childhood education, dual language immersion, or advanced mathematics or science courses. According to national data, the two largest sources of teacher shortages are teacher turnover and teacher retirement.

Teacher Retention

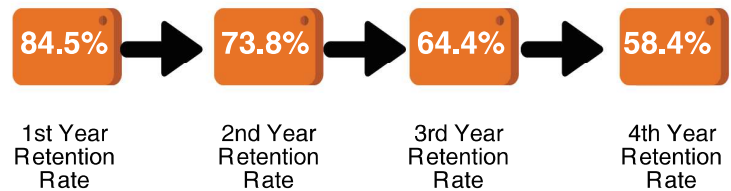
By the end of their 5th year of employment, almost 60% of teachers who began teaching in 2011 were still in the classroom. Previous cohorts of teachers show similar rates of retention. (2010 cohort: 60%, 2009 cohort: 61%, and 2008 cohort: 60%)

Percent Retained at End of 5th Year
(2015)



Source: Utah State Board of Education

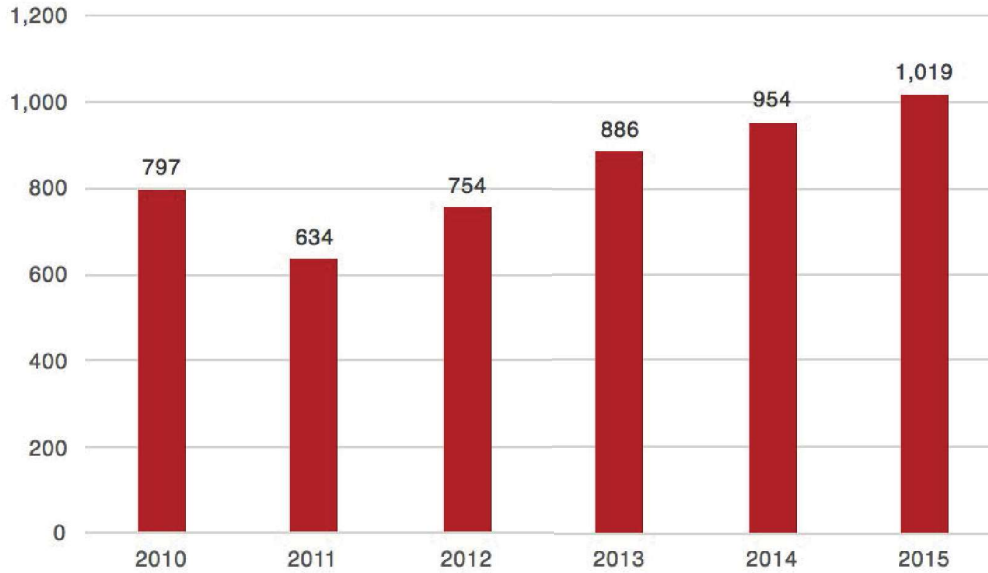
Cohort of Teachers - 2011



While we can quantify the number of teachers retained, we do not have data to indicate reasons why teachers are leaving the classroom. This is an area that needs further analysis.

Educator Retirements

Because Utah's education system decentralizes hiring (i.e., districts and charter schools handle all teacher hiring and retirement), reliable state-level data from one source that could better inform an issue such as teacher demand issues impacted by retirements are not available. State-level data related to teacher retirement is collected by different entities and largely self-reported by districts and charters. These data are not audited to verify accuracy.

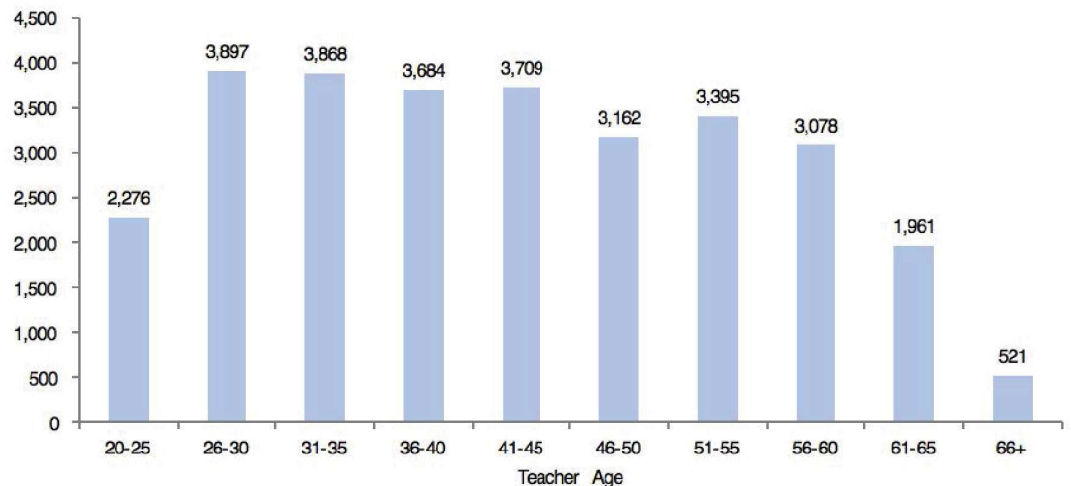


Since 2011, Utah Retirement Systems (URS) reports a steady increase in the number of educators retiring. This is a larger pool than just classroom teachers, and includes specialists, administrators, and others who hold a license.

Source: Utah Retirement Systems. Includes participants in URS, which does not include most charter schools.

Current Teacher Age Distribution

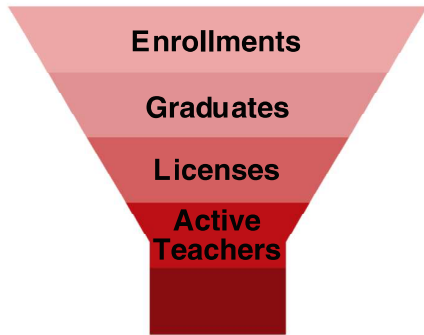
When examining the age distribution of our current teaching workforce to help us understand the potential pool of upcoming teacher retirements, it appears that the distribution is not overly weighted to the 46+ age group. Instead the state has many teachers in their earlier and middle years. This is an opportunity to further analyze the characteristics of teachers entering and leaving the workforce, and the potential for upcoming retirements.



Source: CACTUS Database 2014-15

Teacher Supply

Teacher shortages are also impacted by supply forces such as enrollments and graduates from teacher preparation programs or individuals completing alternative routes to licensing programs. Students coming from teacher preparation programs and individuals prepared through alternative routes affect the supply of new teachers.



Similar to many professional careers, teaching requires a college degree and a professional license. Utah's State Board of Education establishes licensing standards for teachers, and allows for licensure through traditional education degrees as well as alternative pathways to becoming a teacher.

When examining data sources, it is important to understand that there may be distinctions between those who enroll in different programs, graduate from those programs, become licensed teachers, and eventually teach in the classroom.

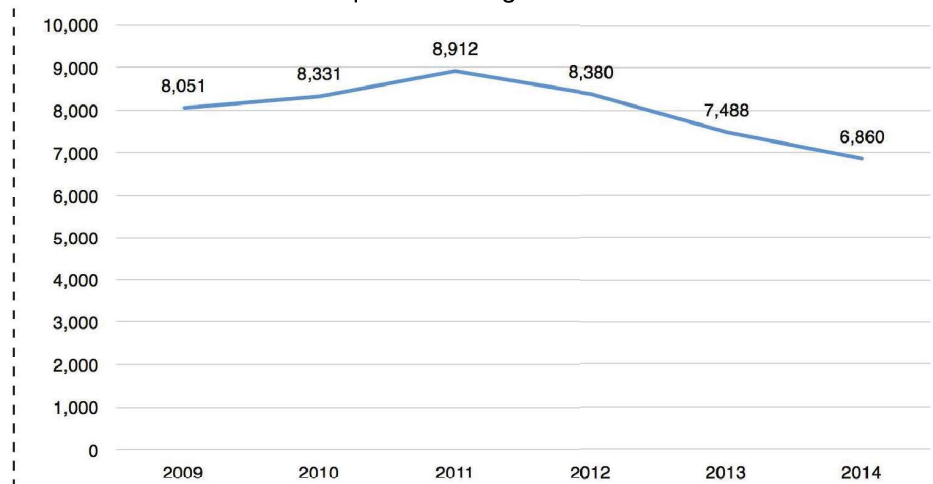
Loosing individuals at each stage can cumulatively affect teacher shortages.

Utah Teacher Preparation Programs at a Glance (2014)



Enrollments

Teacher Preparation Program Enrollments

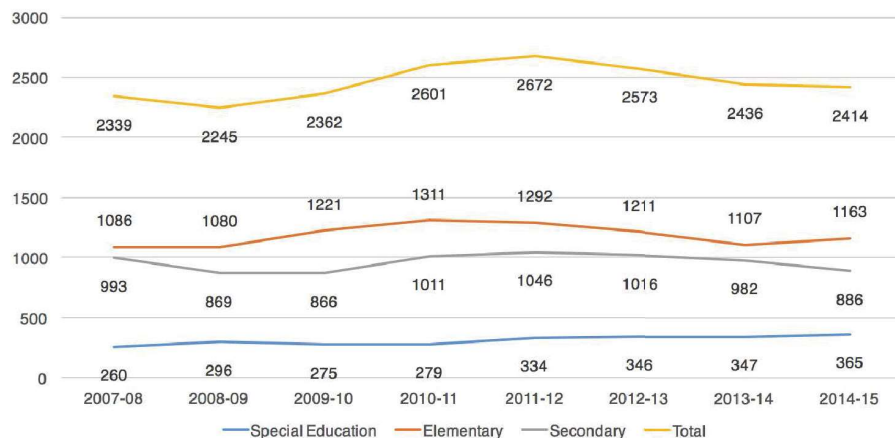


Source: US Dept. of Education: Title II Report. <https://title2.ed.gov/Public/Home.aspx>. Numbers recently updated by providers.

Graduates Recommended for Licensure

Graduates From Utah Teacher Preparation Programs Recommended For Licensure

The number of Graduates from Utah Teacher Preparation Programs who have been recommend for licensure has remained fairly steady over the last seven years. It has only been since 2012 that the total number of graduates have been declining slightly.

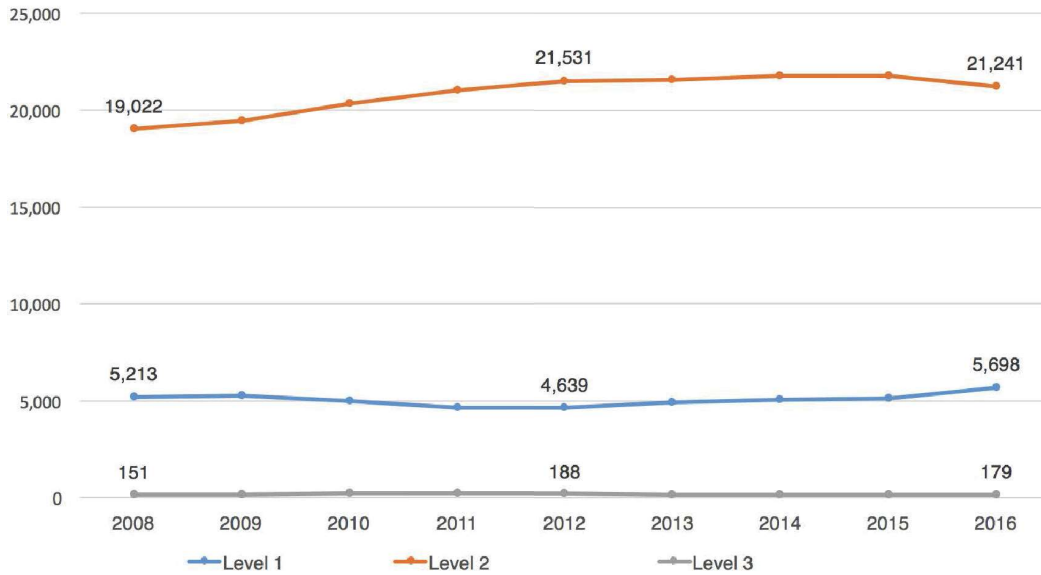


Source: Utah State Board of Education, 2008-2015

Licensing

Every graduate who is recommended for licensure does not necessarily gain a license and teach in the classroom. While the number of active teachers in Utah has been steadily increasing by 1% to 2% each year, the way in which teachers are becoming credentialed is changing.

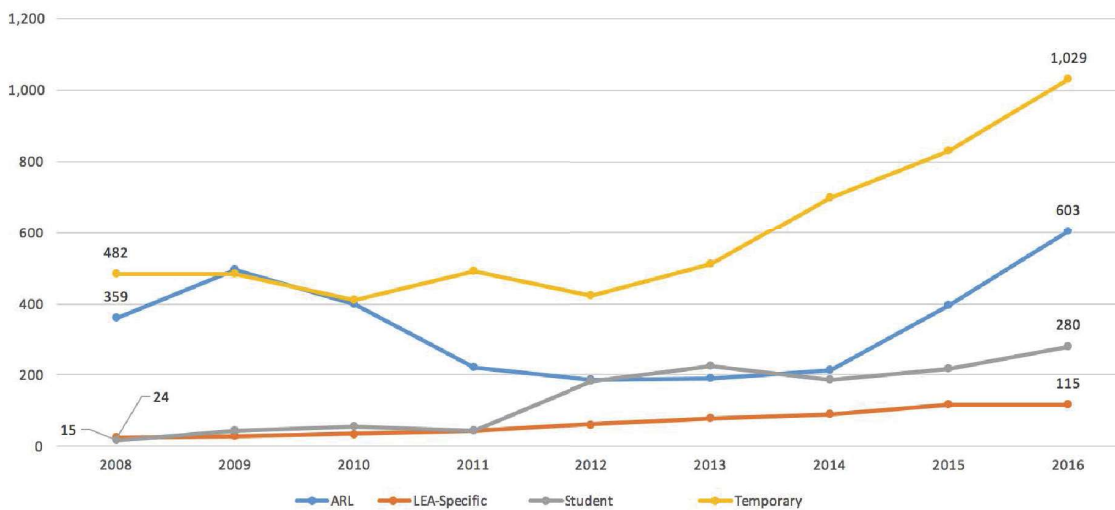
Level 1, 2, 3 Licenses



Source: Utah State Board of Education, Teacher Licensing, 2008-2016

Growth rates of traditional, state-level licenses (Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3) are remaining relatively stable, while the state's options for alternative routes to licensure or teaching with an alternative credential are increasing at much higher rates.

Alternative Credentials



Source: Utah State Board of Education, Teacher Licensing, 2008-2016

Active Teachers in Utah

Average Age



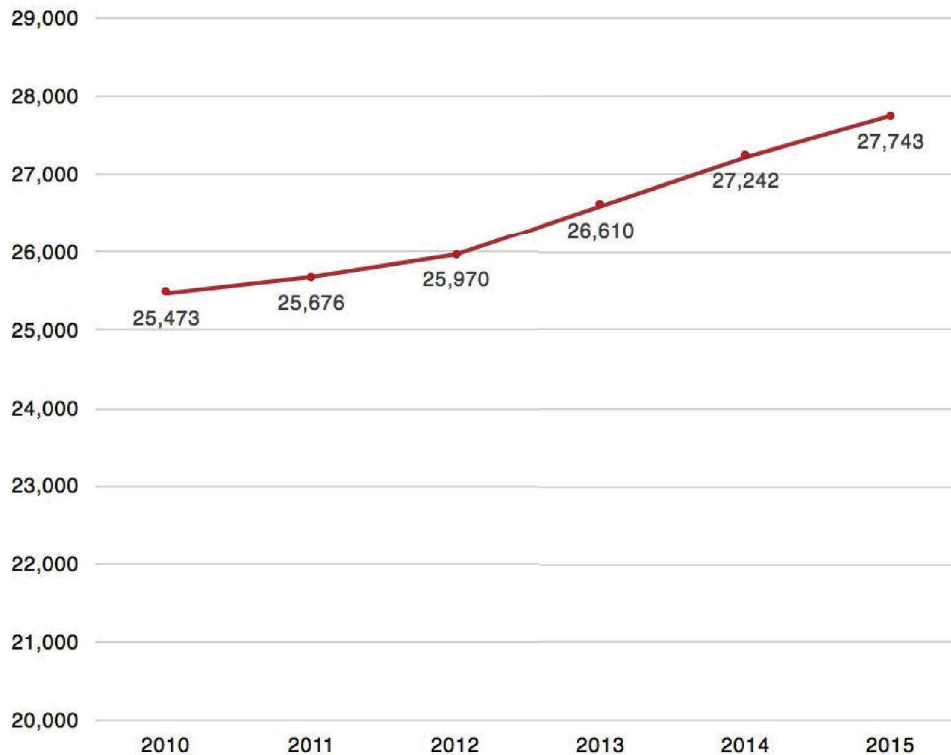
Teachers
27,743
Educator Specialists
4,249
Administrators
1,768



Teachers
76% Female
88% White

Sources: CACTUS Database, 2014-15

Classroom Teacher (FTE) Growth



9%
Increase in
classroom teachers
2010-2015

Sources: Superintendents Annual Report, 2010-15

The growth of classroom teachers (9%) increased slightly less than the student enrollment growth (10%) during the same time period.

Factors Influencing Teacher Shortages

Opportunities



Surrounding States

Teacher Pipeline & Recruitment



Teacher Compensation

Working Conditions

Class Size



Support & Professional Development

School Climate



Discoveries

Analyses will provide better understanding of teacher shortage magnitude, including which specific areas can be prioritized.

Need to look deeper at specific factors that influence shortages.

Exploration of demand factors will inform necessary areas to address.

Constraints on the collection, consistency, and centralization of data.



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