

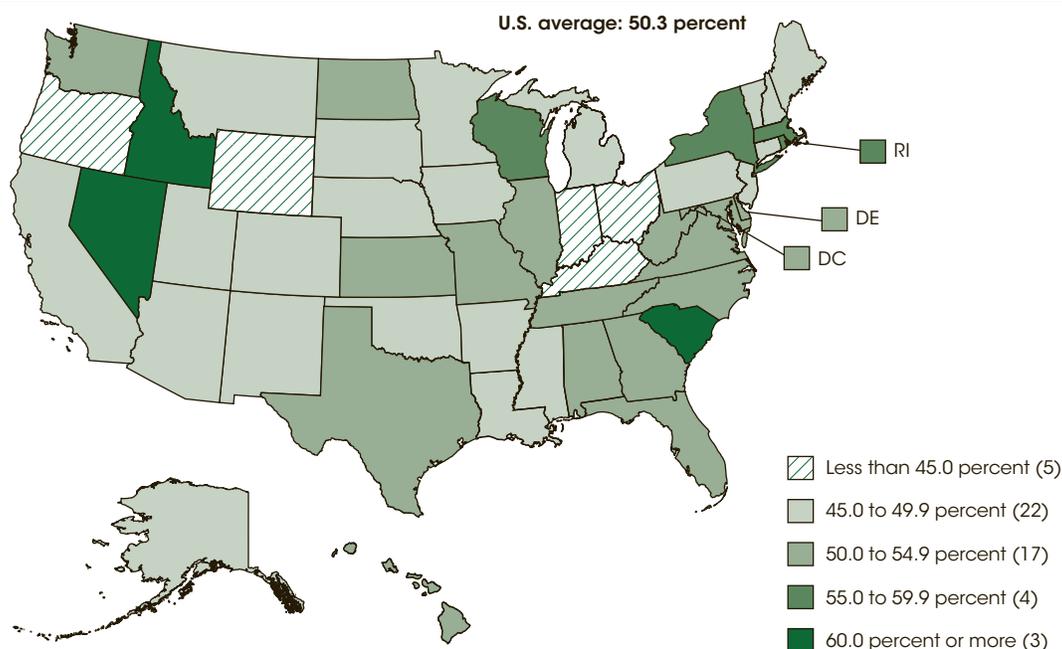
Teachers and Pupil/Teacher Ratios

Of the 6.2 million staff members in public elementary and secondary schools in fall 2013, half (3.1 million) were teachers. The pupil/teacher ratio in public schools declined from 15.9 in 2003 to 15.3 in 2008. In the years after 2008, the pupil/teacher ratio rose, reaching 16.1 in 2013.

Of the 6.2 million staff members in public elementary and secondary schools in fall 2013, half (3.1 million) were teachers. There were 738,000 instructional aides, such as teachers' assistants, who made up another 12 percent of total staff. The percentages of public school staff have changed little in recent years. For example, between fall 2003 and fall 2013 the percentage of staff members who

were teachers decreased 1 percentage point (from 51 to 50 percent), and the percentage of staff members who were instructional aides over this period increased less than 1 percentage point to 12 percent in 2013. By comparison, in fall 1969 teachers represented 60 percent of public school staff, and instructional aides represented 2 percent of public school staff.

Figure 1. Teachers as a percentage of staff in public elementary and secondary school systems, by state: Fall 2013

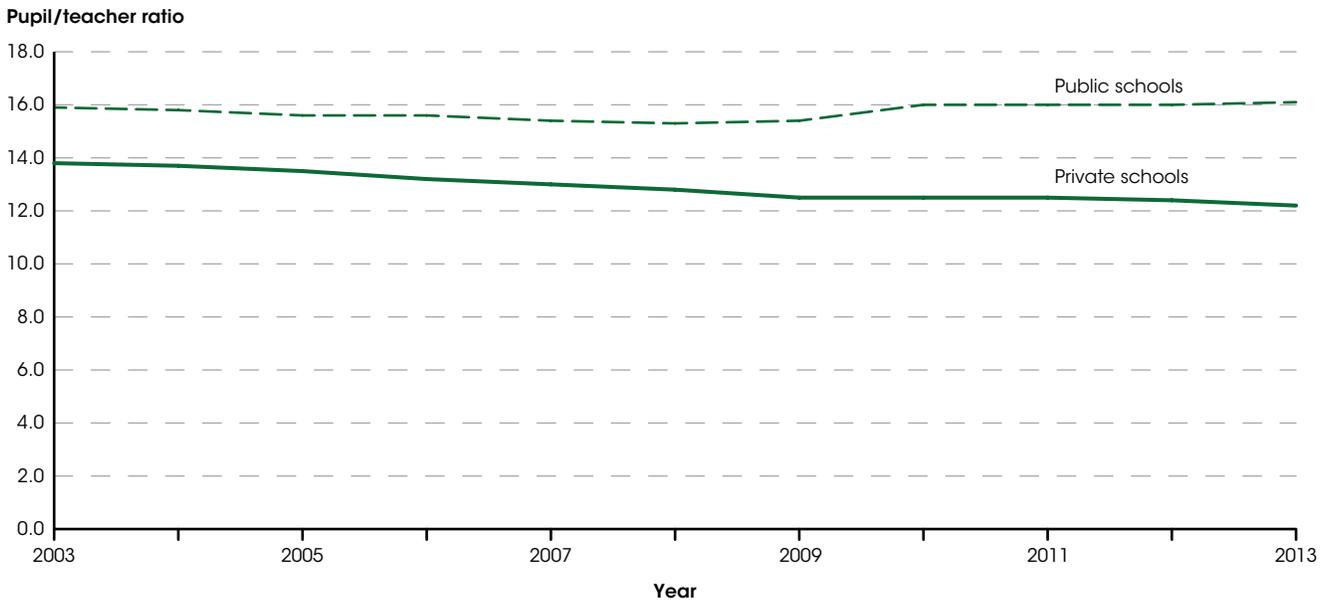


NOTE: The U.S. average includes imputations for underreporting and nonreporting states. The calculations of teachers as a percentage of staff for Alaska, California, Idaho, Illinois, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia include imputations to correct for underreporting. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education," 2013-14. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2015*, table 213.40.

Teachers constituted between 45 and 55 percent of public school staff in 38 states and the District of Columbia in 2013. There were, however, five states where teachers made up less than 45 percent of public school staff (Indiana,

Ohio, Kentucky, Wyoming, and Oregon) and seven states where teachers made up more than 55 percent of public school staff (Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Rhode Island, New York, Idaho, Nevada, and South Carolina).

Figure 2. Public and private elementary and secondary school pupil/teacher ratios: Fall 2003 through fall 2013

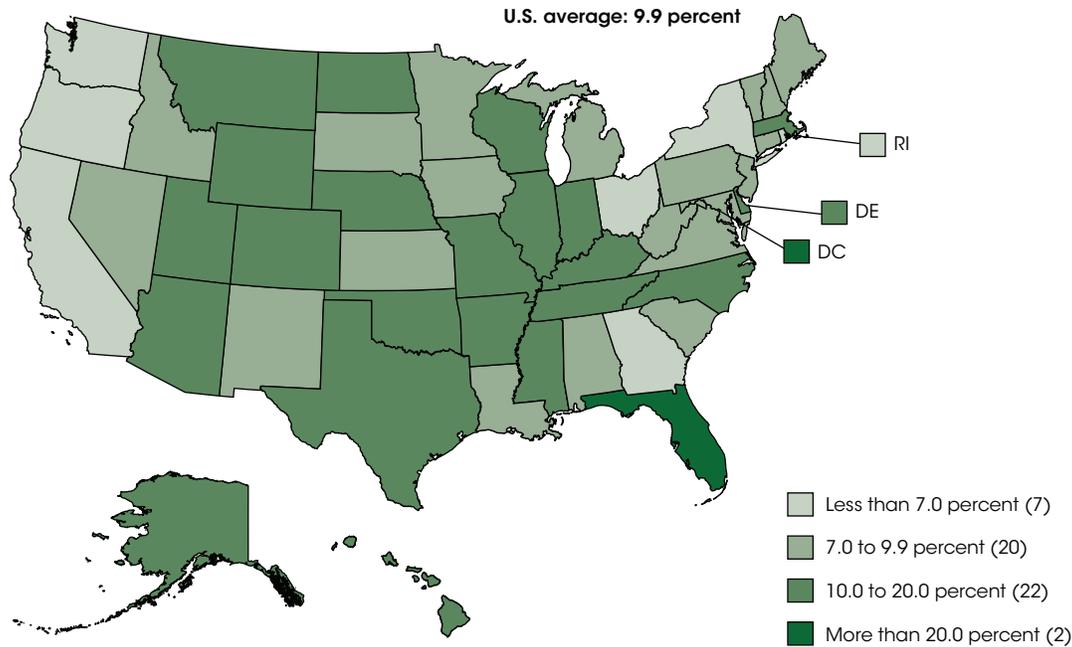


NOTE: Data for teachers are expressed in full-time equivalents (FTEs). Data for public schools include prekindergarten through grade 12. Data for private schools include prekindergarten through grade 12 in schools offering kindergarten or higher grades. The pupil/teacher ratio includes teachers for students with disabilities and other special teachers. Ratios for public schools reflect totals reported by states and differ from totals reported by schools or school districts. Some data have been revised from previously published figures.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education," 2003-04 through 2013-14; and Private School Universe Survey (PSS), 2003-04 through 2013-14. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2015*, table 208.20.

The number of students per teacher, or the pupil/teacher ratio,¹ has generally been decreasing over more than 50 years at both public and private schools. In fall 1955, there were 1.1 million public and 145,000 private elementary and secondary school teachers in the United States. By fall 2013, these numbers had nearly tripled to 3.1 million for public school teachers and to 441,000 for private school teachers. However, increases in student enrollment were proportionally smaller over this period: from 30.7 million to 50.0 million public school students (a 63 percent increase) and from 4.6 million to

5.4 million private school students (a 17 percent increase). For public schools, the pupil/teacher ratio fell from 26.9 in 1955 to 15.9 in 2003. The ratio continued this decline until 2008, when it dropped to 15.3. In the years after 2008, the pupil/teacher ratio rose, reaching 16.1 in 2013. The private school pupil/teacher ratio decreased more steeply (from 31.7 to 12.2 students per teacher) between 1955 and 2013 than did the public school ratio. The pupil/teacher ratio has been lower for private schools than for public schools since 1972.

Figure 3. Percentage of public elementary and secondary school teachers who had less than 2 years of teaching experience, by state: 2011-12



NOTE: The number of years of teaching experience includes the current year and any prior years teaching in any school, subject, or grade. Does not include any student teaching or other similar preparation experiences.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection, "2011-12 Classroom Teachers Estimations." See *Digest of Education Statistics 2015*, table 209.25.

The Civil Rights Data Collection reports information on years of teaching experience for all public elementary and secondary school teachers. Of the 3.1 million public school teachers in 2011-12, some 310,300 teachers, or 10 percent, had less than 2 years of teaching experience. In 42 states, between 7 and 20 percent of public school teachers had less than 2 years of teaching experience. However, in seven states (Rhode Island, Washington, Oregon, New York, Ohio, California, and Georgia), less than 7 percent of public school teachers had less than 2 years of teaching experience, and in Florida and the District of Columbia, more than 20 percent of public school teachers had less than 2 years of teaching experience. While 6 percent of public school teachers overall were in their first year of teaching in 2011-12,

the percentages of first-year teachers that year ranged from 2 percent in Pennsylvania to 19 percent in Florida.

Data on public school teachers' licensing and certification are also available from the Civil Rights Data Collection. Overall, 97 percent of public elementary and secondary school teachers in 2011-12 met all licensing and certification requirements of the state in which they taught. In 20 states, more than 99 percent of public school teachers in 2011-12 met all state licensing certification requirements. In another 18 states, between 97 and 99 percent of public school teachers met all state licensing certification requirements. However, in Florida and the District of Columbia, less than 90 percent of teachers met all state licensing certification requirements.

Endnotes:

¹ The pupil/teacher ratio measures the number of students per teacher. It reflects teacher workload and the availability of teachers' services to their students. The lower the pupil/teacher ratio, the higher the availability of teacher services to students. The pupil/teacher ratio is not the same as class size, however. Class size can be described as the

number of students a teacher faces during a given period of instruction. The relationship between these two measures of teacher workload is affected by a variety of factors, including the number of classes a teacher is responsible for and the number of classes taken by students.

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2015*, tables 208.20, 209.25, 213.10, 213.40

Related indicators: Public School Enrollment, Private School Enrollment

Glossary: Elementary school, Private school, Public school or institution, Pupil/teacher ratio, Secondary school