

TEACHER SHORTAGE

INTRODUCTION WHAT SHORTAGE?

The teacher shortage is a demand and supply problem. It is “the inability to staff teacher vacancies at current wages with individuals qualified to teach in the fields needed.” (*Carver-Thomas, D. & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). Teacher turnover: Why it matters and what we can do about it. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.*) In South Carolina the teacher shortage is a combination of an increase in the number of open teaching positions and a decrease in the supply of potential first-year teachers.

The increase in open teaching positions is based on several demand factors:

- increasing student enrollment,
- higher teacher turnover, and
- lower pupil-teacher ratios.

A fourth factor for 2018 was a one-time increase in teacher retirements.

As discussed above, the major supply issue is the decrease in college teacher preparation program graduates.

This fact sheet covers these demand and supply issues including highlighting the sources for filling teaching positions and the subject areas with the highest teacher vacancies. The primary sources of information are the “South Carolina Annual Educator Supply & Demand Report” documents published by the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention &

Factors Increasing the Demand for Teachers

- Increasing student enrollment
- Higher teacher turnover
- Lower pupil-teacher ratios
- 2018 spike in teacher retirements

Factor Decreasing the Supply of Teachers

- Drop in teacher education program graduates

Advancement (CERRA). For information on teacher salaries, see the “Teacher Salaries” fact sheet.

DEMAND FACTORS

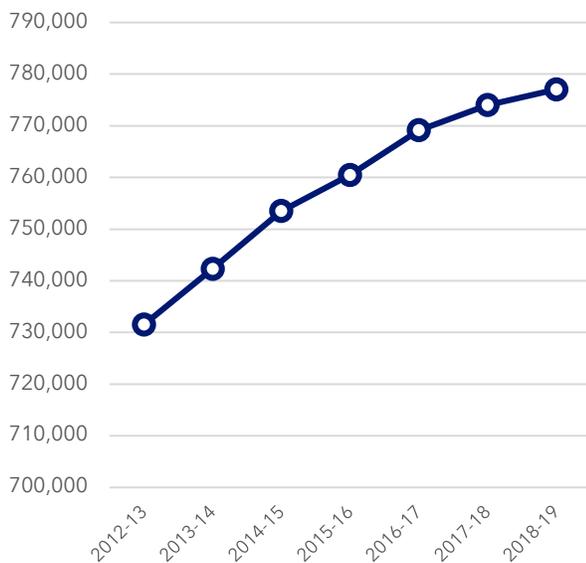
THE NEED FOR MORE TEACHERS

Student Enrollment Growth

Student enrollment in the state and in Greenville County Schools continues to grow resulting in the need for more teachers. Over the six-year period (2012-13 to 2018-19), total public-school enrollment in the state increased at an average annual rate of 1% with an average of 7,600 additional students per year. Greenville County Schools' enrollment had a one-time decrease in 2017-18 due to charter schools moving to the South Carolina Public Charter School District. Despite that drop, the school district added an average of 480 students per year over the six-year period. (State data includes charter school districts and special schools in the state.)

Student Enrollment, South Carolina Public Schools

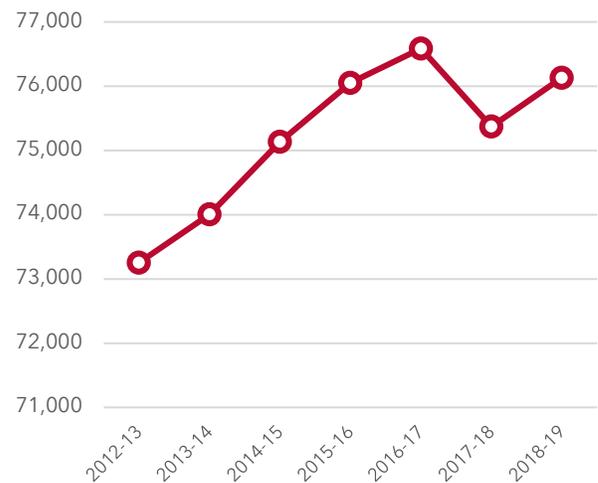
School Years 2012-13 through 2018-19



Note: Includes special schools and charter school districts. Source: "135-Day Active Headcount," South Carolina Department of Education. (<https://ed.sc.gov/data/other/student-counts/active-student-headcounts/>)

Student Enrollment, Greenville County Schools

School Years 2012-13 through 2018-19



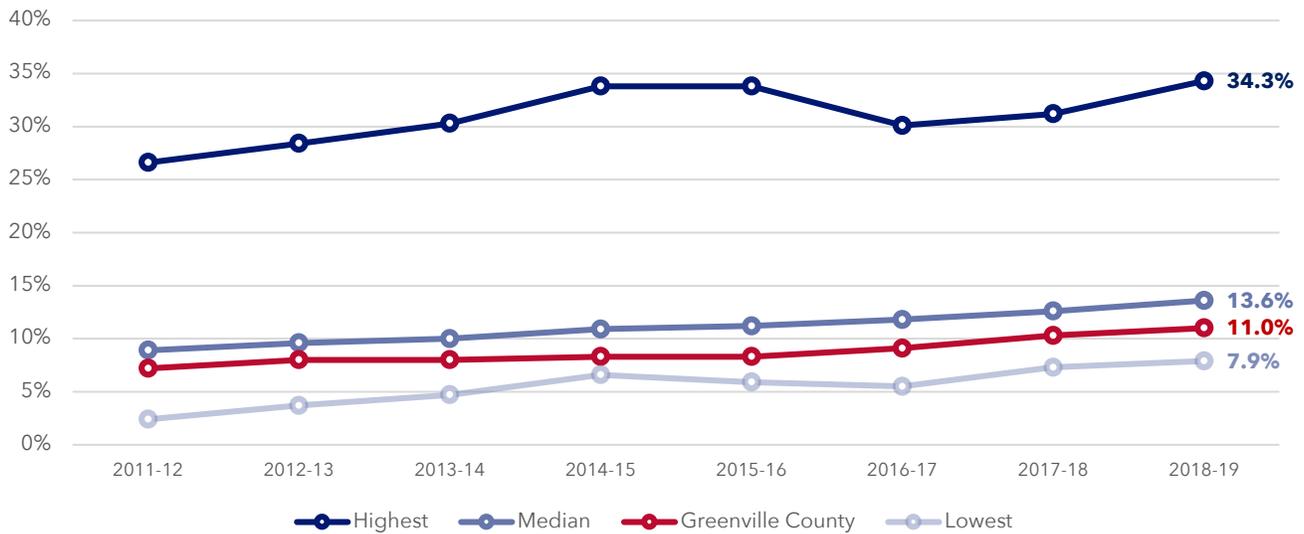
Source: "135-Day Active Headcount," South Carolina Department of Education. (<https://ed.sc.gov/data/other/student-counts/active-student-headcounts/>)

Higher Teacher Turnover

Statewide another factor affecting the teacher shortage is teacher turnover. As of 2018-19 there were nine school districts that consistently had teacher turnover rates (annual 3-year average rates) above 20%. The district with the highest rate saw 34% of its teachers turn over during the latest 3-year period. Of the 82 school districts in the state (includes the South Carolina Public Charter School District), over one-third had a rate above 15%, three times the number of districts five years earlier. At 11% Greenville County Schools' 3-year average turnover rate for 2018-19 was below the median district figure of 13.6% and was the 22nd lowest of the 82 districts. As the chart below demonstrates, the median teacher turnover rate increased from 9% in the 2011-12 school year to nearly 14% in 2018-19.

Teacher Turnover Rate, 3-Year Average, State School Districts

School Years 2011-12 through 2018-19



Source: SC Teacher Turnover Data, Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention & Advancement. (<https://www.cerra.org/research.html>), SC School Report Card.

Another statewide concern is the number of teachers who leave after their first year of teaching. Of the first-year teachers hired for the 2018-19 school year, 28% did not return to the same position the next year.

Of the teachers who left their positions during or at the end of 2018-19, 36% had five or fewer years of classroom experience in South Carolina and 13% had one year or less.

Of the first-year teachers hired for the 2018-19 school year, 28% did not return to the same position in 2019-20.

Using data from the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, & Advancement (CERRA), there are three major reasons that teachers in South Carolina leave their current teaching position: leave for a teaching position in another school district in the state; retirement; and family-related, personal

reasons (including staying home with children, caring for parents, spouse relocation and military assignment). From CERRA's survey of school districts, an additional large percentage of responses listed the reason as "unknown."

Among all school districts, 25% of teachers leaving their teaching position left to go to another South Carolina school district in 2019-20. An additional 9% remained in the education field but taught elsewhere or went to work in a non-teaching education position.

Retirement accounted for 18% of the teachers who left their teaching position after the 2018-19 school year. This is a marked drop from the previous year when the TERI program ended and 26% of departures were due to retirement. (See section on teacher retirements below.)

In Greenville County Schools in 2019, 18% of teachers leaving their teaching position left to teach in another school district in the state. Retirement accounted for 24% of departures. (*"South Carolina Annual Educator Supply & Demand Report," Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention & Advancement (CERRA), January 2019*).

Lowering of Pupil-Teacher Ratios

The Great Recession of 2007-09 led to an increase in school district pupil-teacher ratios as state funding was cut drastically. In recent years, pupil-teacher ratios were lowered in many districts to return them to pre-recession levels and, in some cases, to drop them below these levels. This has increased the demand for teachers.

2018 Spike in Teacher Retirements

A significant increase in the number of teachers retiring occurred in 2018. This was due, at least in part, to the end of the South Carolina Teacher and Employee Retirement Incentive (TERI).

Initiated in 2000 to keep experienced teachers in the classroom, the TERI program allowed teachers to work up to five years after they officially retired during which time their pension benefits were banked in a special account. They then received a lump sum payment of the accrued benefit amounts at the end of their program participation. The program ended June 30, 2018.

The number of teacher retirements peaked in South Carolina in 2018 at 1,937. This was an increase of 600 or 45% from the previous year. In 2019, the number of retirements stood at 1,190, about the same as in recent years other than 2017 and 2018.

In 2018 in Greenville County Schools, retirements were more than double the number in recent prior years. For 2019 the number of teacher retirements remained the same at about 130.

Open Positions and Vacancies

The number of open teaching positions in South Carolina for the 2019-20 school year, dropped from 2018-19 after increasing dramatically over the previous six years (see chart below). The number of total open positions (in full-time equivalents-FTEs) decreased from 8,221 in the previous year to 7,265—a reduction of 12%.

As stated above, in prior years the number of open teaching positions in South Carolina rapidly increased. The 7,265 open teaching positions in 2019-20 is still a 21% increase from 2012-13.

Of the open positions in 2019-20, 556 were not filled as of the fall of the school year. This is a 11% decrease from the previous year but is more than double the number in 2012-13.

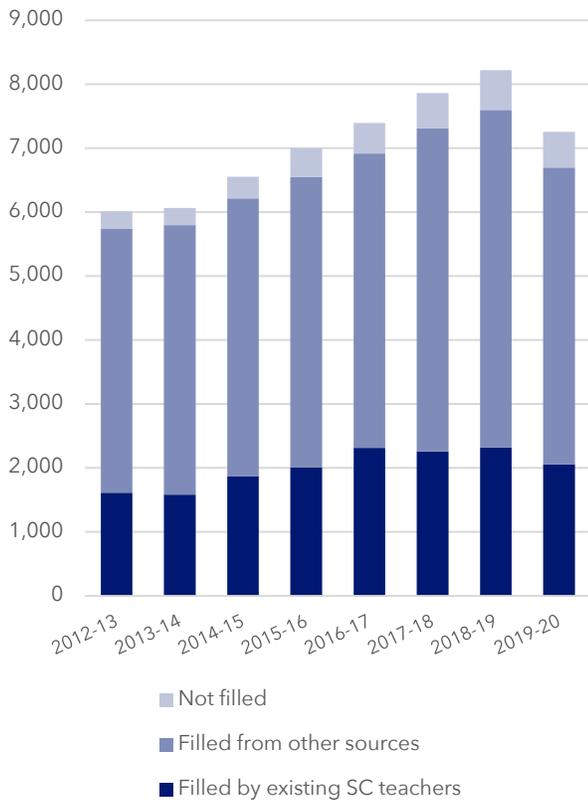
At the start of 2019-20 school year there were 53,080 teaching positions (FTEs) in public schools in the state. Of all teaching positions 14% had been open, and as of the fall semester 1% were still vacant.

For the 2019-20 school year, Greenville County Schools has 550 open teaching positions (FTEs)—a decrease of 11 positions from the previous year but a 38% increase from seven years earlier. Start-of-the-school-year vacant positions numbered 11—a decrease of 1 from the previous year and less than half the number (25) in 2014-15.

At the start of 2019-20, the school district had a total of 5,114 teacher positions (FTEs). Of this number 11% had been open positions. (*“South Carolina Annual Educator Supply & Demand Report,” Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention & Advancement (CERRA), December 2019*).

Open Teaching Positions, South Carolina Public Schools

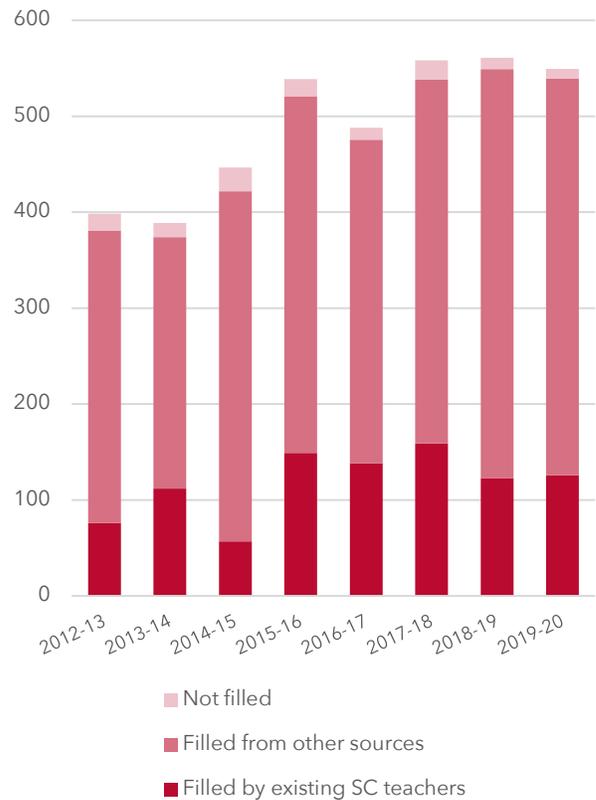
School Years 2012-13 through 2019-20



Source: Tables 3B & 5, South Carolina Annual Educator Supply & Demand Reports, Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention & Advancement (CERRA). (<https://www.cerra.org/research.html>)

Open Teaching Positions, Greenville County Schools

School Years 2012-13 through 2019-20



Source: Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention & Advancement (CERRA). (<https://www.cerra.org/research.html>)

SUPPLY FACTORS

DECREASING AVAILABILITY

Sources for Filling Open Positions

Of the 7,265 open teaching positions in state public schools in 2019-20, 92% were filled and 8% were vacant in the fall of the school year. Of the filled positions, 31% were filled by teachers moving from one school district to another. Just under one-

fourth (23%) were filled by students graduating from a teacher education program at a South Carolina public or independent college or university. In Greenville County Schools 23% moved from another district and 23% were in-state graduates.

Sources for Filling Open Teaching Positions (Excluding those filled by existing SC teachers)

School Year 2019-20

Source	South Carolina	Greenville County Schools
In-state teacher education program graduates	32.9%	29.8%
Teachers from other states	18.7%	26.9%
Alternative teacher certificate programs	13.7%	18.9%
Out-of-state teacher education program graduates	9.9%	11.1%
International visiting teacher	7.5%	3.4%
Inactive in-state teacher returning to teaching	6.2%	2.2%
Previous substitute or non-teacher in district	4.6%	3.4%
Teachers from a college or private K-12 school in state	3.6%	1.5%
Online teacher education program graduate	1.2%	2.9%
Private contractual service	1.2%	0%
Other	0.5%	0%

Source: Table 3B, "South Carolina Annual Educator Supply & Demand Report," Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention & Advancement (CERRA), December 2019. (<https://www.cerra.org/research.html>)

When positions filled by existing South Carolina teachers are excluded, 33% of the remaining positions in the state were filled with students just graduated from a public or independent South Carolina teacher education program. This is down from 45% five years earlier. The percentage for Greenville County Schools in 2019-20 was 30%, a large drop from 66% in 2014-15.

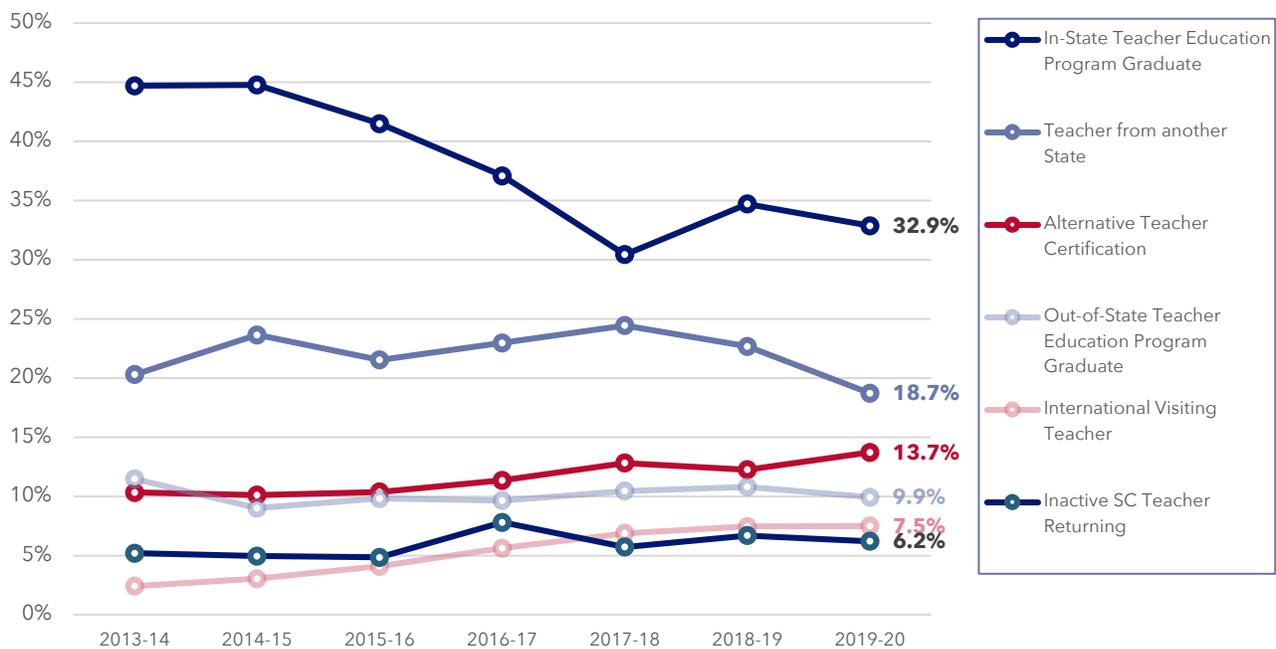
Again, with existing South Carolina teachers excluded, the second largest source for filling open teaching positions in South Carolina public schools was teachers from other states at 19%. For

Greenville County Schools, teachers from other states were also the second largest source for filling teacher positions at 27%. The district has been recruiting at or above this level from this source since 2015-16.

Alternative teacher certificate programs and out-of-state teacher education programs were also significant contributors of 2019-20 hired teachers for both Greenville County Schools and public schools in the state.

Top Sources for Filling Open Teaching Positions in SC Districts (Excluding those filled by existing SC Teachers)

School Years 2013-14 through 2019-20

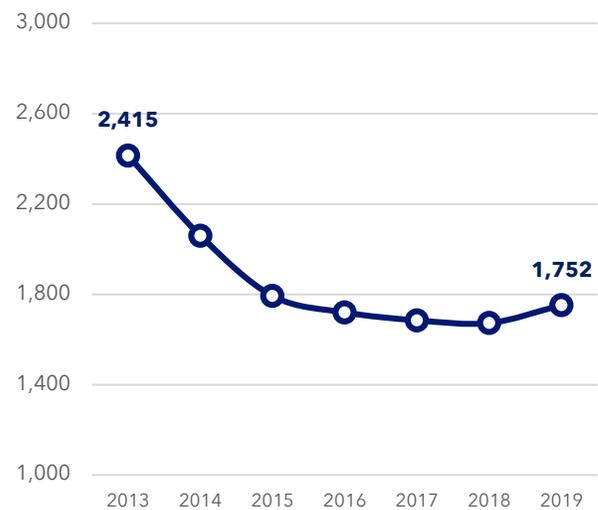


Source: Table 3B, South Carolina Annual Educator Supply & Demand Reports, Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention & Advancement (CERRA). (<https://www.cerra.org/research.html>)

Number of In-State Bachelor's Degree Graduates Eligible for Teacher Certification

As displayed in the graph above, the percentage of open positions filled by bachelor's degree graduates of in-state teacher education programs (at public and independent institutions) is in decline. As shown in the graph to the right, the actual number of in-state graduates with a bachelor's degree eligible for teacher certification declined significantly from 2,415 in 2013 to 1,673 in 2018. This number rebounded to 1,752 in 2019. Still, the overall change from 2013 to 2019 was a 27.5% decrease.

SC Students Graduating with a Bachelor's Degree Eligible for Teacher Certification 2013 through 2019

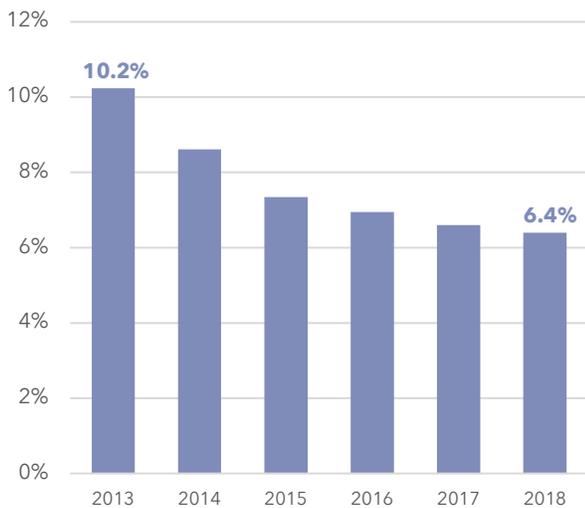


Source: Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention & Advancement (CERRA). (<https://www.cerra.org/research.html>)

As a percentage of the total number of bachelor's degrees awarded in the state, in-state teacher education program graduates accounted for more than 10% of the total in 2013. For the last three years of available data, this figure has been below 7% dropping to 6.4% in 2018.

SC Teacher Program Bachelor's Graduates as a Percentage of All In-State Bachelor's Degrees

2013 through 2018

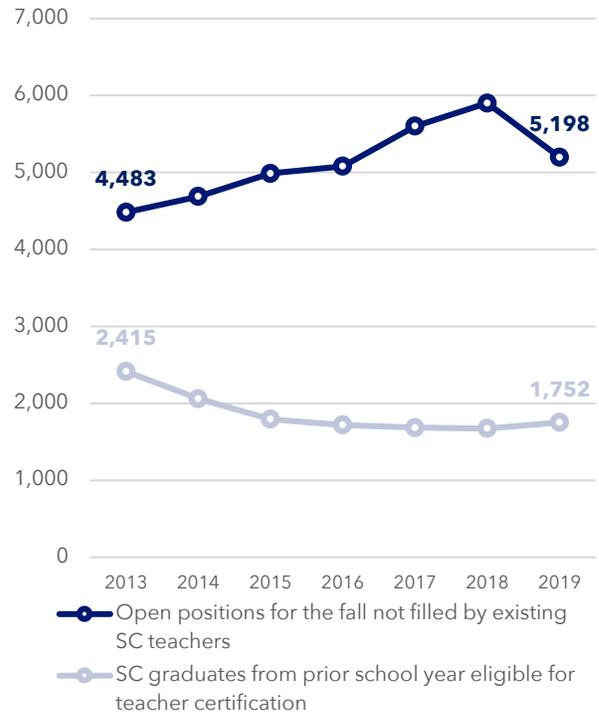


Sources: Center for Educator, Recruitment, Retention & Advancement (CERRA); SC Commission on Higher Education. (<http://www.che.sc.gov/DataPublications.aspx>)

For the first time during the last six years, the gap between open teaching positions not filled by existing South Carolina teachers and the number of in-state teacher program bachelor's degree graduates available to fill those positions shrunk. Still the gap is much worse than in 2013. Overall, from 2013 to 2019, the number of open teaching positions increased by 16% while the number of graduates decreased by 27.5%.

Open teaching positions in South Carolina not filled by existing South Carolina teachers vs. in-state teacher program bachelor's degree graduates

2013 through 2019



Source: Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention & Advancement (CERRA). (<https://www.cerra.org/research.html>)

THE SHORTAGE HARDEST TO FILL POSITIONS

Hardest to Fill Positions

Nationally the hardest to fill teaching positions are in special education, math and science, English as a second language and English. *(Carver-Thomas, D. & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). Teacher turnover: Why it matters and what we can do about it. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute)*

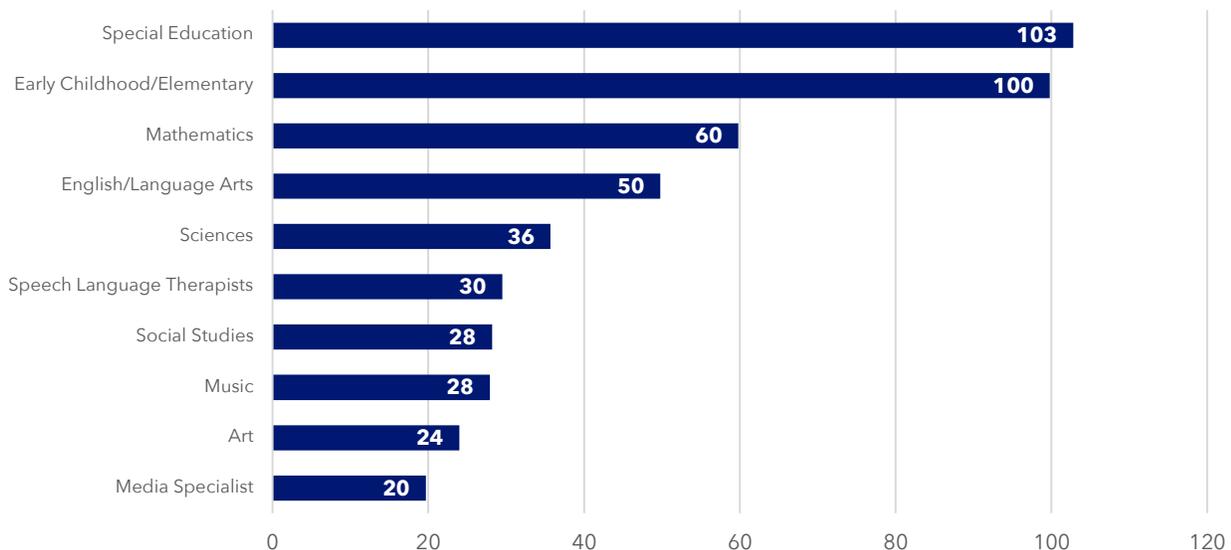
Over the three-year period 2017-18 to 2019-20, South Carolina public schools averaged 575 vacant positions at the start of each school year. The five subject areas with the most vacancies were special education, early childhood/elementary, math,

English/language arts and the sciences. On average, there were 103 special education teaching vacancies a year in South Carolina public schools, 100 in early childhood/elementary, 60 in math, 50 in English/language arts and 36 in the sciences.

Over the same three-year period, Greenville County Schools averaged 14 vacant teaching positions at the start of each school year. There were, on average, 3 vacant positions in special education and 2 in math and English per year. Six other subjects each averaged 1 vacancy per year. *(Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention & Advancement)*

Vacant Teaching Positions Per Year: Top Ten Subjects South Carolina Public Schools

Annual Average Number, School Years 2017-18 through 2019-20



Source: Table 5, South Carolina Annual Educator Supply & Demand Reports, Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention & Advancement (CERRA). (<https://www.cerra.org/research.html>)