

Learning About Teachers



*A closer look at the current world of
Education*

Market Highlight Report, Winter 2011

FOR PRODUCER USE ONLY. NOT FOR USE BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC.
The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America (Guardian) , New York, N.Y.
Guardian, its subsidiaries, agents or employees do not provide legal or tax advice.

Market Highlight Report

Teachers Winter 2011

General Overview

The role of an educator is much more complicated today than ever before. Teachers today are expected to fill many roles, not the least of which is to teach. Increasingly, teachers must deal with societal problems and are called upon to counsel students who are not cared for by parents and to solve such problems as having students without lunch money or needing clean or protective clothing. And, they are constantly called upon to monitor the potential for any violence on school grounds. Teachers must also often deal with large class sizes. As a result, many unofficially hold the extended title of teacher-parent-counselor-friend-disciplinarian. And, in many locations throughout the country, teachers are expected to provide all of these needed services for minimal wages.

Teachers specialize in different levels of learning and ages:

- Kindergarten teachers use play and hands-on teaching, but academics begin to take priority in kindergarten classrooms. Letter recognition, phonics, numbers, and awareness of nature and science, introduced at the preschool level, are taught primarily in kindergarten.
- Elementary school teachers mostly instruct one class of children in several subjects. In some schools, two or more teachers work as a team and are jointly responsible for a group of students in at least one subject. In other schools, a teacher may teach one special subject—usually music, art, reading, science, arithmetic, or physical education—to a number of classes.
- Middle and secondary school teachers specialize in a specific subject, such as English, Spanish, mathematics, history, or biology.
- Vocational education teachers, commonly called career and technical education (CTE) teachers or career-technology teachers, instruct and train students to work in a wide variety of fields. Career and technical education courses train students to enter a particular career and prepare them for the world of work.

Sources: Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2010-11 Edition. Bureau of Labor Statistics. 1 December 2010 <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos318.htm> and <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos358.htm>

National Education Associations (NEA) "Survey of the American School Teacher" provides a profile of today's teacher:

- The majority of teachers hold one or more advanced degrees. Nearly half of all public school teachers (45 percent) hold at least a master's degree.
- They have many years of experience. The majority of the nation's 3.2 million elementary and secondary public school teachers have an average of 13 years of experience in the classroom.
- The average age is 42.
- Public school teachers are highly skilled in the subjects they teach. More than three out of every four public school teachers engages in professional development programs every year.

- Public school teachers come to the profession, and remain dedicated to their careers, for their students and the importance of education.
- Seven in 10 professionals enter teaching because of a desire to work with young people and nearly seven in 10 cite the same reason for remaining in their profession.

For more insight into the teaching profession, read the following article published on the National Education Association's website, NEA Today: [The Top Eight Challenges Teachers Face This Year](#).

Source: Buffenbarger, Amy. "Celebrating National Teacher Day With a Wary Eye on the Future". 4 May 2010. NEA Today. 1 December 2010 <<http://neatoday.org/2010/05/04/celebrating-national-teacher-day-with-a-wary-eye-on-the-future/>>.

Licensing/Certification

The traditional route to becoming a public school teacher involves completing a bachelor's degree from a teacher education program and then obtaining a license. However, most States now offer alternative routes to licensure for those who have a college degree in other fields. Private school teachers do not have to be licensed but may still need a bachelor's degree.

Requirements for regular licenses to teach kindergarten through grade 12 vary by State:

- All States require general education teachers to have a bachelor's degree and to have completed an approved teacher training program with a prescribed number of subject and education credits, as well as supervised practice teaching.
- Some States also require technology training and the attainment of a minimum grade point average.
- A number of States require that teachers obtain a master's degree in education within a specified period after they begin teaching.
- Almost all States require applicants for a teacher's license to be tested for competency in basic skills, such as reading and writing, and in teaching and require teachers to exhibit proficiency in their subject.
- Many school systems are moving toward implementing performance-based systems for licensure, which usually require teachers to demonstrate satisfactory teaching performance over an extended period in order to obtain a provisional license, in addition to passing an examination in their subject.
- Most States require teachers to complete a minimum number of hours of continuing education to renew their license.
- Many States have reciprocity agreements that make it easier for teachers licensed in one State to become licensed in another.

Teachers may attain professional certification in order to demonstrate competency beyond that required for a license. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (<http://www.nbpts.org>) offers a voluntary national certification which allows teachers to demonstrate a competency beyond that required for a license. All States recognize this national certification, and many States and school districts provide special benefits to teachers who earn certification, such as higher salaries and reimbursement for continuing education and certification fees.

All 50 States and the District of Columbia require public school CTE teachers in middle and secondary schools to be licensed through the State Board of Education or a licensure advisory

committee. All States require teachers to have a bachelor's degree and to have completed an approved teacher training program with a prescribed number of subject and education credits, as well as supervised practice teaching.

Growth

Employment is projected to grow about as fast as the average for this occupation. Most job openings will result from the need to replace the large number of teachers who are expected to retire over the 2008–18 period. Also, many beginning teachers—especially those employed in poor, urban schools—decide to leave teaching for other careers after a year or two, creating additional job openings for teachers. Job prospects are best for teachers who:

- Have experience in high-demand fields, such as mathematics, science, and bilingual education.
- Teach in less desirable urban or rural school districts.
- Are geographically mobile and who obtain licensure in more than one subject are likely to have a distinct advantage in finding a job.
- Are bilingual and for those who teach English as a second language.

Growth based on Geography

Through 2018, overall student enrollments in elementary, middle, and secondary schools—a key factor in the demand for teachers—are expected to rise more slowly than in the past as children of the baby-boom generation leave the school system. Projected enrollments will vary by region:

- Rapidly growing States in the South and West will experience the largest enrollment increases.
- Enrollments in the Midwest are expected to hold relatively steady.
- Northeast enrollments are expected to decline.

Job prospects should be better in inner cities and rural areas than in suburban districts. Many inner cities—often characterized by overcrowded, ill-equipped schools and higher-than-average poverty rates—and rural areas—characterized by their remote location and relatively low salaries—have difficulty attracting and retaining enough teachers.

Source: Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2010-11 Edition. Bureau of Labor Statistics. 26 November 2010 <<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos079.htm>>.

Charter Schools

Charter Schools have been a growing trend since 1991. These schools are public schools that receive public funding, but are operated independently and are not subject to many of the regulations that apply to other public schools. Instead, charter schools are guided by a contract called a "charter" that describes the school's mission, structure and performance requirements. Charter schools are more likely to be located in urban areas, typically have smaller classes, and are less likely to be unionized.

Charter schools are part of the public school system in forty states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. According to the Center for Education Reform, in 2008 there were over 4,500 charter schools serving more than 1.3 million students in the United States. Because they are proving popular with the public, the need for teachers interested in this line of work is likely to grow. The State certification requirements for public charter school teachers vary.

Some charter school teacher compensation plans are based on the salary schedule for public school teachers within the district, while other schools offer higher or lower salaries, depending on their charter. There are no national salary statistics specific to charter school teachers, A study for the Thomas Fordham Foundation found that almost 46% of charter schools offer performance-based pay incentives adding 5 to 10% to the typical charter school teacher salary.

The following organization US Charter Schools provides a wide range of information and resources about Charter Schools. (http://www.uscharterschools.org/pub/uscs_docs/index.htm). For more detailed information on each state and the status of its charter school efforts, view this link: http://www.uscharterschools.org/pub/uscs_docs/sp/index.htm.

Source: Becoming A Charter School Teacher. 2010. *All Education Schools*. 1 December 2010 <<http://www.alleducationschools.com/education-careers/article/charter-school-teacher/>>.

Teaching in Today's Economy

Top trends facing America's teachers are exacerbated by state budget crises nationwide, with a historically high number of layoffs topping the list of trends. According to a new survey released May 2010 from the American Association of School Administrators, 275,000 teachers, support professionals and administrators could lose their jobs this upcoming school year (2010-11).

In addition, school districts are forced to close schools, cut education programs, as well as increase class sizes and shorten the school year or week. NEA's "Survey of the American School Teacher" highlights some of these issues below.

America's public school teachers are facing massive layoffs:

- Roughly 150,000 NEA members are affected.
- In New York, 15,000 educators' jobs are in jeopardy; In Illinois 9,000 educators have received layoff notices; In California, 26,000 educators have received their pink slips.
- Nine out of 10 superintendents expect to lay off school personnel this fall.

Source: Buffenbarger, Amy. "Celebrating National Teacher Day With a Wary Eye on the Future". 4 May 2010. *NEA Today*. 1 December 2010 <<http://neatoday.org/2010/05/04/celebrating-national-teacher-day-with-a-wary-eye-on-the-future/>>.

Also of concern are states that are likely to take up pension plan changes this year as the sour economy continues. With state revenues and stock indexes down, many states are moving to slash spending on retirement pensions. In 2010, according to NEA research, *17 states made significant changes to their retirement systems*, more than in any other year. Almost all of these changes were for the worse:

- Higher payments from employees;
- Reduced benefits;
- Smaller cost-of-living adjustments;
- More restrictions on early retirement;
- Shifting pension plans toward "defined contribution" with no guaranteed retirement income.

While media reports have focused on states with badly underfunded pension systems, the great majority of state pension systems are in good health and don't need any drastic action, however, it is worth keeping an eye on state pension funds and how they will affect retiring teachers.

Source: Jehlen, Alain. "States Slashing Educator Retirement Funds". 29 November 2010. NEA Today. 1 December 2010 <<http://neatoday.org/2010/11/29/states-slashing-educator-retirement-funds/>>.

Salaries for Teachers

The National Education Association is advocating for a \$40,000 starting salary for all pre-K-12 teachers as, historically, low teacher pay results in good teachers leaving to better-paying professions. According to the NEA, some 20% of new public school teachers leave the profession by the end of the first year, and, as noted above, 30% leave within five years.

Public school teachers' classes, workloads and hours are increasing while their pay is not keeping up with inflation.

- Teachers across the nation are continuing to lose spending power for themselves and their families as inflation continues to outpace teacher salaries last year in many states.
- The national average public school teacher salary for 2007–2008 was \$54,503.
- In 2008, public school teachers spent an average of 52.8 hours weekly on all teaching duties.
- Ninety-two percent of public school teachers spend, on average, \$475 on classroom materials for their students.

View the following link for a listing of all states. Click on the state and scroll down to quick facts for salary information for that state as well as the local chapter information: <http://www.nea.org/home/1621.htm>.

Source: Buffenbarger, Amy. "Celebrating National Teacher Day With a Wary Eye on the Future". 4 May 2010. NEA Today. 1 December 2010 <<http://neatoday.org/2010/05/04/celebrating-national-teacher-day-with-a-wary-eye-on-the-future/>>.

Debt incurred by Teachers

Today, two-thirds of four-year college graduates leave with student loan debt, compared with less than a third just 10 years ago, according to the State Public Interest Research Group's Higher Education Project. And they carry twice as much debt as they did 10 years ago, too.

Among National Education Association members specifically, half of those teaching four years or less have loans totaling more than \$15,000. With some teaching salaries starting at \$28,000 a year, it doesn't add up. Ballooning educational costs and stagnant salaries are making young people rethink their career choices.

Estimates by the research group Project on Student Debt, found that 23% of public college graduates leave school with too much debt to manageably repay their loans on a starting teacher's salary. It jumps even higher for students leaving private colleges. Because of the cost of living and teacher salaries, graduates are in the worst shape with unmanageable debt in the following states: New Hampshire, Wisconsin, North Dakota, Vermont, Utah, Maine, South Dakota, Montana, Connecticut, and Minnesota.

Source: Kopkowski, Cynthia. "My Debt, My Life". January 2008. NEA Today. 1 December 2010 <<http://www.nea.org/home/9310.htm>>.

Market Challenge

Teachers can be a difficult market to target because they are either teaching and cannot be disturbed or in planning/review mode and do not wish to be disturbed. Like other professionals, when they are home with their families or on a school vacation, it is very difficult to get their attention.

There has been no shortage of news in the last few years regarding the cutbacks in education funding in America and students, as well as teachers, bear the primary burden of this. Teachers often need to worry, semester to semester, whether their jobs will be in tact and, if they are, what additional responsibilities they maybe taking on, including increasing class sizes. Sometimes, teachers retain their positions but are forced to work for less pay. Still, although there is a good deal of attrition, most people who go into the teaching profession have a passion for it and often reach into their own pockets when possible to fill supply gaps or put in hours of unpaid time to combat a school's lack of funding.

Networking with Teachers

On the positive side, teachers appreciate the process of education. Once you get in front of a teacher, if you have done your "homework," have a good lesson plan laid out and provide step-by-step guidance, a teacher will probably follow your whole presentation. Be sure to use excellent communication skills that you know are valued by teachers such as active listening, asking clarifying questions when necessary, testing for understanding and summarizing.

Keep in mind that there are a lot of changes going on behind the headlines. Earlier, this report stated that 17 States have drastically reduced and tightened their retirement plans for teachers this year. If you are interested in specializing in teachers, it's very important to keep up with not only the detail of the changes themselves but the impact these changes are having on the individuals to whom you want to serve.

When it comes to finding meaningful ways to network with teachers, it maybe helpful to test out the traditional methods of association involvement, direct mail, and tradeshow. However, the popular teachers' website "Roy: Tales of a Singing Zebra" portends that the internet is the best way to go since teachers are constantly using the internet as a class room and professional development tool. More on this can be found at the following link: <http://www.roythezebra.com/marketing-and-selling-to-teachers.html>.

Finally, when warming up a relationship with a teacher prospect, have a few "go-to" questions to ask, like: *"What is your favorite subject (or section) to teach in your classroom this year?"* or *"Tell me about your most gifted (or unusual) student over your years of teaching,"* etc.

National Associations

National Education Association (NEA)

<http://www.nea.org/index.html>

The NEA currently has 3.2 million members and has affiliate organizations in all 50 states with representation in more than 14,000 communities throughout the United States. Members include public school teachers, faculty members, education support professionals, retired educators, and students.

View the following links for upcoming events to mark your calendar, such as National Teacher Day: <http://www.nea.org/events/>.

In the link below you may review state affiliates for leadership information and related organizations in each state: <http://www.nea.org/home/1621.htm>.

American Federation of Teachers

<http://www.aft.org>

The American Federation of Teachers, an affiliate of the AFL-CIO, was founded in 1916 and represents nearly 3,000 local affiliates nationwide, 43 state affiliates and 1.5 million members. In addition, the AFT represents approximately 80,000 early childhood educators and nearly 250,000 retiree members. This can be a good source for finding out more about what legislative issues are impacting teachers.

Association for Career and Technical Vocation

<http://www.acteonline.org/>

The Association for Career and Technical Education is the largest national education association dedicated to the advancement of education that prepares youth and adults for careers. Review the website for state associations and their leadership and events:

<http://www.acteonline.org/states.aspx>.

US Charter Schools

http://www.uscharterschools.org/pub/uscs_docs/o/index.htm

Referenced previously, this organization provides a wide range of information and resources about Charter Schools. (http://www.uscharterschools.org/pub/uscs_docs/index.htm).

For more detailed information on each state and any related organizations, view this link:

http://www.uscharterschools.org/pub/uscs_docs/sp/index.htm.

Association of Teacher Educators (ATE)

<http://www.ate1.org/pubs/home.cfm>

The Association of Teacher Educators was founded in 1920 and is the only national, individual membership organization devoted solely to the improvement of teacher education for both school and campus-based teacher educators. ATE members represent over 650 colleges and universities, 500 major school systems, and the majority of the state departments of education. Review the website for the Board of Directors and annual meeting information.

Subject-Specific Organizations:

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)

<http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=1>

American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD)*

<http://www.aahperd.org/>

International Technology Education Association (ITEA)

<http://www.iteaconnect.org/>

National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)

<http://www.ncss.org/>

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)

<http://www.ncte.org/>

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)

<http://www.nctm.org/>

National Science Teachers Association (NSTA)

<http://www.nsta.org/>

Learn more about Association marketing by reading [About Association Marketing](#) which includes tips for vetting an association, becoming a resource, and surveys for the association leadership and members.

Marketing Checklist

- Narrow niches within the market to a reasonable size and scope.
- Visit websites and flag the best ones for ongoing reference.
- “Follow” companies and associations of interest on LinkedIn.com and join market-related groups.
- Note names of at least 15 individuals that would be good Centers of Influence in the market.
- Conduct informational interviews and/or networking appointments
 - with potential strategic alliances also active in the market.
 - ask for “personal introductions” to others in the market.
- Subscribe to market-related blogs and magazines, note calendar dates, editors names and sponsorship or advertising opportunities.
- Determine which association(s) is most worthwhile and attend networking events; obtain meeting with Association Director and be sure to “ask” more rather than “tell.”
- Determine a Unique Value Statement that appeals to the market and sets you apart from the competition.
- Announce your presence in the market through social media, letters, ads, and press releases.
- Obtain membership lists for cultivation and look into targeted list buying if needed.
- Organize a mix of cultivation pieces. For ex., avoid sending all email or all snail mail. Aim for a minimum of six to twelve touch-points per year.
- Explore what types of seminar topics and/or guest speakers are of interest to this market.
- Contact local business journals and find out if they plan on dedicating a special issue to the market where you can advertise and/or get an article published.

SAMPLE One Page 90-Day Strategic Planning Template
Target Market Focus: Teachers in (Region)

Three Year Vision: 75 teachers clients in database; Receive X number of leads per mo.; Conduct min. of 2 Workshops per year and 3 C of I Appreciation Events

One Year Vision: 20 new teacher clients in database with a min. of 12 who will provide ongoing introductions

90 Day Objectives/Tactics	Challenges	Action Items	Person	Date
1. Continue Research & Build Top 15 List		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obtain local research & dig deep into links in report; - define profile of best client. - Identify 5 C of I's who work w/ Teachers - Drill down to find out more about individuals and create a file. - Determine which associations to join or volunteer - Become active on LinkedIn.com. - Ask for introductions 		
2. Create Unique Value Proposition and Brand Statement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Find out needs/wants - Come up with unique characteristics of product line and hone approach - Create brand statement; get approved by Compliance - Test out w/ Advisors 		
3. Build Cultivation Program		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vet communication materials - Select best approved pieces (2 or 3) - Create Approach letter - Get approved - Set up first mailing program 		
4. Conduct 5 Center of Influence Surveys; goal is min. of 5 per month.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modify interview as appropriate - Send hand written thank you's & follow up on any tasks/requests - Get responses from surveys into database - Schedule more appts. 		
5. Set up database/admin. needs		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make sure database can manage cultivation process for follow up, etc. 		