

At a Glance

Teacher Recruitment and Retention

October 2007

Background

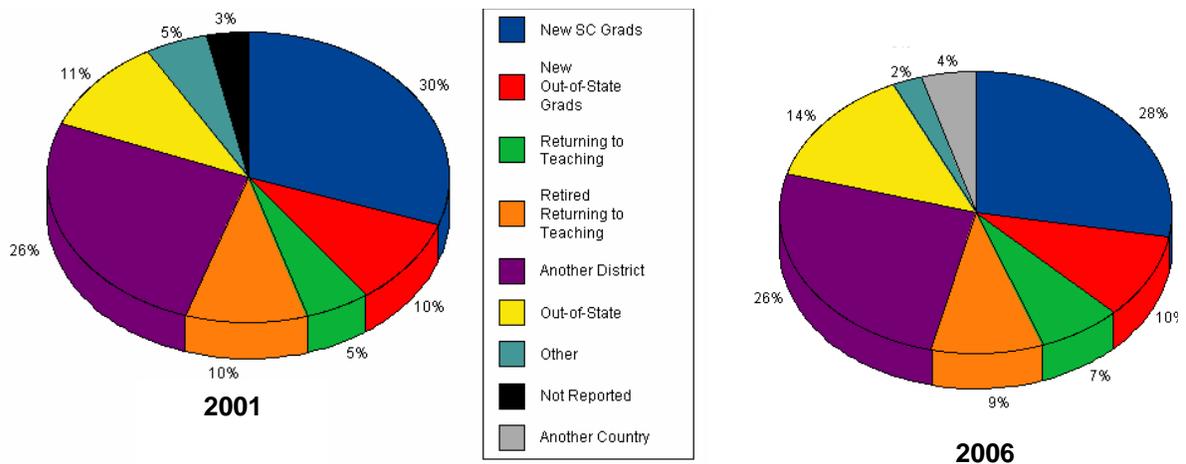
- Based on growing concern over the issue of teacher recruitment and retention, the SC General Assembly adopted Proviso 1A.66 in the 2007 FY budget, charging the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) with convening a task force to evaluate current teacher recruitment and retention policies, particularly those that impact schools that historically underachieve.
- In October 2007, the report of the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Task Force was presented to the EOC.
- The task force was composed of representatives from the South Carolina State Department of Education, the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA), institutions of higher learning, the Student Loan Corporation, the Commission on Higher Education, and classroom teachers.

“No Quick Fixes or Solutions”

The report, which stresses there are no “quick fixes or solutions” to the teacher recruitment and retention situation, summarizes data on new hires to the teaching profession and vacancies in 2006-07. The data show:

- Approximately 8,114 new teachers were hired in SC in 2006-07.
- Of the 48,000 classroom teacher positions on 2006-07, 680.3 vacancies (1.4 percent) were reported in the final supply and demand survey results in November 2007. This number represents a 24 percent increase in the number of vacancies from the 2005-06 school year.
- *Long-term data* show that over the last five years, state colleges and universities accounted for less than one-third of the new hires in the state each year.

Percentage of New Teacher Hires by Source, 2001 and 2006



Teacher Recruitment

Addressing the issue of recruitment, the task force examined programs and initiatives designed to recruit individuals into the profession or into specific districts or schools. A variety of programs exist; however, teacher shortages exist in most subject areas and according to the report, “almost all areas are identified as critical need areas based on teacher vacancies.”

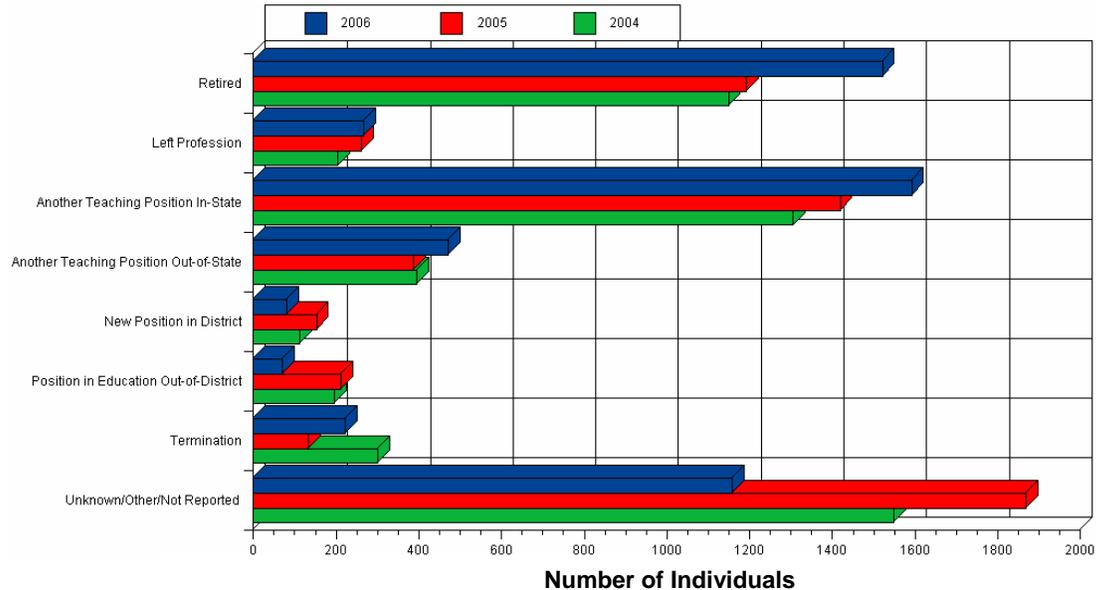
Specific programs and initiatives examined within the report include:

- ProTeam/Freshman Academy
- Teacher Cadet Program
- Teacher Loan Program
- Teaching Fellows Program
- Call Me Mister
- Minority Recruitment
- Program of Alternative Certification for Educators (PACE)
- American Board for the Certification of Teaching Excellence (ABCTE)
- Career Changers
- Troops to Teachers

Teacher Retention

- The task force identified retention as “the most important issue facing the profession at the first task force meeting.”
- National statistics indicate that up to 50 percent of new teachers leave the profession within the first five years of teaching. South Carolina’s rate of 33.5 percent leaving after five years is better than the national average but the task force members agreed the rate of attrition must be reduced.
- Data is collected by the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement on the reasons given by educators to the school district for leaving the profession. As shown in the graph below, the most recent three years of data show similar trends.

Reasons Given for Leaving District



Task Force Recommendations

- A data collection system similar to the one implemented in Virginia should be developed or purchased and adapted for South Carolina to collect more accurate and definitive data on teacher recruitment and retention for research and development of policy in the future.
- The South Carolina Induction and Mentoring Program: Implementation Guidelines should be fully funded in 2008-09, including stipends for mentors, to strengthen district leadership and provide for the effective mentoring of beginning teachers.
- Marketing of the teacher recruitment and retention programs that presently exist in South Carolina should be expanded through the responsible agency or sponsoring institution to increase the awareness and effectiveness of these programs, especially in the recruitment of males and African Americans.
- The presidents and provosts of the teacher preparation institutions, with the assistance of the Commission on Higher Education, should convene and collaborate on a comprehensive plan to recruit the best and brightest individuals into the teacher preparation programs and increase the number of graduates prepared to teach in South Carolina schools.
- A study on teacher compensation, to include examination of innovative ways to increase compensation for teachers beyond traditional salary, should be conducted by the State Budget and Control Office.

Perspectives from Task Force Members

“Mentoring is extremely important. We work so hard to get these young teachers. If they aren’t supported, we lose them.” -- *Terri Myers, Director of Personnel in Berkley County School District*

“We have to address the needs of both rural and urban districts, keeping in mind the unique needs of each.” -- *Kindra Simon, ESOL teacher from Central High School*

For additional information, contact the EOC at (803) 734-6148.

A complete copy of “Report from the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Task Force” can currently be found online at www.eoc.sc.gov, under Publications. Click on “Teachers.”