



Key Findings on the National Teacher Shortage

For more information and access to the publications on which these findings are based, contact AACTE Senior Director for Federal Relations and Policy, Michael Rose (mrose@aacte.org).

National Teacher Shortage Pre-COVID

- There were an estimated 100,000 classrooms in 2018 staffed by instructors who did not complete some type of educator preparation program (*Learning Policy Institute, Taking the Long View, 2018*).
- Despite increased need for PK-12 teachers—and growing enrollment in higher education—the number of students completing bachelor's degrees in education has been in decline over the last two decades (AACTE, *Colleges of Education: A National Portrait, 2018*).
- Teacher education graduates, nearly 80% of whom are white, do not reflect the demographics of the PK-12 student population, in which more than 50% of learners are students of color (AACTE, *Colleges of Education: A National Portrait, 2018*).
- Pay is by far the top reason cited by undergraduates for not pursuing teaching as a career; it was named by 72% of respondents in a large 2018 survey of prospective college students (*American College Testing, Encouraging More Students to Consider Teaching, 2018*).
- The number of students earning degrees in the high-demand specialties of mathematics, science, and foreign language education are in decline and the numbers earning degrees in special education and teaching English as a second language are insufficient to meet demand in many localities (AACTE, *Degree Trends in High-Demand Teaching Specialties, 2020*).
- The number of institutions with small education programs is on the rise; one-third of the 1,500 institutions that award bachelor's and master's degrees in education granted 30 or fewer such degrees in 2019 (AACTE, *Institutions Offering Degrees in Education, 2020*).

National Teacher Shortage Post-COVID

- In a recent survey, 27% of teachers said they were considering leaving their jobs, retiring early, or taking a leave of absence due to the pandemic. (*Horace Mann, The Hidden Impact of COVID-19 on Educators: Rising Health Concerns, Lower Risk Tolerance and Benefit Gaps, 2020*).
- An October 2020 survey of AACTE members revealed that nearly 60% have experienced a decline in undergraduate enrollment due to COVID, 83% have had budget cuts, and half have reduced staffing. AACTE predicts that, absent additional support, a sizable number of educator preparation programs will close, eliminating needed capacity to produce the profession-ready teachers the nation needs (*Educator Preparation Responds to COVID-19 and Racial Injustice, 2021*).