

# ADVANCING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT & DEVELOPMENT IN NC: *Promising Policies & Practices for the Teaching Workforce*

## FACT SHEET

### Executive Summary

Teachers matter to the short- and long-term trajectories of students. In the short term, teachers influence student achievement and the development of social and emotional skills. In the long term, teachers affect educational attainment, employment, and earnings. Given the importance of teachers, North Carolina's state and local officials are charged with enacting policies that recruit, prepare, develop and retain a highly effective teacher workforce. North Carolina has been a regional and national leader in many of these policy areas; however, there are also opportunities to innovate and better align policy initiatives to strengthen the teacher workforce. This policy brief describes the importance of teachers, what we know about improving teacher quality and retention, and how policy and practice can accomplish these goals.



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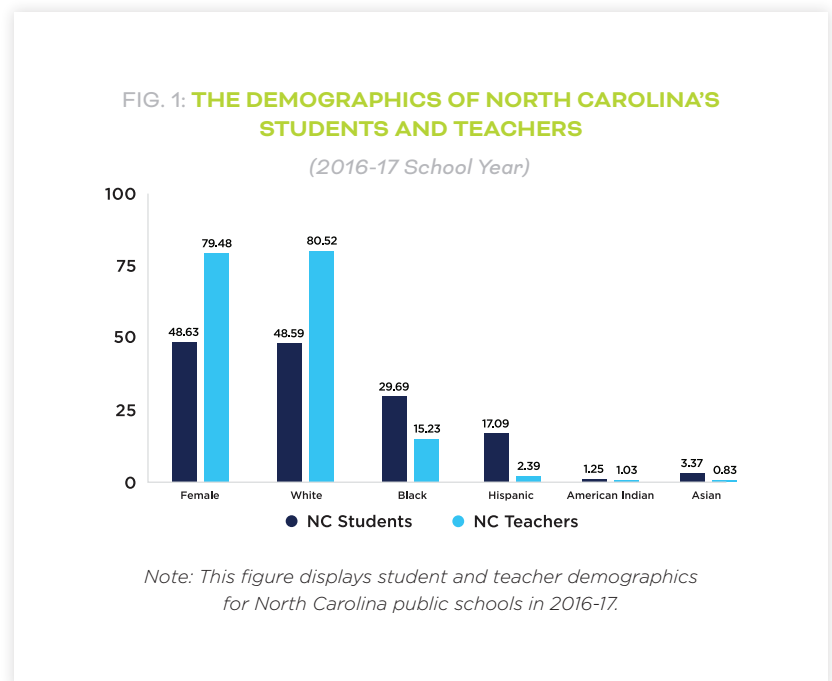
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### The Current Landscape of the Teacher Workforce in North Carolina

#### The Demographics of North Carolina's Students and Teachers

Over the last decade, the population of students attending North Carolina public schools has become increasingly diverse. In 2007, white students accounted for nearly 56 percent of public school enrollees. By 2017, after a steady increase in North Carolina's Hispanic population, white students accounted for 49 percent of public school enrollees. North Carolina schools are now majority minority and like many states, North Carolina does not have a teacher workforce that resembles its student population.

Figure 1 shows that white females make up a majority of the teacher workforce in North Carolina. In 2017, nearly 80 percent of North Carolina's teachers were female and nearly 81 percent were white. These values are essentially unchanged from 2007, when 80 percent of the



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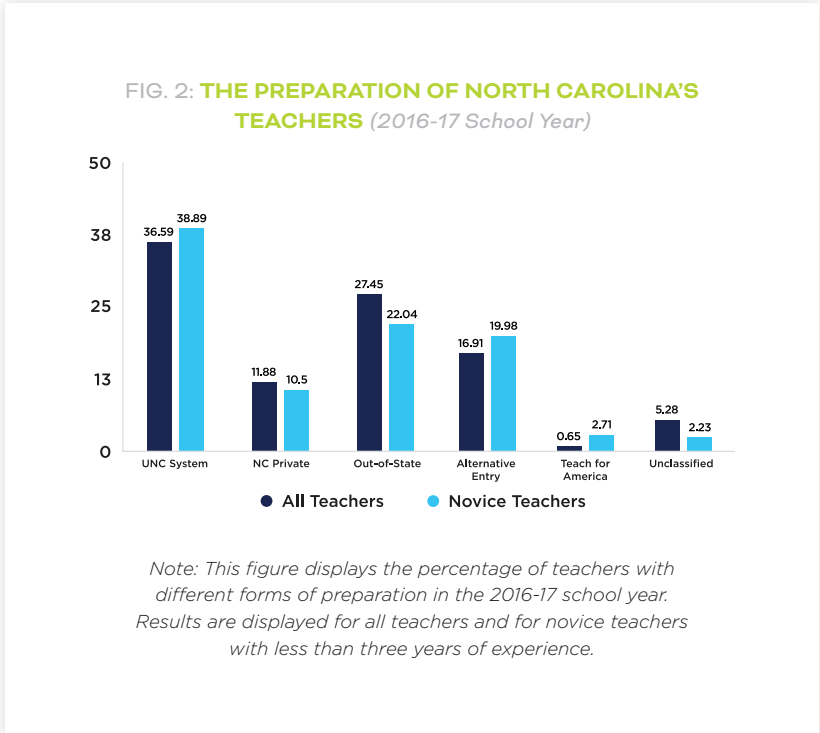
teachers were female and 83 percent were white. The percentage of black and Hispanic teachers has increased slightly over the last decade but this has not substantively narrowed the racial/ethnic minority gaps between students and teachers. The percentage of black students is nearly twice that of black teachers while the percentage of Hispanic students is seven times larger than that of Hispanic teachers. These gaps are relevant to North Carolina, especially with research documenting the positive impacts of racial/ethnic minority teachers on the test scores and educational attainment of same-race students.<sup>1,2</sup>

## Staffing North Carolina's Schools

As a large and growing state, North Carolina needs a steady supply of teachers to staff its public school classrooms. While the University of North Carolina (UNC) system is the largest single supplier of teachers to the state's public schools, the North Carolina teacher workforce is also comprised of many in-state private university, out-of-state university, and alternative entry teachers. This diversity in preparation matters: those prepared in-state are more effective (as measured by student achievement gains and evaluation ratings) and more likely to remain teaching in North Carolina than those prepared out-of-state or entering teaching alternatively.<sup>3,4</sup>

Figure 2 shows that teachers prepared by UNC system institutions comprised 37 percent of the state's teacher workforce in 2017. Private colleges and universities in North Carolina supplied another 12 percent of the teacher workforce. In addition to in-state supply sources, North Carolina imports a significant number of its teachers from out-of-state. In 2017, approximately 28 percent of the state's teacher workforce had been prepared at an out-of-state college or university. Alternative or lateral entry teachers — those entering teaching having not completed all of their licensure requirements — made up 17 percent of the state's teacher workforce in 2017. These teachers are more likely to be male or a racial/ethnic minority and are concentrated in North Carolina's middle and high schools. Finally, Teach For America — an alternative teacher preparation provider for low-income and low-performing schools — comprised less than 1 percent of the full workforce and approximately 3 percent of the state's novice teachers.

Related to teacher preparation is the relative “green-ness” of North Carolina's teacher workforce. Figure 3 illustrates that nearly 16 percent of the state's workforce has less than three years of teaching experience, while another 14 percent has three to five years of experience. These figures are connected to student achievement and equity since inexperienced teachers are often less effective (as measured by student achievement gains)<sup>5</sup> and are concentrated in high-poverty schools.<sup>6</sup>



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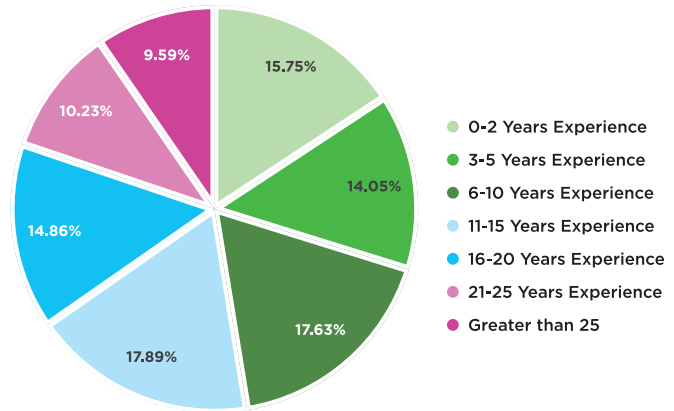
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## Teacher Retention in North Carolina

Teacher retention is a priority for states, districts, and schools since turnover harms student achievement<sup>7</sup> and results in school instability and more teaching vacancies. Figure 4 presents the percentage of teachers who returned to any North Carolina public school and the percentage of teachers who returned to the same North Carolina school district during the 2008 through 2017 school years. In the first half of this data window (2008-2012), approximately 89 percent of teachers returned to North Carolina public schools annually. This percentage dropped in 2012 through 2015 but has since rebounded. School district retention displays a similar pattern, with a drop in district retention in the middle of this data period and an uptick to 85 percent in the most recent school years. Since North Carolina employs approximately 95,000 teachers, a 1 percentage point change in retention is significant: resulting in schools/districts needing to hire nearly 1,000 more (or fewer) teachers.

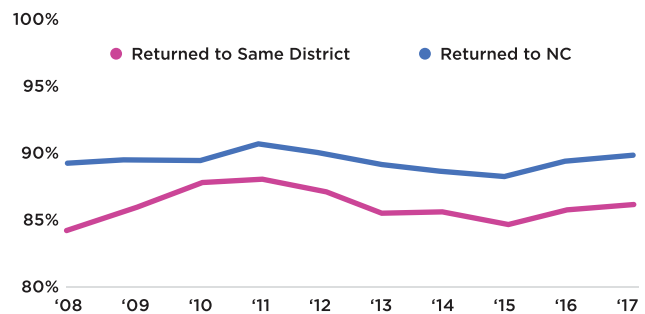
Descriptive data show that district-level teacher retention is highest in western North Carolina — approximately 88 percent in the Northwest and Western State Board of Education (SBE) regions — and lowest in the northeast portion of the state — approximately 81 percent in the Northeast and North Central SBE regions. Likewise, teacher retention is lower, by 2 percentage points, in North Carolina’s Tier One counties (i.e. the state’s 40 most economically distressed counties).<sup>8</sup> While many factors influence teacher retention, research indicates that perceptions of school leadership have the greatest impact on teachers’ retention decisions.<sup>9</sup>

FIG. 3: THE EXPERIENCE OF NORTH CAROLINA’S TEACHER WORKFORCE (2016-17 School Year)



Note: This figure displays the teaching experience of North Carolina public school teachers in 2016-17.

FIG. 4: TEACHER RETENTION IN NORTH CAROLINA (2008 through 2017)



Note: This figure displays the percentage of teachers who returned to any North Carolina public school in the specified year and the percentage of teachers who returned to the same school district in the specified year.



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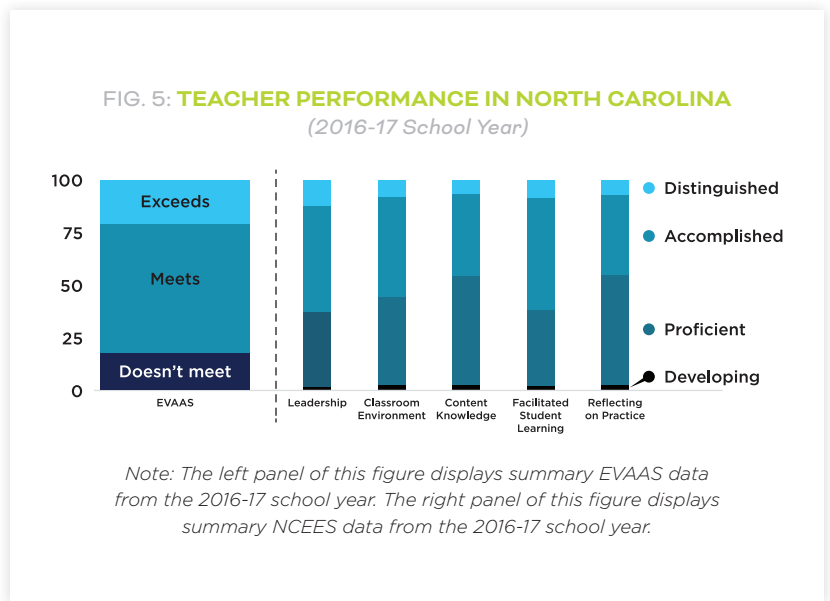
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## Teacher Performance in North Carolina

North Carolina assesses the performance of its teachers in two official ways: (1) Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) estimates and (2) ratings from the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System (NCEES). EVAAS is a way to measure teachers' contributions to student achievement growth on North Carolina's End-of-Grade, End-of-Course, early-grades reading, and final exams. NCEES is the rubric used to evaluate teachers on the state's five professional teaching standards — Leadership, Classroom Environment, Content Knowledge, Facilitating Student Learning, and Reflecting on Practice.

Figure 5 presents summary EVAAS and NCEES data from the 2016-17 school year. Overall, EVAAS data show that 17 percent of teachers were classified as not meeting expected student growth. Sixty-three percent were classified as meeting expected student growth and 20 percent as exceeding expected student growth. Teacher evaluation data from the NCEES show that very few teachers (approximately 2 percent) were rated below proficient. For the Leadership, Classroom Environment, and Facilitating Student Learning standards, the modal evaluation rating was accomplished; for Content Knowledge and Reflecting on Practice the modal rating was proficient. Across teaching standards, approximately 6-12 percent of teachers were rated as distinguished.



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