

North Carolina's Teacher Attrition Rate Nears Record High

A new report presented to the North Carolina State Board of Education shows an increasing teacher attrition rate.

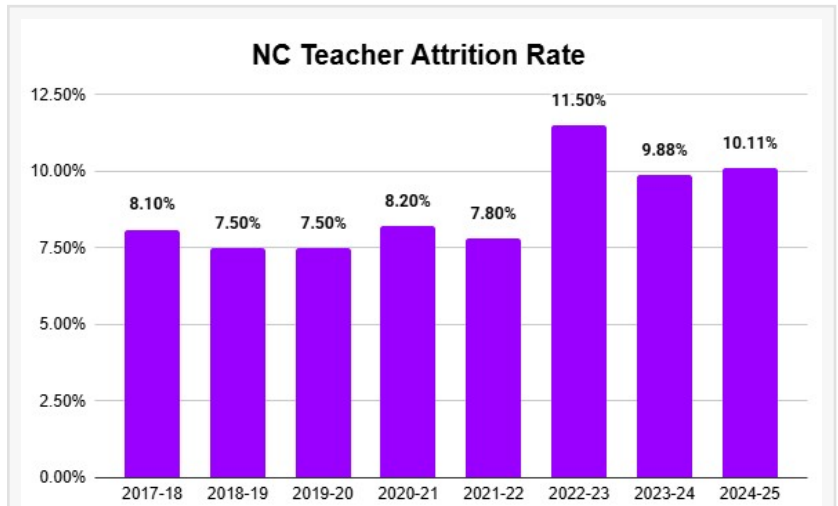
RALEIGH, NC, UNITED STATES, March 12, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The North Carolina State Board of Education received unwelcome news at its March meeting last week. Data from the annual [State of the Teaching and School Administration Professions](#) in North Carolina show that North Carolina's teachers are leaving the classroom at a rate of 10.11% (up slightly from last year's 9.88%), which puts teacher attrition in 2024-25 at a near-record high.

The record 11.50% teacher attrition rate was set in 2022-23. While not quite reaching the record high, the current attrition rate is still much higher than before the pandemic where it ranged from 7.5% to 8.2%.

Beginning teachers (those with fewer than three years of teaching experience) had a much higher attrition rate (14.9%) than teachers with more years of experience (9.34%), which highlights a critical issue for North Carolina's public schools: How can districts retain early-career teachers?

As seen in previous years, educators with 30 or more years of experience left at the highest rate as they choose to retire.

Teacher attrition rate varied widely across the state. Weldon City Schools in the northeast region



North Carolina Teacher Attrition Rate by Year



Public Schools First NC

had the highest attrition rate at 26.53%, while Clay County Schools in the western region had the lowest attrition rate at 4.30%.

The report also identified the drop in percentage of teachers entering the field from a traditional education preparation program (EPP). The percentage dropped from 33% in 2017-18 to 27% in 2024-25. The percentage of teachers coming from EPP residency pathways or from other states has also dropped in recent years.

As a result of fewer teachers from in-state teacher preparatory programs or from other states, districts have relied more on international teachers. The percentage of newly hired international teachers rose from 5% in 2017-18 to 13% in 2024-25.

Although many international teachers are both experienced and high-quality, their tenure in the state is limited by their visa status, further adding to teacher turnover. According to a [recent article in Border Belt Independent](#), North Carolina was second only to Texas in the number of K-12 education visas approved by the federal government in 2025. Recent changes in visa regulations put the future of these visas at risk and will likely leave some of the hardest-to-staff districts scrambling to hire teachers.

In its latest [Making the Grade](#) report, the Education Law Center ranked North Carolina 50th in public education cost-adjusted funding level and 50th in funding effort. These rankings, along with near-record high teacher attrition rate, may encourage lawmakers to invest more in North Carolina's public education system.

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