



Getting Down to Facts III 2026

Successes, Challenges, and Opportunities in California Educator Workforce

Webinar
September 17, 2026

Welcome

GDTF III Objective:

Provide the best possible evidence on where CA's education system is, where it can go, and how to get there so that CA can be a model of excellence for all of our students

Across the studies, researchers found that California faces three systemwide challenges:

- Accountability and Alignment
- Balance Between State Guidance and Local Control
- Capacity

Thank you!



STUART FOUNDATION



GIVE FORWARD
FOUNDATION

Individual Supporters

Jenny and Gerald Risk
Grace and Steven Voorhis
others



Tandem
Philanthropies

Youth Thriving
Through
Learning Fund

Today's Speakers



Nicole Arshan

Learning Policy Institute

California Principals:
Trends in Supply,
Preparation,
Distribution,
Retention, and
Turnover



Thomas Smith

*University of California, Davis
(Moderator)*

Who Stays, Who Leaves:
Five-Year Retention
Patterns by Teacher Entry
Pathways



Susan Patrick

Learning Policy Institute

Trends in California's
Teacher Workforce:
Understanding Supply,
Demand, and Shortages



Maya Kaul

University of Pennsylvania

Teacher Certification
Policies: Balancing
Quality and Access in
the Teaching
Profession

Today's Speakers



Nicole Arshan

Learning Policy Institute

California Principals:
Trends in Supply,
Preparation,
Distribution,
Retention, and
Turnover



Thomas Smith

*University of California, Davis
(Moderator)*

Who Stays, Who Leaves:
Five-Year Retention
Patterns by Teacher Entry
Pathways



Susan Patrick

Learning Policy Institute

Trends in California's
Teacher Workforce:
Understanding Supply,
Demand, and Shortages



Maya Kaul

University of Pennsylvania

Teacher Certification
Policies: Balancing
Quality and Access in
the Teaching
Profession

California Principals: Trends in Supply, Preparation, Distribution, Retention, and Turnover

Nicole Arshan

Learning Policy Institute



Research shows that principals affect student and teacher outcomes by:

- Supporting effective instruction
- Creating a positive climate that welcomes and connects staff, students, and families
- Retaining teachers, thereby strengthening school stability and expertise

California Principal Access to Professional Learning

- Revisions to administrator preparation, induction, and supports, including the 21CSLA
- Principals self-report greater preparation, high satisfaction with preparation, coaching, and professional learning
- Access to reform-enabled high-quality preparation and professional learning associated with greater teacher retention and student achievement

State of the Principal Workforce

28% are Aged 55+

Signaling impending retirements

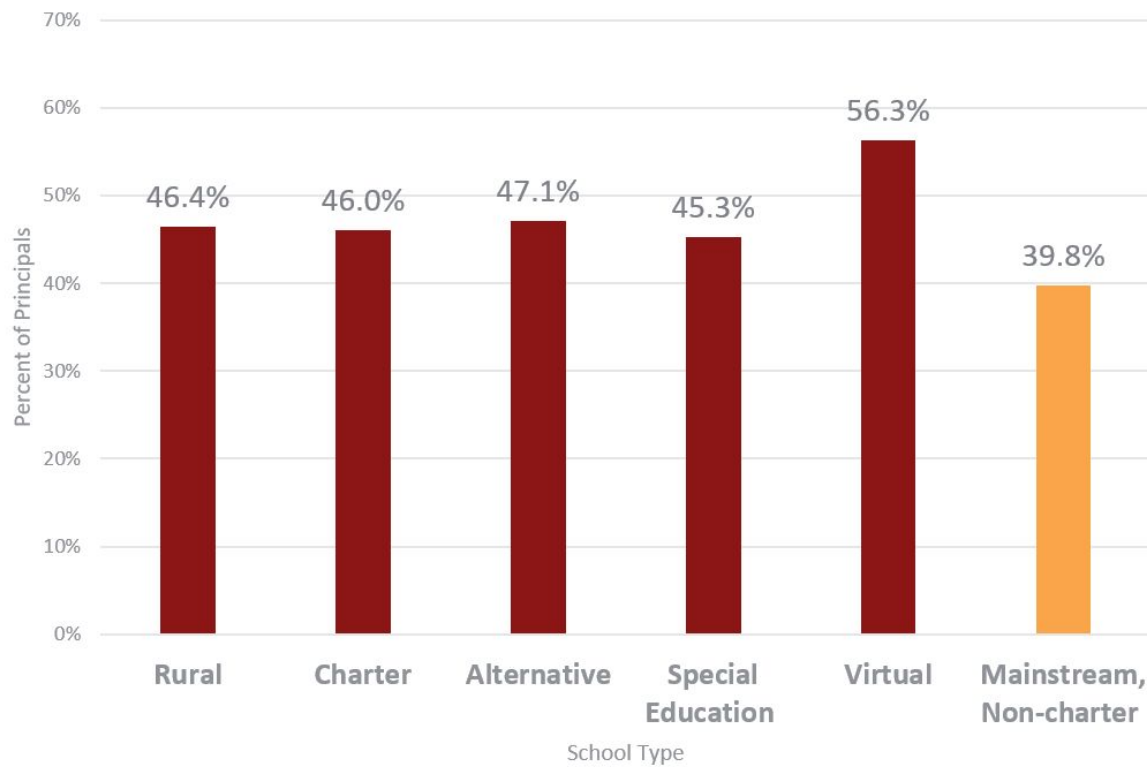
5.4% Entered Through Test-Only
Route

A small but growing proportion

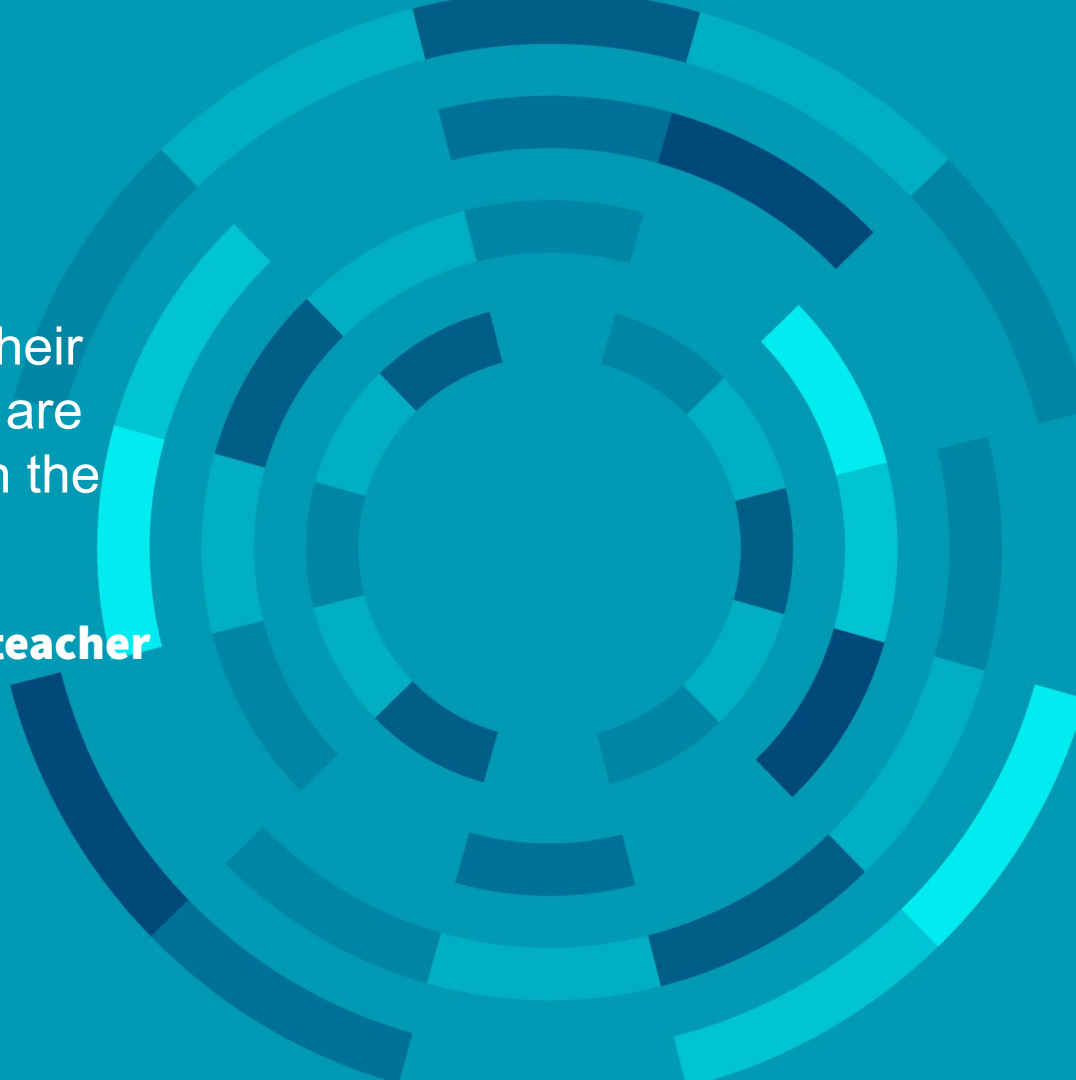
Stagnant Wages

Despite growing responsibilities and
higher average experience

Principals in Role for Three Years or Fewer



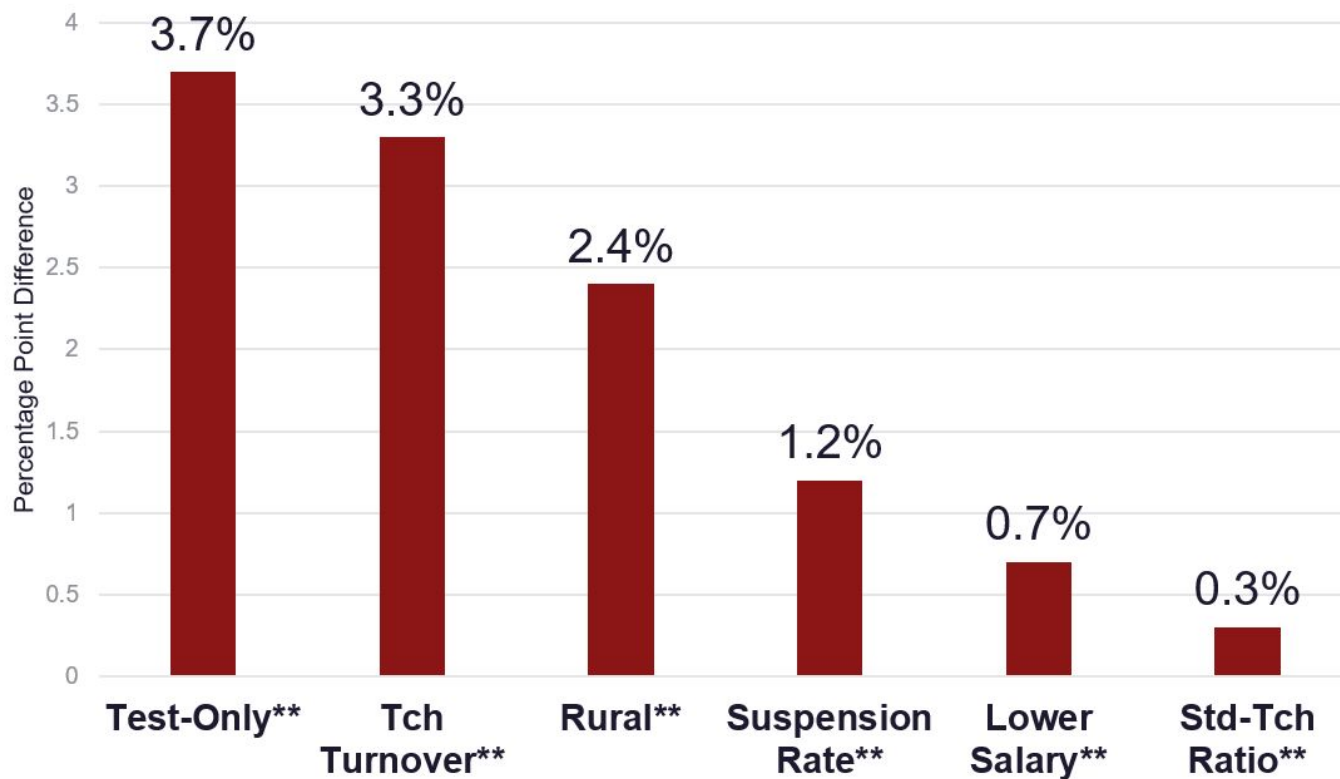
Source: LPI analysis of California Department of Education restricted-use data and California Commission on Teacher Credentialing restricted-use data from 2021–22 through 2024–25.



About 1 in 5 principals leaves their school each year—these rates are slightly higher in California than the national average.

Typically, when principals leave, teacher attrition increases and student achievement declines.

Differences in Predicted Principal Turnover



Source: LPI analysis of California Department of Education restricted-use data and California Commission on Teacher Credentialing restricted-use data from 2021–22 through 2024–25. ** p , .01

Implications for California



- Invest in principal preparation and professional learning
- Invest in sustainable working conditions
- Provide adequate compensation
- Ensure productive accountability systems

Today's Speakers



Nicole Arshan

Learning Policy Institute

California Principals:
Trends in Supply,
Preparation,
Distribution,
Retention, and
Turnover



Thomas Smith

*University of California, Davis
(Moderator)*

Who Stays, Who Leaves:
Five-Year Retention
Patterns by Teacher Entry
Pathways



Susan Patrick

Learning Policy Institute

Trends in California's
Teacher Workforce:
Understanding Supply,
Demand, and Shortages



Maya Kaul

University of Pennsylvania

Teacher Certification
Policies: Balancing
Quality and Access in
the Teaching
Profession

Who Stays, Who Leaves: Five-year Retention Patterns by Teacher Entry Pathways

Tom Smith and Yiwang Li
UC Davis



Why entry pathways matter for workforce stability

Preparation route is the mechanism through which teachers enter the workforce. It structures where they are placed, what supports they receive, and how long they remain.

1 Pipeline

The share of beginning teachers entering through **student teaching** fell from **63.5% to 39.4%** between 2014–15 and 2024–25, while the share entering on **emergency permits** rose from **10% to 30%**. Intern credentials held steady at 13–17%.

2 Placement

Emergency-permit, intern, and out-of-state entrants begin in schools with higher unduplicated pupil counts, higher chronic absenteeism, and fewer experienced colleagues. Placement is racially patterned within pathways.

3 Retention

Pathway differences in leaving California public K–12 teaching are large at year one, accumulate through year five, and persist after adjustment for teacher characteristics and school context.

Six research questions cover entry counts and shares, demographic composition, school context at first placement, one-year turnover, five-year competing risks of moving and leaving, and credential progression at years three and five.

Data and analytic approach

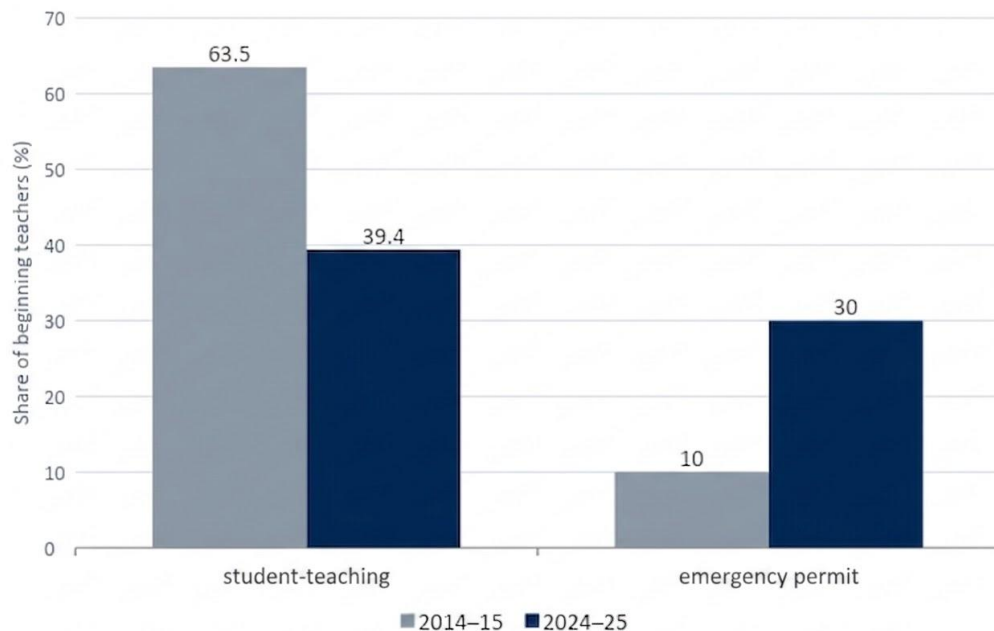
Data

- Teacher-level longitudinal records linking CDE employment files (2012–13 to 2024–25) and CTC credential files, provided by the Learning Policy Institute
- First-time teachers of record in California traditional public and charter schools, 2014–15 through 2024–25
- Four entry pathways: student teaching, intern credential, emergency permit, out-of-state preliminary
- Linked school-level context by year: UPC quartile, chronic absenteeism, suspension rate, locale, level, charter status

Interpretive caution

Estimates are descriptive associations, not causal effects of preparation routes. Teachers select into pathways on characteristics administrative data does not observe — career intentions, geographic flexibility, financial resources, prior work experience, and outside labor market options. Adjustment for demographics, credential area, and school context does not address that selection.

Reliance on emergency permits has tripled in a decade



10,105 → 5,703

Beginning teachers entering on a student-teaching preliminary credential, 2014-15 to 2024-25 (6,823 in 2019-20)

13-17% stable

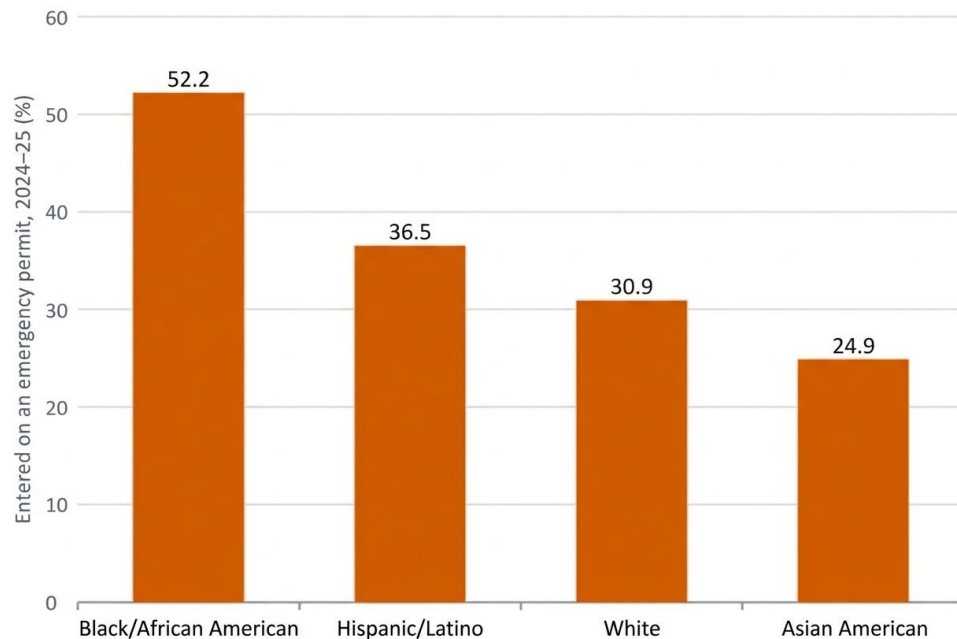
Intern credential share across the decade, roughly 1,900 to 2,500 entrants per year; university intern share down 3 points in five years

50.5% / 50.3%

Emergency-permit share among new **education specialist hires**, and among beginning teachers in **rural schools**, 2024-25

Source: Smith and Li (2026), *Getting Down to Facts III*. Out-of-state preliminary entrants were 11.9% of the 2024-25 cohort, ranging from 10.5% to 14.4% over the decade.

Entry pathways are racially patterned



Other pathways, 2024–25

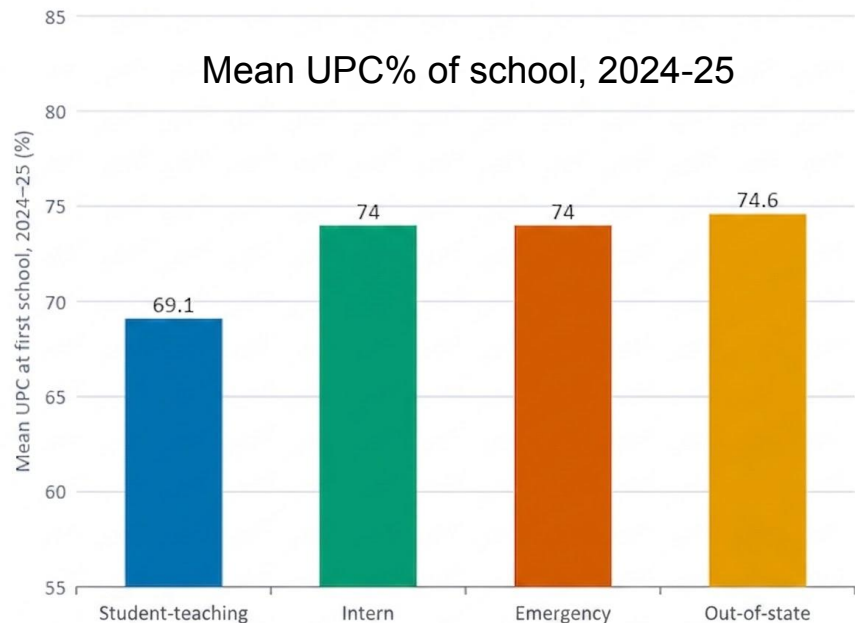
- Intern credential: 17.1% of Black/African American and 16.0% of Hispanic/Latino entrants, against 14.5% White and 10.4% Asian American
- Out-of-state preliminary: 24.1% Asian American, 15.3% White, 11.3% Black/African American, 5.2% Hispanic/Latino

Composition is changing

Hispanic/Latino beginning teachers rose from **25% to 42%** of entrants over the decade while White entrants fell from 60% to 40%. Diversification of the pipeline is therefore occurring disproportionately through the emergency and intern routes.

Source: Smith and Li (2026), Figure 5. Prior work attributes these differences to unpaid clinical requirements and licensure examination barriers (Carver-Thomas, 2018; Cowan et al., 2020).

Pathways sort teachers into different school contexts



Highest-need quartile placement

Intern 31%, emergency permit 27%, student teaching 23%, out-of-state 18% of entrants begin in schools at or above the 75th percentile of UPC.

Placement is patterned by race within pathway

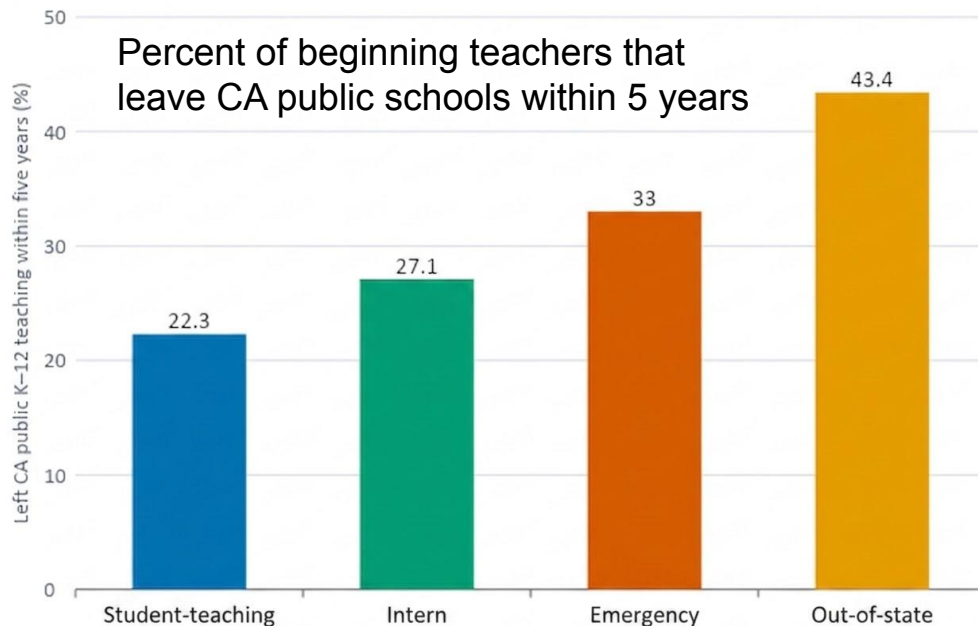
Among preliminary-credential holders, mean first-school UPC is 75.6% for Black/African American and 76.8% for Hispanic/Latino entrants, against 61.8% White and 64.4% Asian American.

Organizational conditions differ

Emergency and intern entrants begin in schools with higher chronic absenteeism (about 5 points above preliminary holders post-COVID), higher suspension rates, and fewer colleagues with eight or more years of experience (56% vs 62%).

Source: Smith and Li (2026), Figures 18–25. UPC counts English learners, students eligible for free or reduced-price meals, and foster youth, unduplicated.

Five-year attrition differs sharply across entry routes



Year one, 2023–24 cohort

- Leaving: emergency permit 19.9%, out-of-state 15.6%, student teaching 8.5%, intern 8.2%
- Moving: student teaching 18.9% and intern 19.1%, against 15.5% for both emergency permit and out-of-state entrants
- The pathway contrast is concentrated in attrition, not mobility

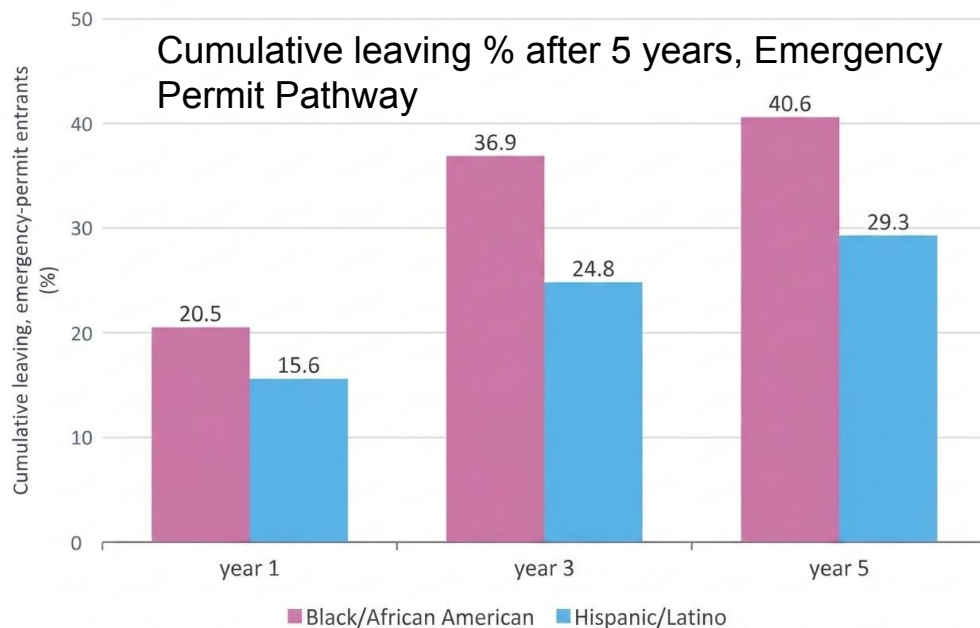
Turnover overall

Five-year cumulative turnover, combining moves and exits, runs from 66.2% for student-teaching entrants to 77.1% for emergency-permit entrants.

Most early-career churn is movement between schools rather than exit.

Source: Smith and Li (2026), Figure 29. Five-year rates are for the 2019–20 entry cohort and are affected by pandemic-era conditions; one-year rates use the more recent 2023–24 cohort.

Racial gaps in attrition persist within the same pathway



All beginning teachers

- One-year leaving: Black/African American 18.7%, White 12.8%, Asian American 12.5%, Hispanic/Latino 11.7%
- **Five-year leaving: 40.3% for Black/African American entrants against 24.3% for Hispanic/Latino entrants**
- First-year moving rates are similar across groups, 16.5% to 17.8%

Composition is not the whole story

The Black–Hispanic gap holds within every pathway except student teaching, where it narrows. Because it survives conditioning on entry route, it is more consistent with differences in assignment, mentoring access, induction quality, and leadership climate than with preparation.

Source: Smith and Li (2026), Figures 30–32. Cumulative rates sum annual moving and leaving hazards for the 2019–20 entry cohort.

Most emergency-permit entrants are still teaching five years later

Emergency-permit entrants at year five

■ Teaching on a clear credential	37%
■ Teaching on a preliminary credential	19%
■ Teaching on an intern credential	3%
■ Teaching on a permit or no credential	3%
■ Left California public K–12 teaching	38%

Emergency permits function as a partial on-ramp: 62% of entrants are still teaching in California five years later, and over a third hold a clear credential. Progression is slower and less certain than through intern or student-teaching routes, where 53% and 72% respectively hold a clear credential by year five.

Source: Smith and Li (2026), Table 3. Trajectory percentages average cohorts 2019–20 and 2020–21 and may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

Pipeline, placement, and support are one problem

1 Finance clinical preparation

Sustain investment in the Teacher Residency Grant Program, Golden State Teacher Grants, and the forthcoming Student Teaching Stipend so that paid clinical practice competes with immediate-salary routes.

2 Build on-ramps from emergency permits

Align CTC emergency permit issuance with financial support for enrollment in intern or residency programs, and pair teachers on emergency permits with induction, mentoring, and other supports to help them succeed.

3 Improve credential portability

Streamline clearance timelines and coordination among CTC licensure, induction providers, and district HR for out-of-state prepared teachers, who show the highest five-year attrition at 43.4%.

4 Target retention for teachers of color

Monitor racially patterned placement into the highest-need schools, expand culturally responsive mentoring and induction, and strengthen school leadership capacity.

Thomas M. Smith · tomsmith@ucdavis.edu | Yiwang Li · School of Education, University of California, Davis

Today's Speakers



Nicole Arshan

Learning Policy Institute

California Principals:
Trends in Supply,
Preparation,
Distribution,
Retention, and
Turnover



Thomas Smith

*University of California, Davis
(Moderator)*

Who Stays, Who Leaves:
Five-Year Retention
Patterns by Teacher Entry
Pathways



Susan Patrick

Learning Policy Institute

Trends in California's
Teacher Workforce:
Understanding Supply,
Demand, and Shortages



Maya Kaul

University of Pennsylvania

Teacher Certification
Policies: Balancing
Quality and Access in
the Teaching
Profession

Trends in California's Teacher Workforce: Understanding Supply, Demand, and Shortages

Susan K. Patrick

Learning Policy Institute



Trends in California's Teacher Workforce



- Scope and distribution of teacher shortages
- Teacher supply: Entry into the profession
- Teacher demand: Staffing Needs and Turnover
- Patterns of Teacher Turnover
- Barriers and Policies for Strengthening California's Teacher Workforce
- Policy Opportunities

Trends in California's Teacher Workforce

- **Scope and distribution of teacher shortages**
- **Teacher supply: Entry into the profession**
- **Teacher demand: Staffing Needs and Turnover**
- **Patterns of Teacher Turnover**
- **Barriers and Policies for Strengthening California's Teacher Workforce**
- **Policy Opportunities**

Analyses conducted using statewide data provided by the California Department of Education and California Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Scope and distribution of teacher shortages

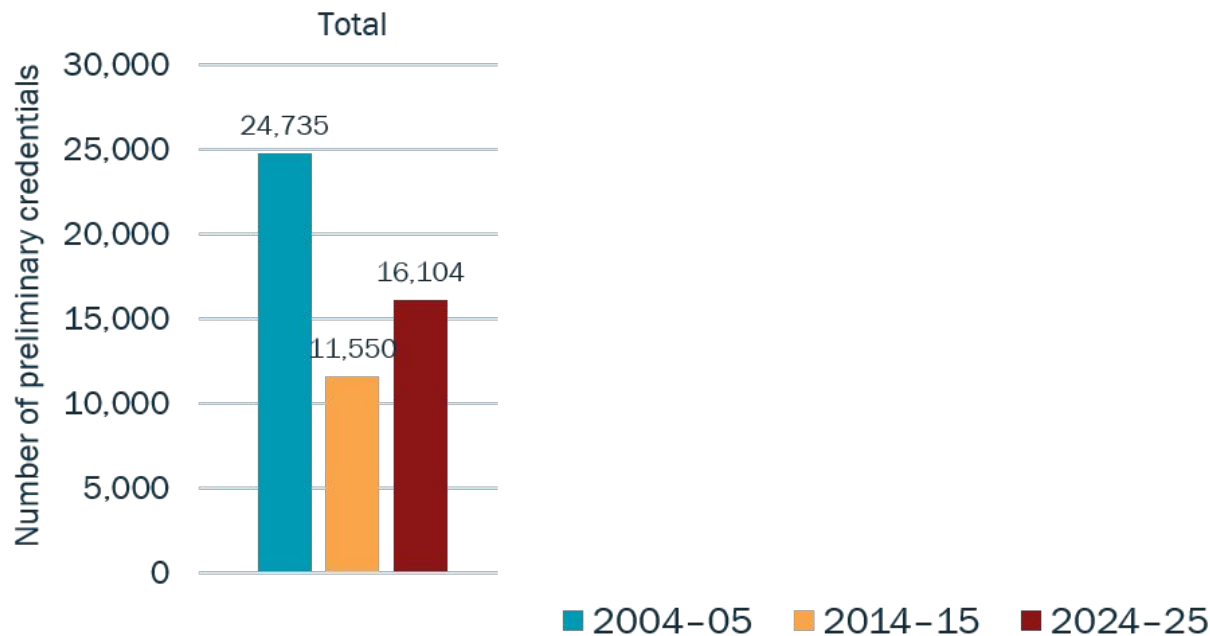
Teacher shortage refers to the lack of fully credentialed teachers available to meet the demand for teaching positions.

Large increase in the use of emergency permits between 2012-13 and 2024-25

Shortages vary across teaching assignments and are highest in CTE, STEM, and special education

Shortages disproportionately affect rural schools and schools serving more students with higher needs

Supply of California-prepared teachers dropped 60% between 2003-04 and 2013-14 but is beginning to rebound.



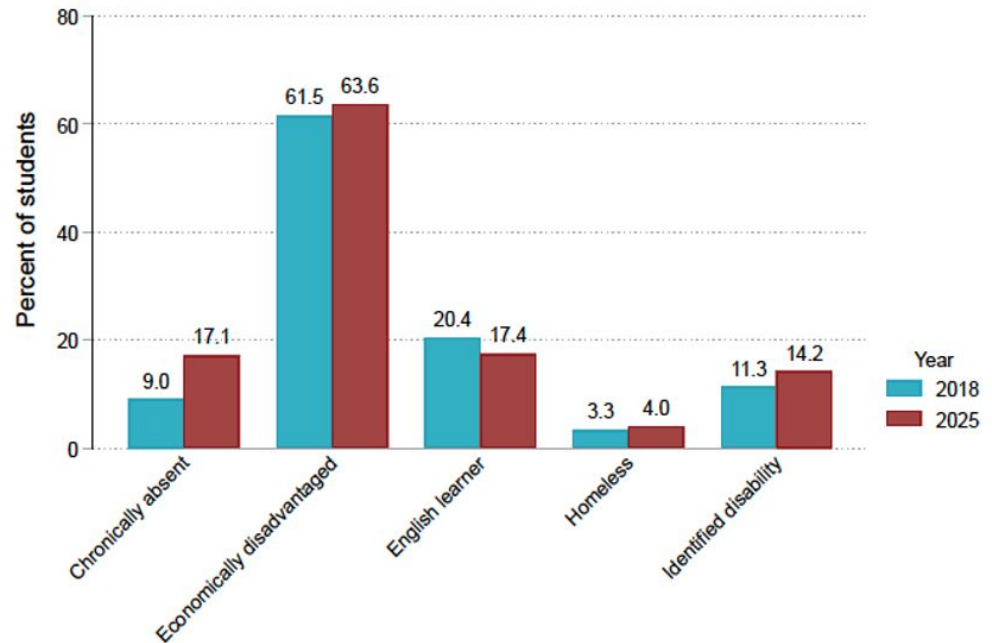
California's teaching pipeline has shifted over time, likely reflecting California's investments in teacher preparation.

- **Racial/ethnic composition:** Increasing shares of Latiné candidates
34% in 2018–19 > 43% in 2024–25
- **Preparation pathway:** Increasing shares of residency candidates
2% in 2018–19 > 10% in 2024–25
- **Program level:** Increasing shares of undergraduate candidates
6% in 2018–19 > 9% in 2024–25
- **Program modality:** Increasing shares of candidates in online-only programs
10% in 2018–19 > 34% in 2024–25

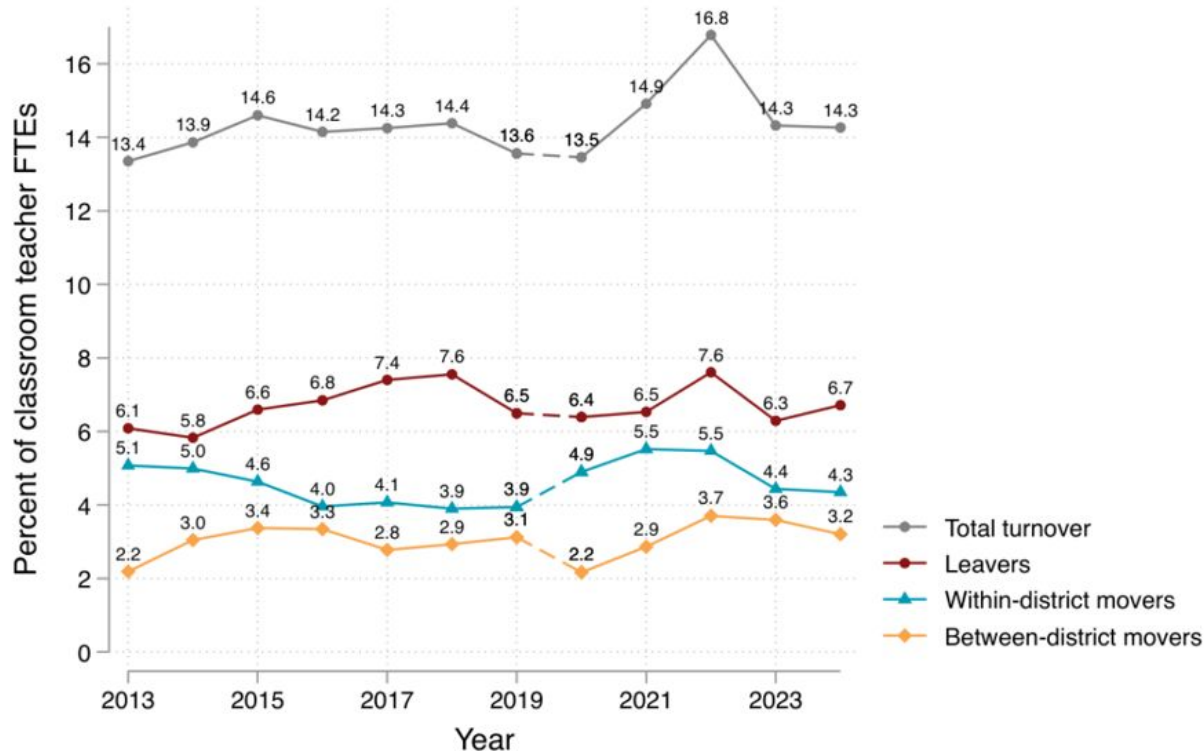
Changing student needs affect the demand for teachers.

Public school enrollment declined while the number of teachers increased. Why?

- Lowered student-teacher ratio statewide
- Expanded staffing needs for Transitional Kindergarten
- Increased student needs



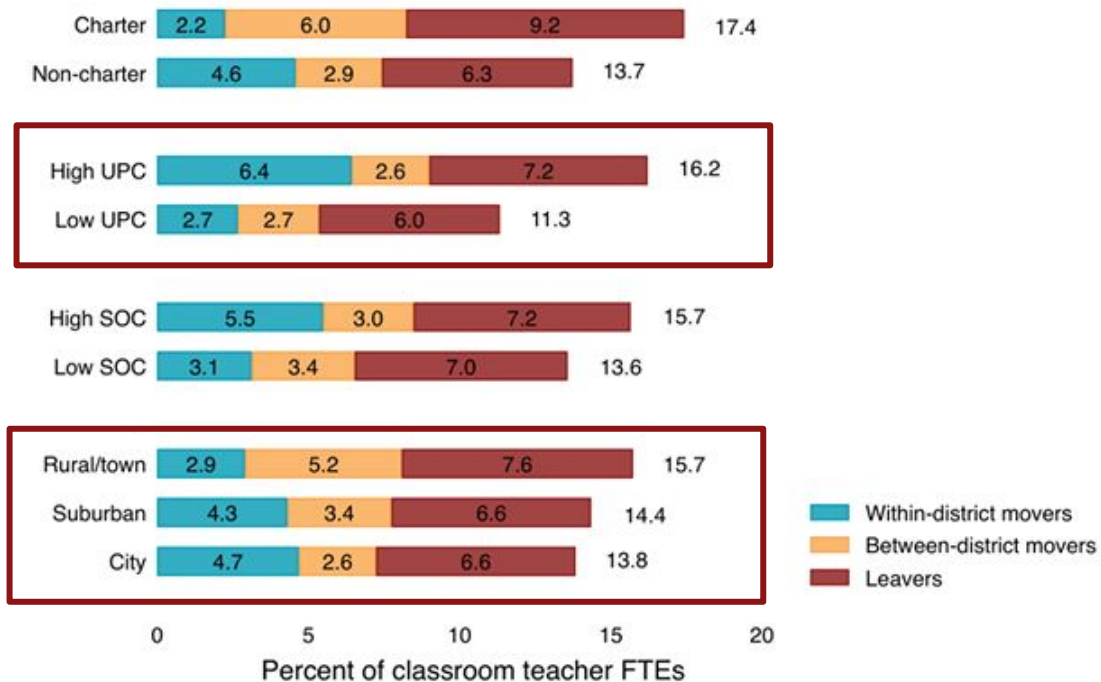
Teacher turnover spiked during the pandemic, and attrition continues to be the primary driver of shortages



Teacher turnover rates are highest among certain types of teachers and schools, driving inequities.

Turnover highest among:

- Black and Native American teachers
- Special education teachers
- Teachers entering on emergency permit



Policy Opportunities

Expand and strengthen teacher pipeline

- Continue to broaden access through stable ongoing funding
- Incentivize undergraduate teacher preparation
- Support strong implementation of recent licensure testing reforms

Support teacher retention

- Enable and incentivize competitive salaries
- Strengthen special education workforce
- Support school principal preparation and retention

Strengthen data collection

- Implement statewide staffing surveys
- Study the impact of online teacher preparation
- Strengthen data system to better evaluate investments

Today's Speakers



Nicole Arshan

Learning Policy Institute

California Principals:
Trends in Supply,
Preparation,
Distribution,
Retention, and
Turnover



Thomas Smith

*University of California, Davis
(Moderator)*

Who Stays, Who Leaves:
Five-Year Retention
Patterns by Teacher Entry
Pathways



Susan Patrick

Learning Policy Institute

Trends in California's
Teacher Workforce:
Understanding Supply,
Demand, and Shortages



Maya Kaul

University of Pennsylvania

Teacher Certification
Policies: Balancing
Quality and Access in
the Teaching
Profession

Teacher Certification Policies: Balancing Quality and Access in the Teaching Profession

Maya Kaul

University of Pennsylvania



Why Teacher Certification Matters

- How teachers are prepared, credentialed, and ultimately distributed across the state's education system has profound implications for students' equitable access to high-quality instruction.
- At the same time, there are significant structural barriers into the profession, which limit the diversity, supply, and quality of the teacher workforce.

Balancing *quality* and *access* in entry to the teaching profession remains one of the most enduring challenges for the field.

The History of Teacher Certification in California

California has not made system-level reforms to teacher credentialing since the 1970s.

- The **Fisher Act of 1961** and **Ryan Act of 1970** define much of the system today, leaving California's teacher credentialing system an anomaly relative to that of many other states.
 - The **Fisher Act** required teachers to complete an academic undergraduate major, requiring a 5th year program for teacher education and preventing an Education major at the undergraduate-level
 - The **Ryan Act** centralized the system, creating the California Commission of Teacher Credentialing (CTC). The CTC was the first autonomous state standards board in the country, and operates independently from the CDE and the State Board.

Five Enduring Challenges

Fragmentation

Distributed responsibility for teacher learning the disconnect between K–12 and teacher credentialing creates challenges in ensuring coherence

Ensuring Quality in Pathways

96 institutions in the state are authorized to support teachers earning their preliminary certification, raising potential issues with ensuring quality across all programs

Data Systems

Lack of integrated data systems limits the systems' ability to learn from itself, and understand teachers' pathways in/through the profession (e.g., entry from community college system)

5th Year Requirement

Historic 5th year requirement for teacher education makes California a national outlier, and has made earning a credential more difficult and expensive for teachers

Broad Certification Areas

California is unusual in designing certifications around very broad grade bands → hard to align preparation with developmental needs and subject matter by grade levels

Opportunities

Long-Term

1

Rethink the governance structure for oversight of teacher development across the teacher career pipeline.

2

Rethink the number of educator preparation programs in order to ensure consistently high quality preparation for all teachers.

Short-Term

3

Build out models of undergraduate teacher education for PK–3 and multiple subject credentials.

4

Reimagine certification grade bands.

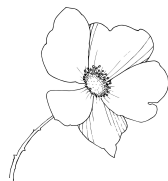
5

Create incentives for streamlined dual certification programs with special education.

Q and A



Learn More



Use “Poppy” the GDTF III Bot to find what you’re looking for.

Use the QR code to go to a stand-alone page or use it on the GDTF III website in the bottom right-hand corner of the page.



Thank you for attending!

Please complete the feedback survey to help us maximize the benefit of this webinar series and share your thoughts.

Find all of our resources at
www.gettingdowntofacts.com