

# SC Teacher Exit Survey: Summary of Results for 2023–24

OCTOBER 2024

SC TEACHER administers the annual SC Teacher Exit Survey to teachers leaving public PK–12 classroom positions. The data collected from teacher responses helps more clearly illustrate paths of teacher mobility in South Carolina. For instance, while some teachers left the profession, others moved to teach in another school district. The survey focuses on better understanding the various types of teacher mobility, as well as teachers' reasons for leaving. Additionally, it investigates the factors that could influence teachers' potential return.

This overview provides a highlight of key findings from the 2023–24 SC Teacher Exit Survey. Read the full report at [www.sc-teacher.org/TES-summary-oct2024](http://www.sc-teacher.org/TES-summary-oct2024).



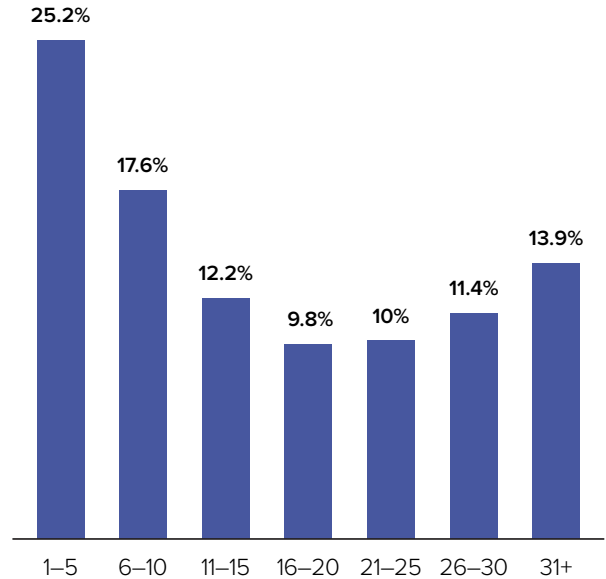
## OVERVIEW

In the 2023–24 academic year, teachers submitted responses from 29 of the 30 school districts that participated in the SC Teacher Exit Survey. The survey was conducted from May 15, 2024, through June 21, 2024. From those 29 districts, 1,019 teachers responded.

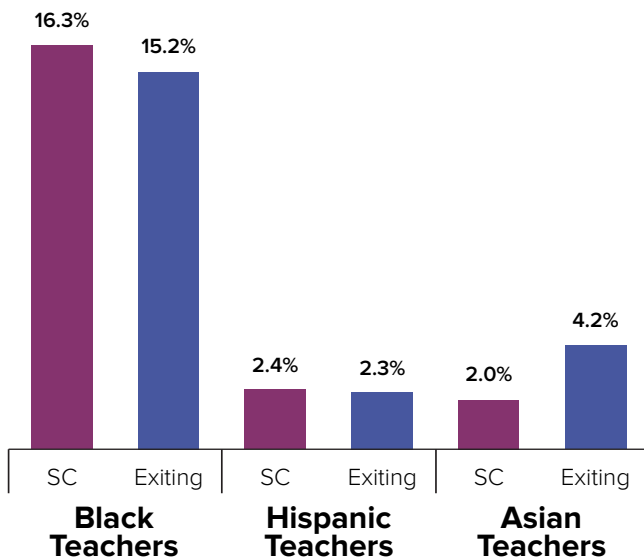
# Characteristics of Teachers Exiting Their Current Position

## YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

We examined the total years of teaching experience for departing teachers, finding an average of 16 years. Overall, experience levels ranged from 1 to 53 years. Beginning teachers with 1–5 years of experience comprised the largest group of exiting teachers, accounting for 25.2% of respondents. Those with 6–10 years of experience represented 17.6%, while 13.9% had 31 or more years of experience. The smallest groups of exiting teachers were those with 16–20 years (9.8%) and 21–25 years (10%) of experience.



Total Years of Teaching Experience

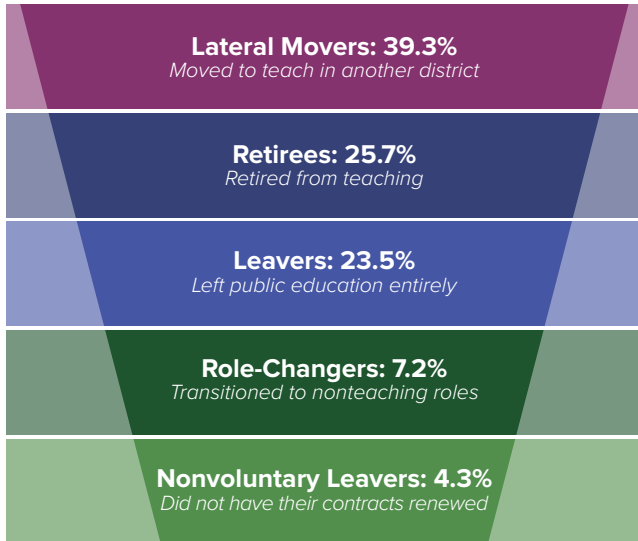


## RACE AND ETHNICITY

For White, Black, and Hispanic teachers, analysis showed a percent of exiting teachers largely similar to the percent of teachers identifying as that race/ethnicity in the overall teacher population for 2022–23. However, the percentage of Asian teachers leaving their positions (4.2%) was notably higher than their representation in the teacher population (2.0%).

By comparing percentages of exiting teachers to statewide demographic proportions, we can gain a better understanding of potential anomalies and challenges in teacher movement.

# Exiting Teacher Mobility Patterns



Through the survey, teachers were grouped into mobility types based on their responses.

Distinguishing groups of exiting teachers in this way can help inform more specific strategies for retention. With these categories, we can better understand the different factors motivating each mobility type.

# Teachers' Reasons for Exiting Their Current Position

For lateral movers and leavers, significant percentages of teachers in one or both categories ranked the following factors and reasons as very or extremely important in their decision to leaving their position.

## JOB RESOURCES

### Lack of administrative support

Lateral movers: 46%

Leavers: 42%

## JOB DEMANDS

### Frequency of student misbehavior

Lateral movers: 45%

Leavers: 54%

## POLICY REASONS

### Dissatisfaction with minimum salary schedule

Lateral movers: 32%

Leavers: 46%

## PERSONAL REASONS

### A desire for a job more conveniently located to their residence

Lateral movers: 46%

Leavers: 17%



## Exiting Teachers' Willingness to Return

### WHO WOULD CONSIDER RETURNING

**Of retirees, 70% would consider returning to teaching, as would more than 80% of nonvoluntary leavers. Of leavers, 64% said they might consider a return.**

### FACTORS INFLUENCING A RETURN

**Smaller class sizes, salary increases, and protected planning time** were the top reasons cited by both retirees and leavers for considering a return.

### DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RETIREES AND LEAVERS

Retirees would be most influenced by **salary increases** as a factor.

Leavers emphasized the importance of **protected planning and break time** in their decision.

## How Exit Survey Participation Serves Teachers, School Districts, and the State

SC Teacher Exit Survey data exist to share insights from exiting teachers at both district and state levels, including the reasons behind teachers' decisions and their movement. Districts that participate in the survey (and meet participation thresholds) receive reports with data specific to the teachers exiting their district. These data help fuel opportunities to create more specific strategies around retention in their schools.

In this latest survey iteration, exit survey constructs were updated to include reasons for leaving related to working conditions. This allows for closer alignment with the SC Teacher Working Conditions Survey administered by SC TEACHER every two years. Data from both surveys can be used in conjunction to better understand teachers' perceptions of working conditions in their districts and the state. The next SC Teacher Working Conditions Survey will take place in January–February 2025.

In addition to receiving specific results, resources, and support from SC TEACHER, by participating in these surveys, school districts and teachers are helping to build a robust data infrastructure for holistic study of South Carolina's educator pipeline.



### ABOUT SC TEACHER

SC TEACHER provides comprehensive research, visualized data profiles, and compelling stories to communicate impact of educator pipeline policies and promote transformative practices that inform policymakers, educators, and communities who care about education scaling economic opportunity.