

2023 Working Conditions of New Teachers in South Carolina

DECEMBER 2023

SC TEACHER's Spring 2023 South Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey (SCTWCS) collected information from more than 17,000 teachers to gauge workplace satisfaction and engagement.

As part of SCTWCS, teachers stated whether they had worked in SC public schools for five years or fewer. Respondents were then categorized as new teachers (i.e., five years or fewer) or experienced teachers (i.e., more than five years). This brief addresses the workforce profile of new teachers in SC who responded to the survey: where they are located, differences in perspectives around job demands and resources, and experiences with an assigned mentor, when applicable.

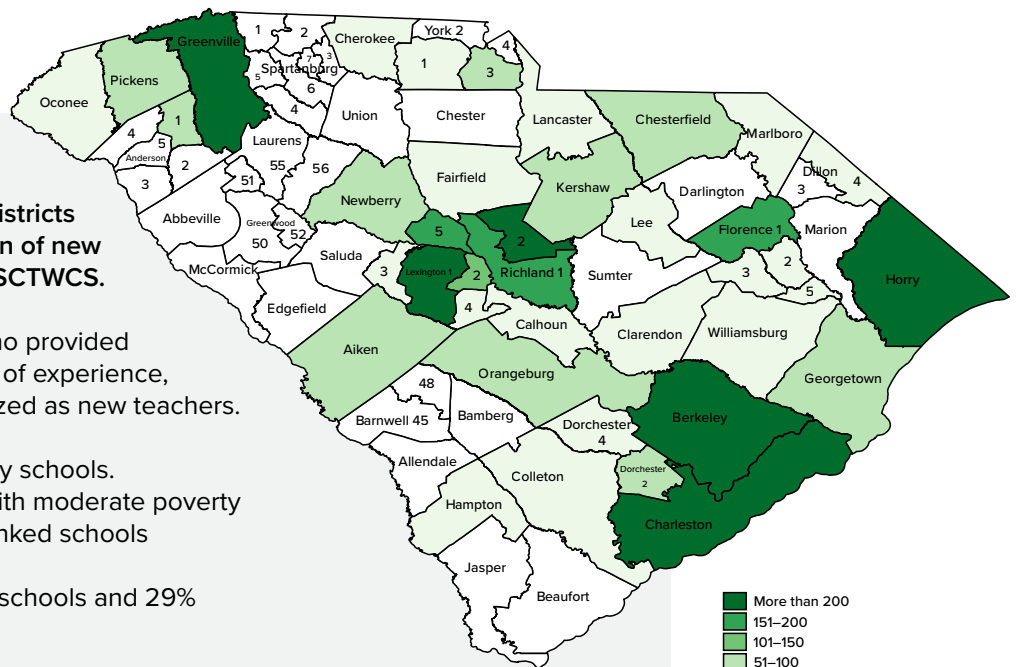
Who are the new teachers who participated in the 2023 SC Teacher Working Conditions Survey?

This map highlights the districts with the largest proportion of new teachers participating in SCTWCS.

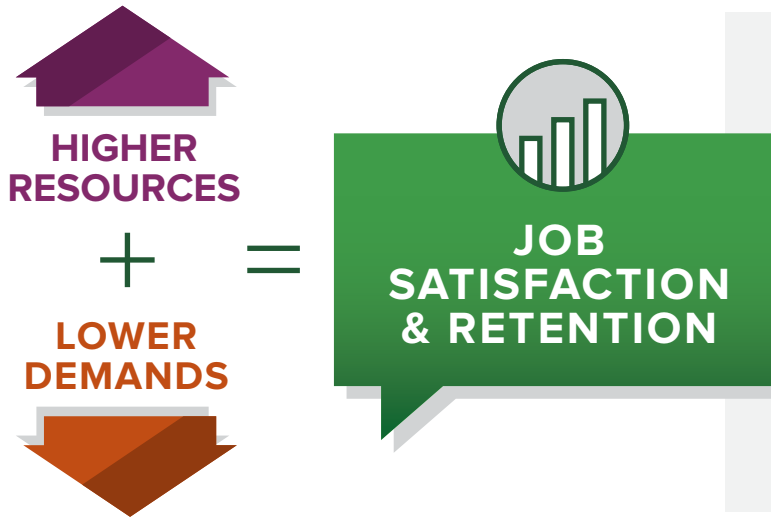
Of the 14,408 teachers who provided information on their years of experience, 3,718 (26%) were categorized as new teachers.

Of those new teachers:

- 42% taught at elementary schools.
- 46% taught at schools with moderate poverty levels (middle 50% of ranked schools by pupils-in-poverty).
- 40% taught in suburban schools and 29% taught in rural schools.

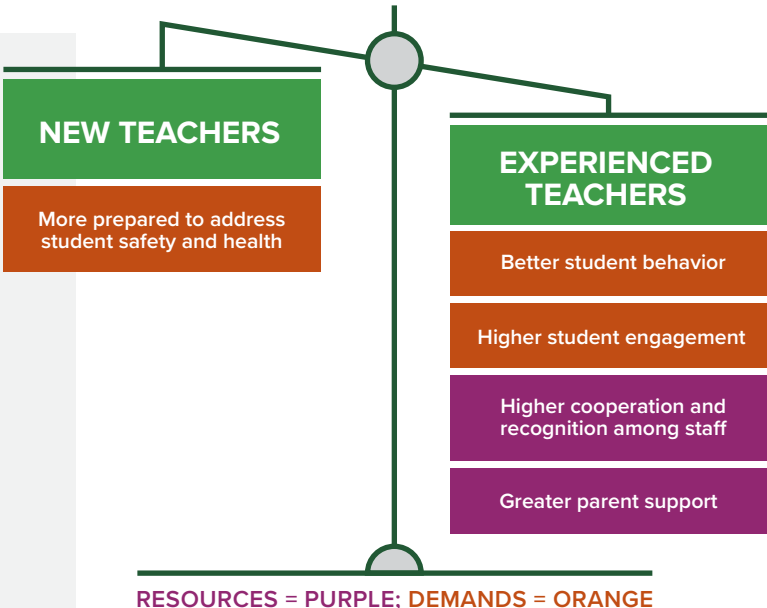


How do teachers' views of demands and resources differ by experience level?



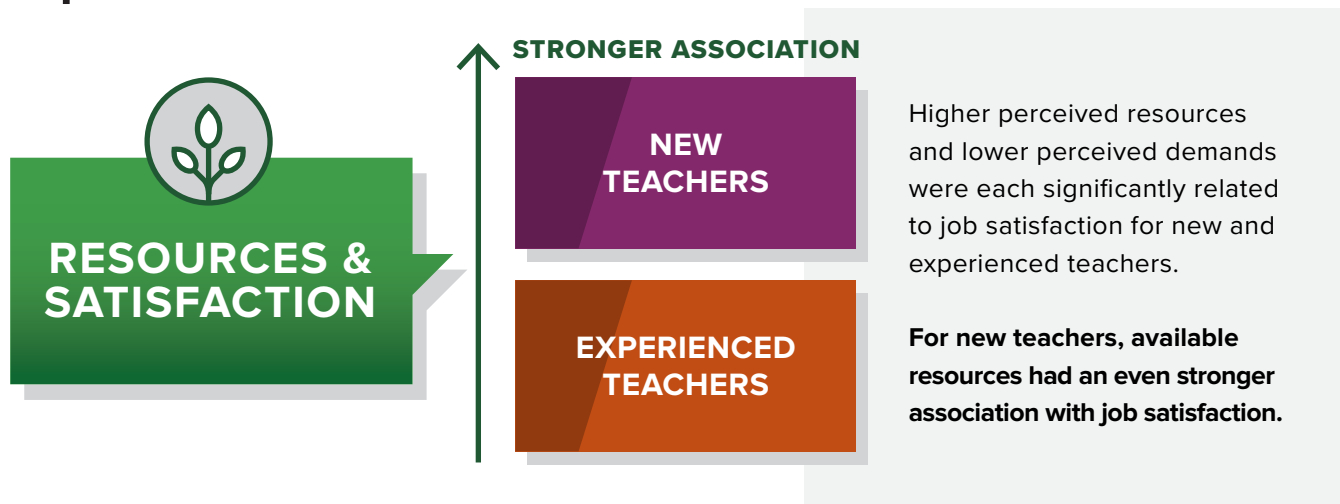
The SCTWCS measured 11 key areas categorized as resources (positive conditions) and demands (negative conditions). Demands (e.g., dealing with student behavior) can be balanced with resources (e.g., administrative support) to bolster teachers and increase the likelihood they remain in the profession.

Looking at resources and demands by experience level, new teachers reported they felt better prepared to handle student safety and health issues. Experienced teachers reported lower demands from student behavior and lack of engagement and greater support from parents and colleagues.



No differences between new or experienced teacher perspectives were observed in the following five areas: administrative support and communication, availability of resources, influence over school policy and decision-making roles, autonomy in the classroom that supports state and local standards, and amount of paperwork and routine duties.

How do teacher perceptions of working conditions differentially relate to overall job satisfaction by experience level?



How do new teachers' perceptions of mentor support differ across grade and school poverty levels?

Of the 3,718 new teachers, 1,336 (36%) reported having an assigned mentor to help with job adjustment and training. These teachers provided feedback on the support their mentors provided for adjusting to the classroom and balancing duties outside of teaching.

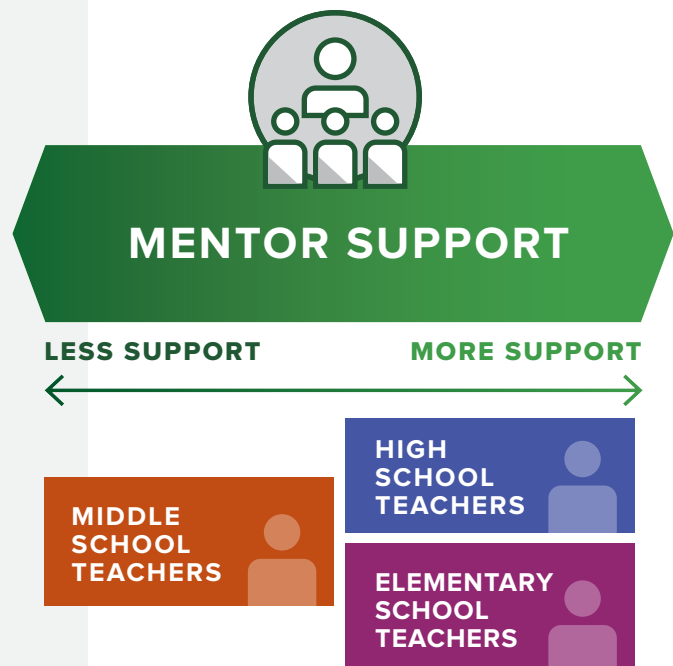
New teacher's proximity to their mentors:

- 92% housed in the same building
- 60% teaching in the same content area
- 56% instructing the same grade level

Locations of new teachers with a mentor:

- Elementary schools (40%)
- Schools with moderate poverty levels (45%)
- Schools in suburban areas (37%)

New teachers in elementary schools perceived higher mentor support than those in middle schools, both for teaching and for balancing duties outside the classroom. However, no differences were observed between new teachers in elementary and high schools or across school poverty levels.



+ KEY FINDINGS

1

New teachers feel more prepared to address student safety and health than experienced teachers. Experienced teachers perceive better student behavior and engagement and more parent and colleague support.

2

While there is a positive relationship between resources and job satisfaction for new and experienced teachers, the relationship between resources and job satisfaction is stronger for new teachers.

3

New teachers at middle schools perceive lower mentor support inside and outside of the classroom compared to new teachers at elementary schools.

About the SC Teacher Working Conditions Survey

The South Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey (SCTWCS), conducted by SC TEACHER, aims to shed light on the working conditions of classroom teachers in South Carolina. In spring 2023, the SCTWCS was distributed across 44 out of 83 school districts, with a participation rate of 49%, representing 68% of teachers statewide through responses from 17,954 teachers in 849 schools.

The survey investigates 11 aspects of teacher working conditions, including resources and demands. Resources refer to positive aspects of teaching conditions, like support and communication. Demands represent challenges teachers face, such as time spent on paperwork. The survey explores the impact of these conditions on teachers' job satisfaction and intention to remain in the profession, as well as three areas of mentor support for new teachers.

Detailed information about the SCTWCS can be found at sc-teacher.org/twc-survey/

A full description of the analyses used in this report is provided in the Technical Appendix at sc-teacher.org/2023-working-conditions-of-new-teachers-in-south-carolina