

South Carolina Teacher Attrition, Mobility, and Retention Report for 2024–25

MARCH 2026

This report provides an annual examination of teacher workforce stability in South Carolina public schools. Using statewide educator-level data from the 2024–25 academic year, along with longitudinal comparisons spanning from six prior years, the report documents patterns of teacher retention, mobility, and attrition across state, district, and school contexts. This overview highlights key findings, including recent trends in teacher retention, variation across school contexts, and differences by certification pathway and career stage.

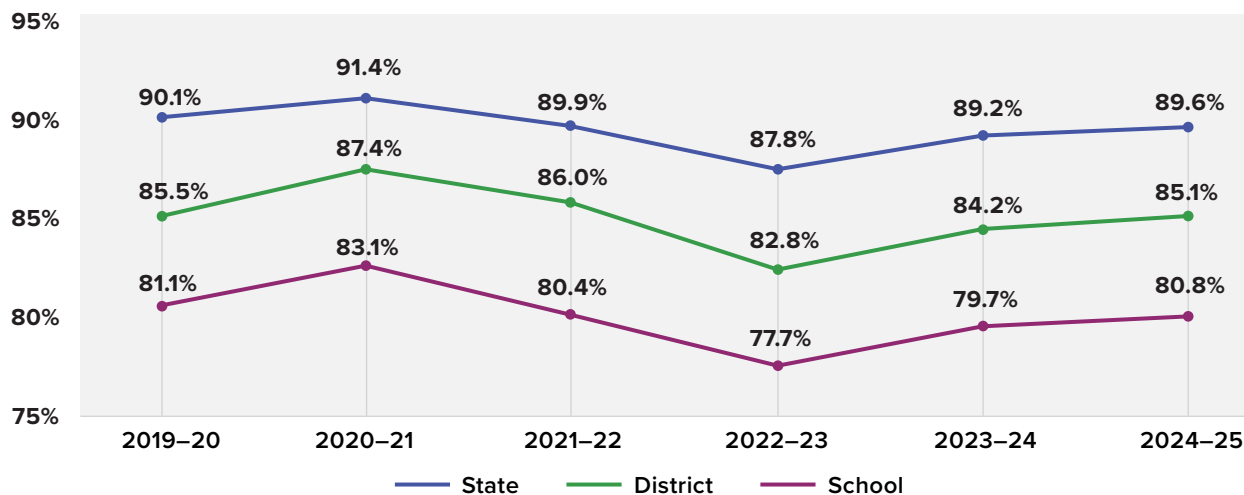
For the full analysis of teacher retention and mobility in South Carolina public schools, access the report at www.sc-teacher.org/EPR-teacher-retention-mar2026.

Retention Across State, District, and School Levels

Teacher retention can be measured at multiple levels, each offering different insight into workforce stability.

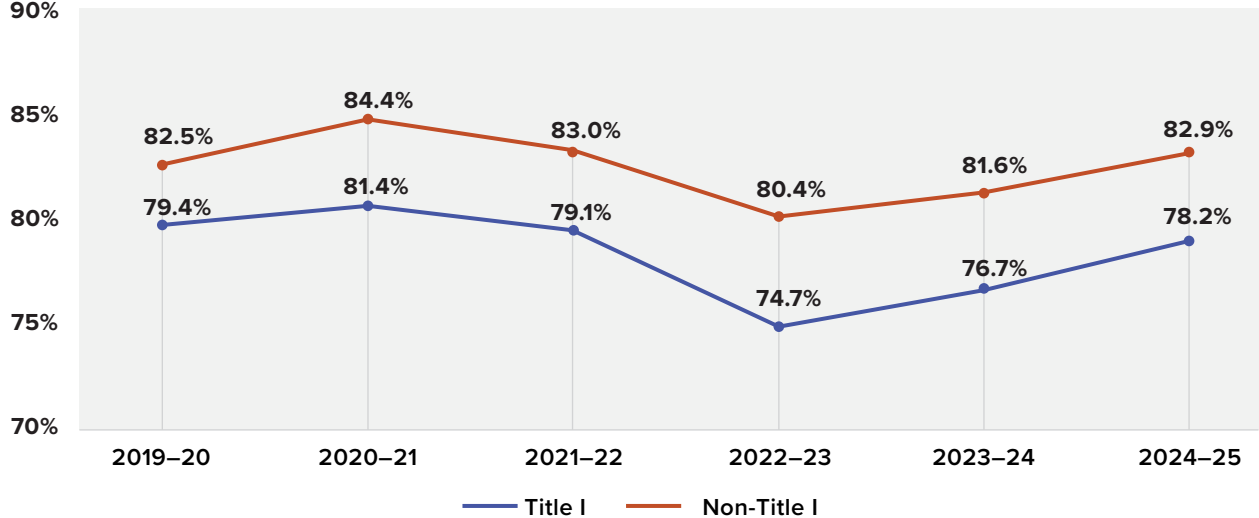
- **State-level retention** reflects whether teachers remain employed in South Carolina public schools from one year to the next.
- **District-level retention** captures whether teachers remain in the same district.
- **School-level retention** addresses stability within individual schools and is most sensitive to teacher movement.

Interpreting these measures collectively helps distinguish between educators leaving the profession entirely and those who remain in the system but change schools or districts.



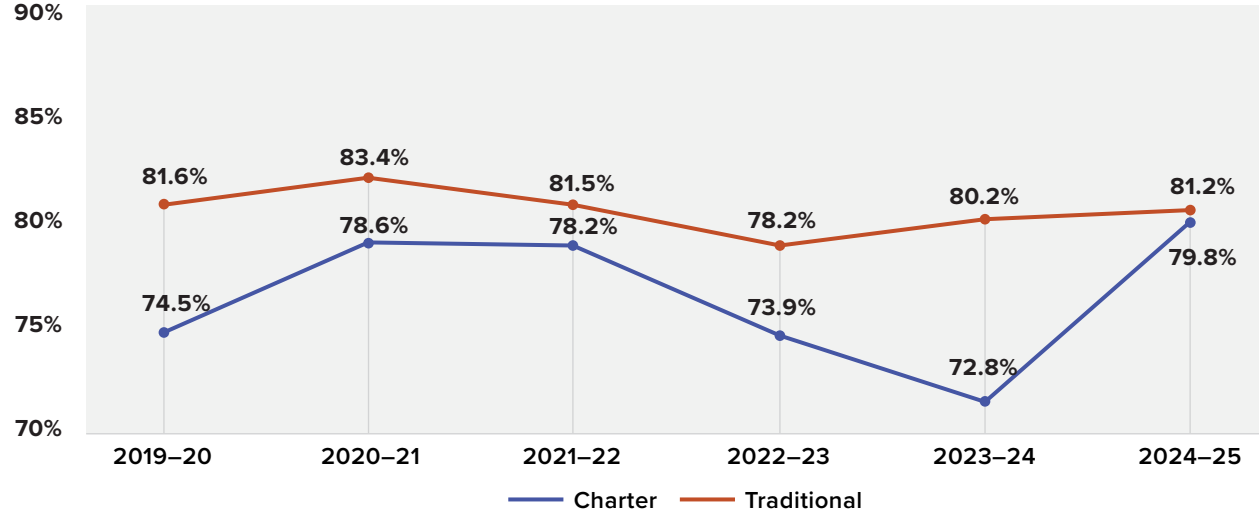
Retention by Title I Status

Examining retention by Title I status highlights how workforce stability varies across schools serving different student populations and funding contexts. In the report, we show that retention patterns differ between Title I and non-Title I schools across elementary, middle, and high school levels. Considering these patterns over time helps identify where retention challenges remain more persistent and where recovery has occurred.



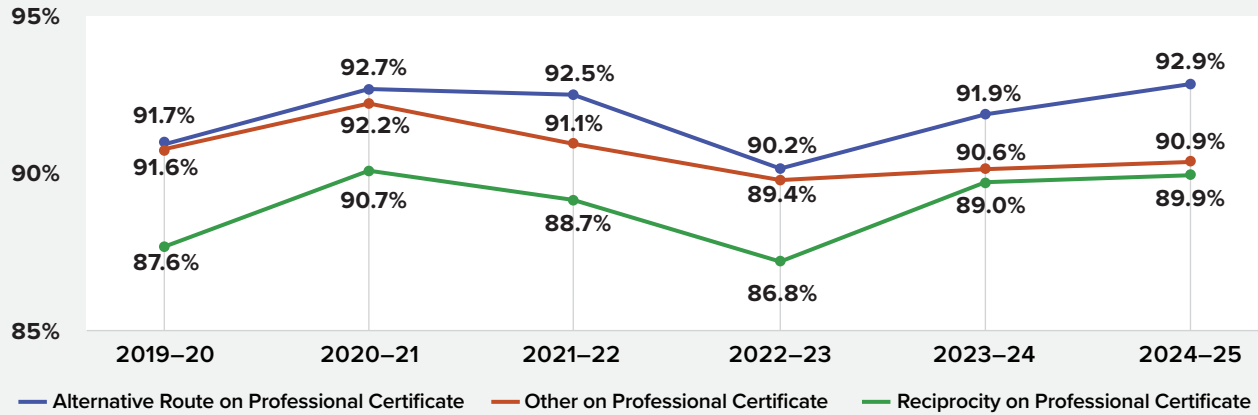
Retention by School Governance

Retention also varies by school governance structure. Patterns observed in traditional public and charter schools reflect differences in both organizational structures and operating conditions. Differences in teacher experience, working conditions, and school stability may contribute to these patterns. Examining retention across governance types provides additional context for understanding variation in workforce stability across South Carolina public schools.



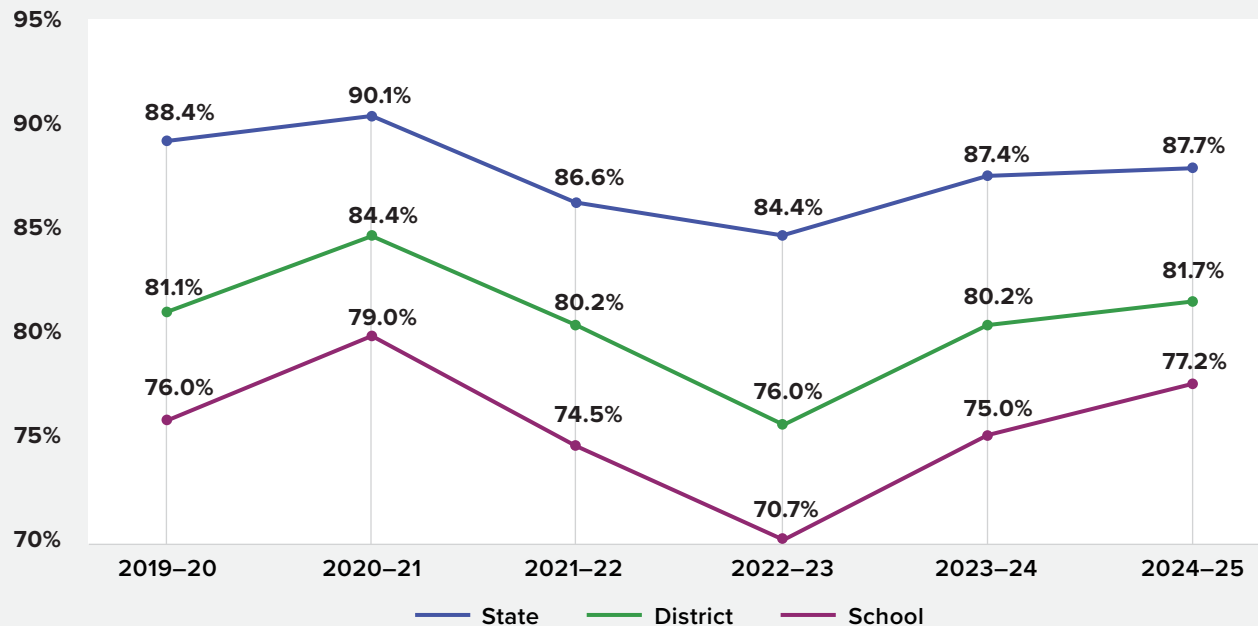
Retention Among Experienced Teachers

Retention patterns also vary by certification type among teachers holding professional certificates. Teachers who completed state-approved alternative certification pathways have consistently shown the highest retention rates, while those entering through reciprocity have been retained at somewhat lower rates. Examining these patterns over time helps illuminate how different pathways into teaching relate to workforce stability in South Carolina. The professional certificate category includes alternative route completers, reciprocity educators, and all other teachers holding a five-year renewable professional certificate—the latter group consisting primarily of graduates of traditional in-state educator preparation programs.



Novice Teacher Retention Across State, District, and School Levels

Retention patterns for novice teachers follow a trajectory similar to the broader South Carolina workforce—a temporary increase during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, a subsequent decline, and a recent recovery—though state-level retention for novice teachers remains modestly lower overall, reflecting higher rates of early-career attrition. Differences between state- and district-level retention are more pronounced for novice teachers than for the workforce as a whole, suggesting greater cross-district movement among early-career educators, while the gap between district- and school-level retention closely mirrors patterns observed for all teachers. Together, these trends indicate that novice teachers are more likely to move within the public school system, particularly across districts, during the early stages of their careers.



Key Findings

RECOVERY IN TEACHER RETENTION

Teacher retention at the state, district, and school levels returned to pre-pandemic levels in 2024–25, following two years of decline.

SCHOOL CONTEXT AND RETENTION

Title I schools and charter schools exhibit lower retention than their counterparts, though gaps narrowed in 2024–25.

RETENTION BY EXPERIENCE

Novice teachers experience lower retention and greater mobility at the state, district, and school levels, with particularly elevated movement among districts.

Using These Findings

Retention, mobility, and attrition are interrelated workforce dynamics that provide insight into the stability of South Carolina’s teacher pipeline. The South Carolina Teacher Attrition, Mobility, and Retention Report for 2024–25 documents where and how teachers move within the public school system over time, highlighting patterns that may not be visible in workforce counts alone.

Staffing data are essential for understanding these patterns, but they do not capture educators’ underlying motivations or experiences. For a more complete picture of why teachers stay, move, or leave, the findings in this report should be considered alongside data from the SC Teacher Exit Survey and SC Teacher Working Conditions Survey, which provide complementary perspectives on teachers’ experiences across school contexts and career stages.

Together, these data sources support a more holistic, evidence-based approach to strengthening educator recruitment, early-career support, and long-term workforce stability across South Carolina.



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.