

Georgia Professional Standards Commission

Georgia Educator Report

Fall 2009



Kelly C. Henson, Executive Secretary

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Overview

This report provides information on Georgia's P-12 public school educators based on the October Certified and Classified Personnel Information (CPI) data collections beginning with the 1997-98 school year.

For the purposes of this report, a teacher is an individual reported in the CPI with any teacher of record assignment with an FTE greater than zero who has been verified as holding at least one Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GAPSC) educator certificate. These individuals sometimes also will have student services, administrative or non-certified assignments.

The teaching workforce has grown each year through the 2008-09 school year. The 2009-10 school year marks the first time since 1997-98 the statewide teacher workforce has declined in size, from 119,996 to 116,859, a reduction of 3,137 individuals. At the same time, student enrollment growth has begun to rebound: in the fall of the 2008-09 school year only 6,203 more students were reported compared to the previous fall; in the fall of this 2009-10 school year, enrollment grew by 11,893 students.

Statewide teacher attrition has declined from a high of 8.2% in 2004-05 to 7.1% this year. Promotion or reassignment to non-teaching positions has also declined from a high of 1.6% in 2006-07 to 1.2% this year. Teacher job-changing, or mobility, from one school system to another decreased from an all-time high of 5% in 2006-07 to 3.7% last year to only 1.5% this fall. Hiring also declined dramatically, from 14,675 in 2006-07 to 11,617 in 2008-09 to only 6,002 this fall.

The ratio of support and administrative personnel to teachers has remained essentially stable for both administration (*e.g.*, principals) and student services (*e.g.*, counselors). The number of administrators per one hundred teachers rose slightly this year from 7.0 to 7.2, as did the number of student services staff from 5.6 to 5.7 per hundred teachers. The ratio of education support staff (*e.g.* literacy and graduation coaches) has risen steadily over the years from 3.3 per hundred teachers at the end of the last decade to 4.7 per hundred this 2009-10 school year.

Average teacher age and experience increased substantially in this year. Average age increased almost a half-year from 42.20 to 42.68 years, while average experience rose from 12.35 to 12.84 years from 2008-09 to 2009-10. Given that many of each year's new and relatively young teachers arrive from recent graduation at colleges of education, changes in average age and experience are primarily the result of the precipitous drop in hiring this year.

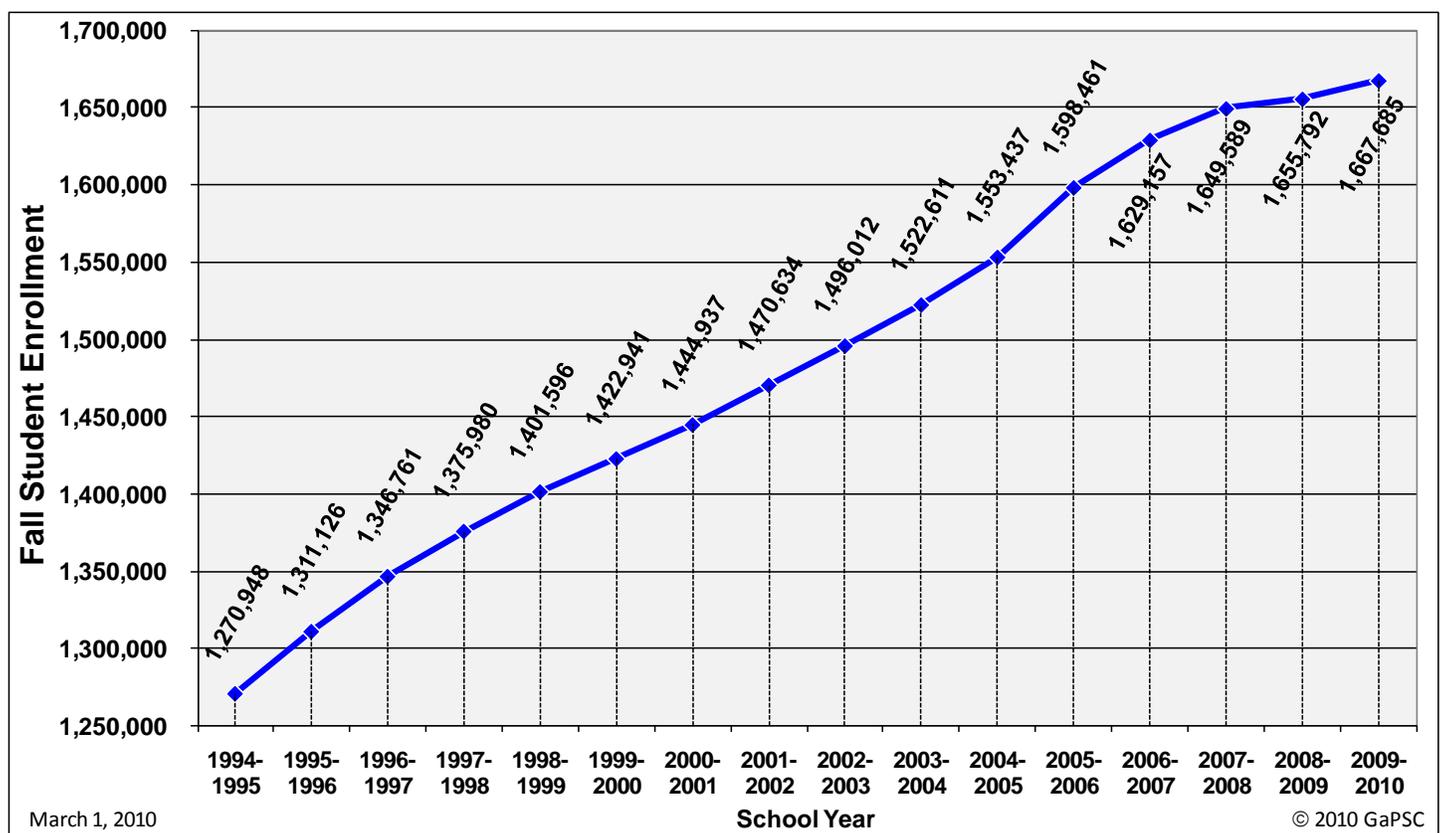
The percentage of classroom teachers of minority race or ethnicity continues to rise. Minorities comprised 20.9% of the teacher workforce in 1997-98; that has increased to 26.5% this school year.

The percentage of teachers with advanced degrees continues to increase, with 62.9% of all teachers holding at least a master's degree or equivalent.

Student Enrollment

Georgia public school enrollment has increased every year since counts became available in the 1994-95 school year. The 2005-06 school year saw a rise in enrollment above normal, bolstered even further by the influx of more than 10,000 students from neighboring states in the aftermath of several hurricanes. While enrollment has continued to grow, the rate of growth slowed for the next three years. Enrollment increased about 12,000 students in the October 2009 Full Time Equivalent count in comparison with enrollment the year before.

Figure 1. Total number of Georgia pre-Kindergarten through grade twelve public school students

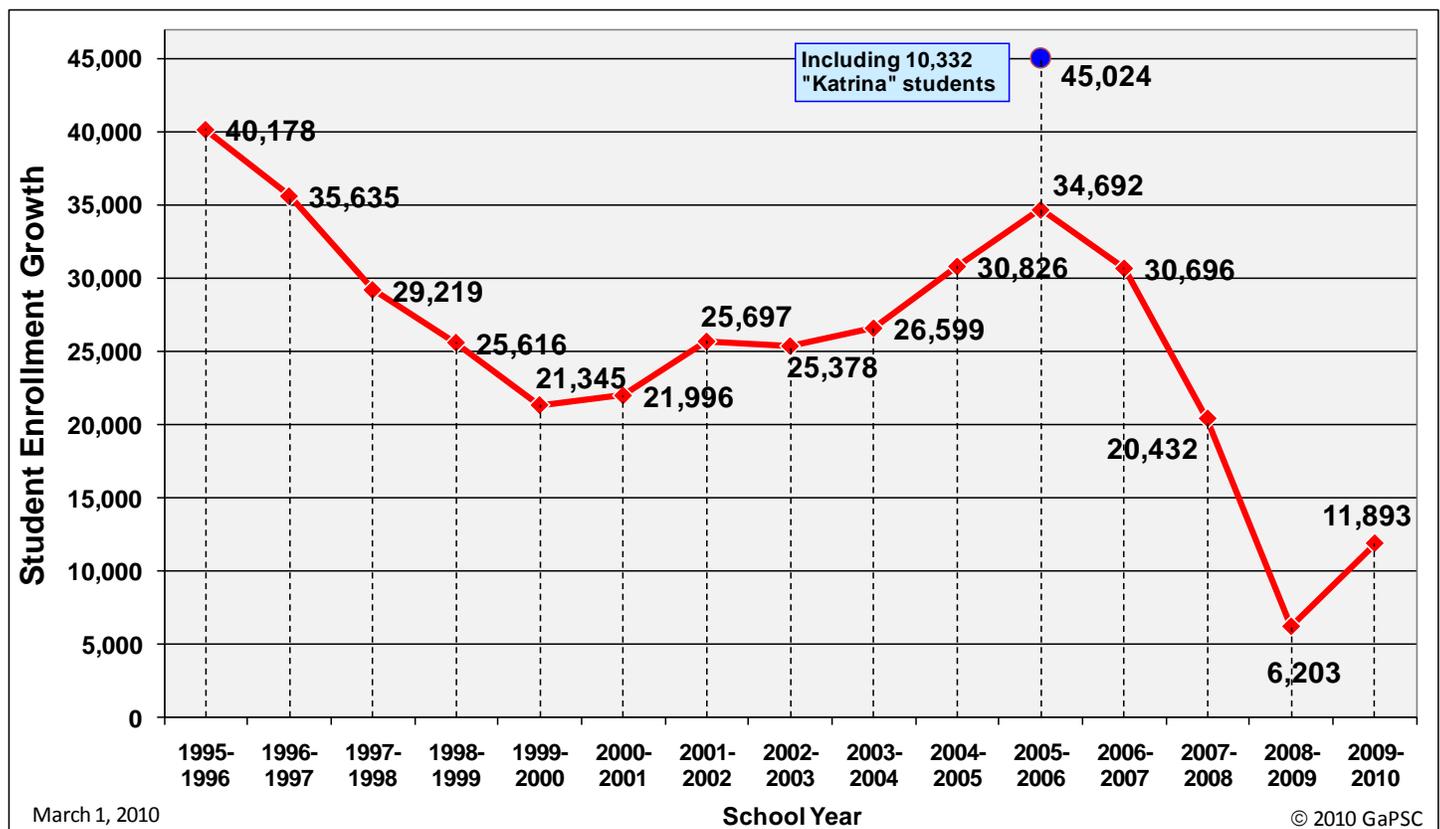


Annual changes in student enrollment

In past years, growth in statewide student enrollment had been somewhat predictable, averaging about 2% except in 2005-2006 when it rose to 2.9%. Even without the influx of hurricane evacuees, Georgia enrollment would have increased by about 35,000 students - growth not seen since the mid-90's, which seemed to suggest that Georgia's population growth, and corollary teacher demand, would continue unabated. The 2006-07 growth of 30,000 could have simply been a beginning of more stable growth, but 2007-08 should have been an early indicator of the state's participation in the worldwide economic decline. The decline in 2008-09 to almost zero enrollment growth – less than one half of one percent (0.38%) - makes long-term prediction of future teacher demand highly uncertain.

The 2009-10 enrollment growth 'rebounded' to almost 12,000. One year's change cannot and should not be used to predict any long-term change. However, if the decline in growth beginning with the 2006-07 school year was an indicator of the coming recession, then it will be interesting if this year's shift in enrollment growth becomes an early indicator of economic rebound.

Figure 2. Change in student enrollment each year from the previous year

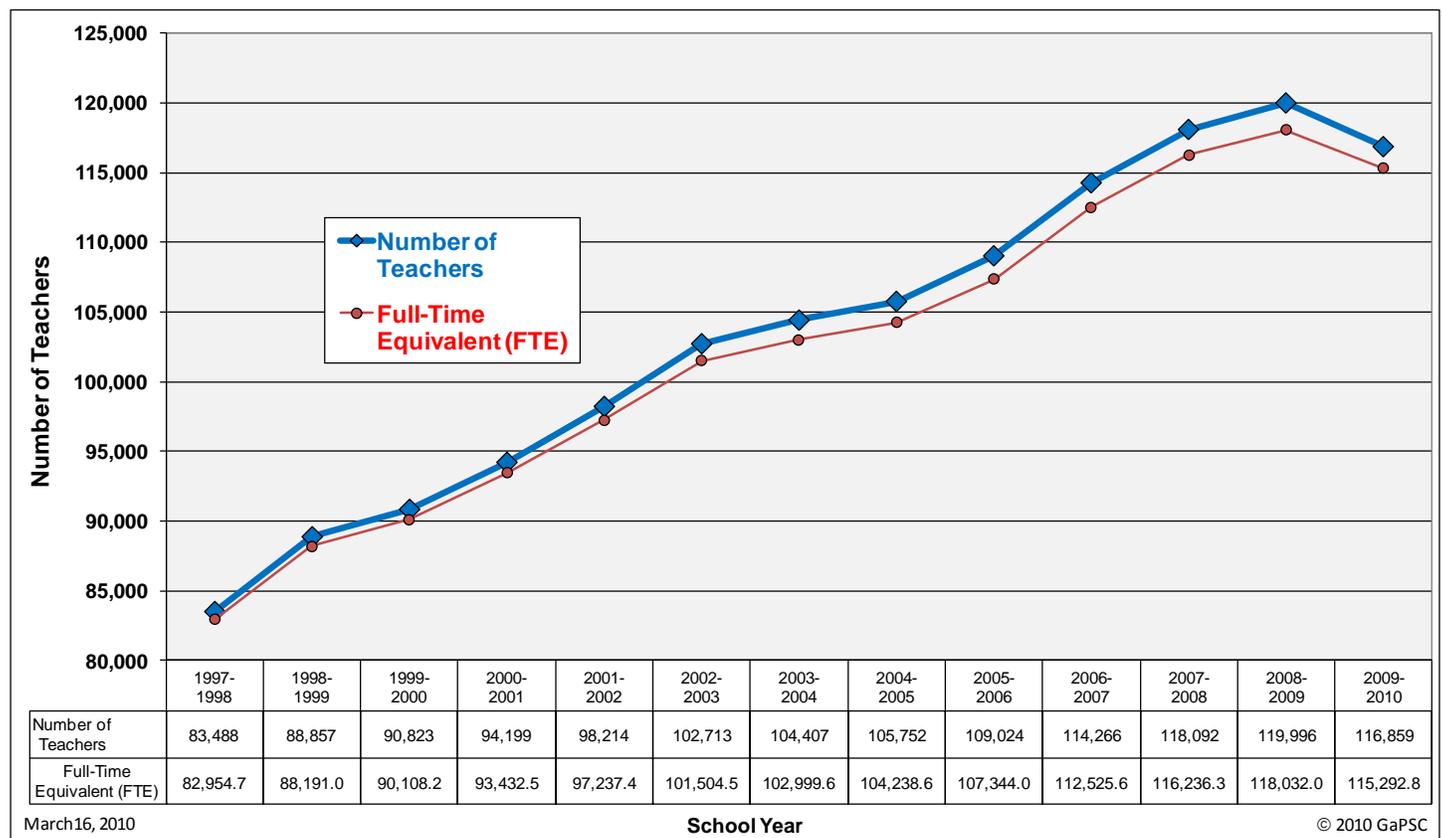


Teacher Staffing

For the first time since the 1997-98 school year, teacher staffing has declined in Georgia public schools. The number of teachers declined by more than 3,000 individuals from 2008-09 to 2009-10, to 116,859. Not all teachers are contracted full-time, hence teacher employment is also reported by full-time equivalency (FTE), which declined by more than 2,700 this past year to 115,292.8. The slightly smaller decline in FTE than in the absolute number of teachers indicates that part-time staffing was also reduced: a smaller percentage of teachers are employed part-time this school year (down from 3.5% to 3.0%), and the average percentage of time they work increased slightly from .56 to .59 FTE.

These counts reflect individuals in the annual October Certified and Classified Personnel Information collections who were reported with any teaching assignment, regardless of what or what amount of non-teaching assignments they had. For example, some teachers may spend some of their day as an assistant principal; others may have morning and afternoon bus driving duties.

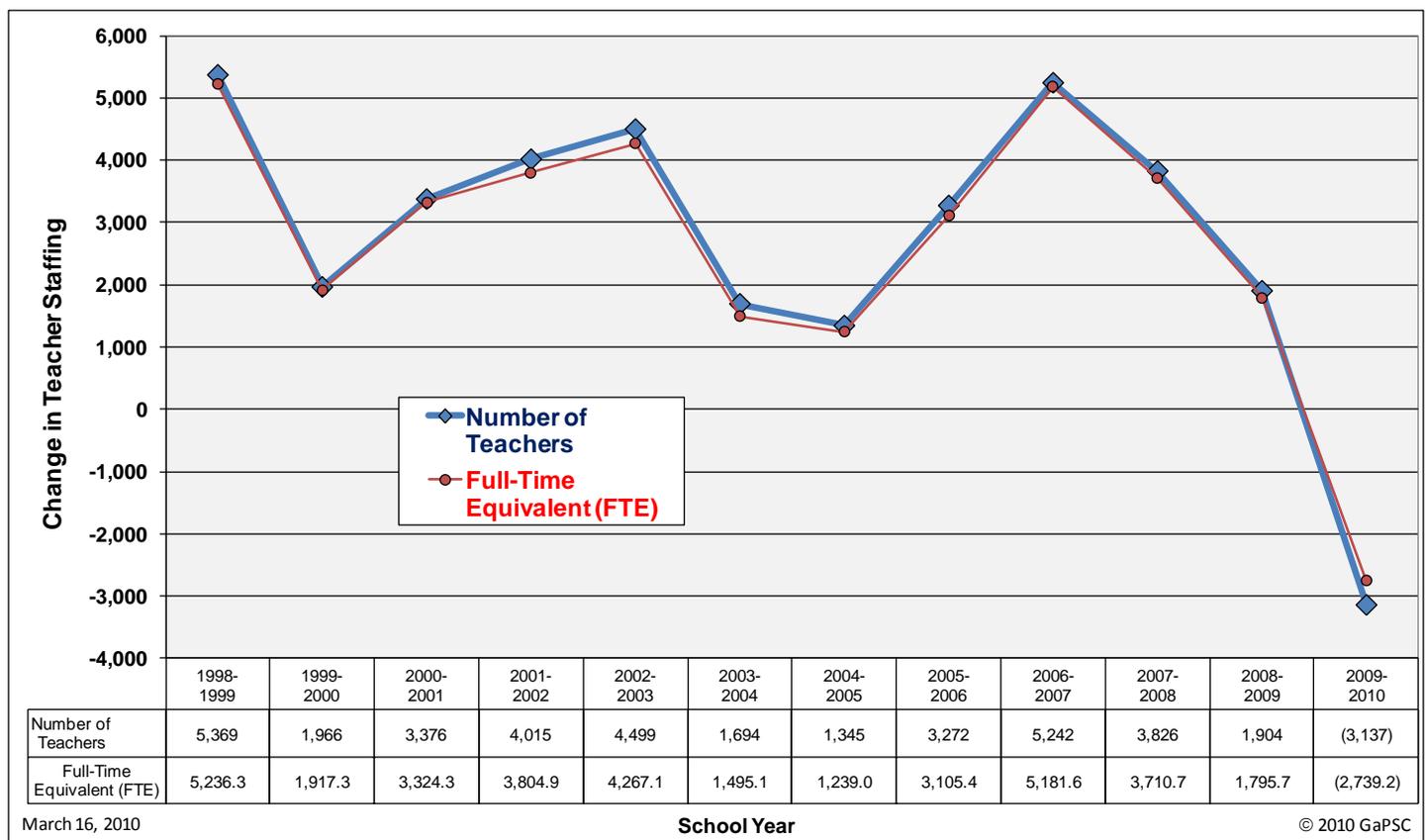
Figure 3. Total number of Georgia pre-Kindergarten through grade twelve public school teachers and their corresponding full-time equivalent employment



Change in Teacher Staffing

Although 2009-10 is the first year the number of teachers employed in Georgia public schools actually declined, the change in staffing growth since 1997-98 has been highly variable. More than 5,000 teachers were added to the state's public school workforce in both the 1998-99 and 2006-07 school years, while fewer than 2,000 were added in the years 1999-00, 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2008-09. Although some of the variation is in response to changes in enrollment growth, some change has been a function of policy initiatives such as legislated changes in class size.

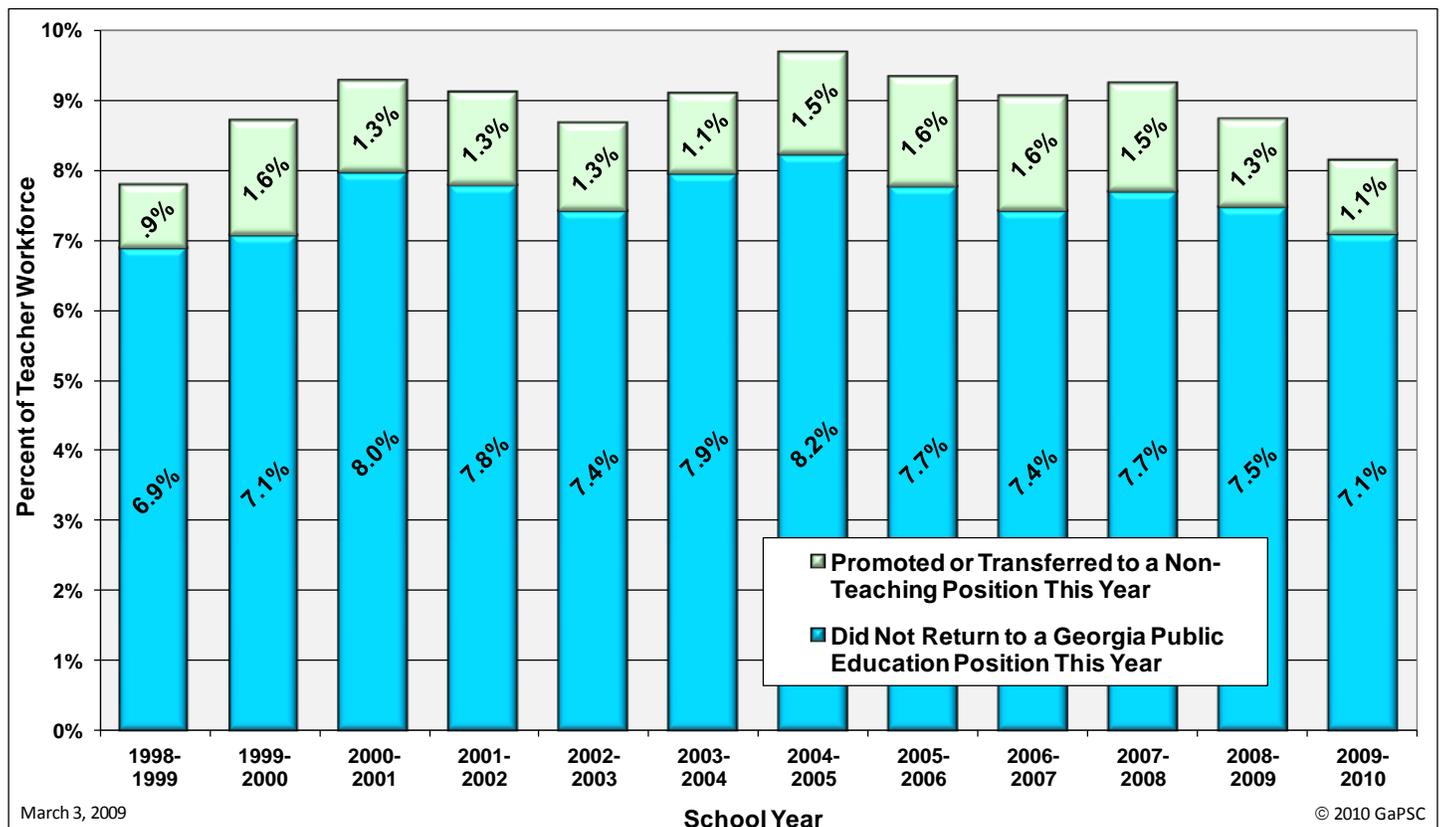
Figure 4. Change from the previous year in the number of P-12 Georgia public school teachers and their corresponding total full-time equivalent employment



Teacher Attrition

The rate at which teachers depart the profession is both a human and economic capital issue. Shown below are the attrition and promotion/reassignment rates for all teachers. The total of promotion and attrition indicates the proportion of the teaching force that must be replaced in that year. This year's attrition rate of 7.1% has not been so low since the 1999-00 school year, and reached its highest point of 8.2% in 2004-05. Promotion and reassignment rates, an indicator of career opportunity, fell to 1.1% this year from 1.6% only three years ago, in 2006-07. If attrition and promotion rates are indicators of changes in the economy, a rise in both rates could be anticipated as the economy recovers.

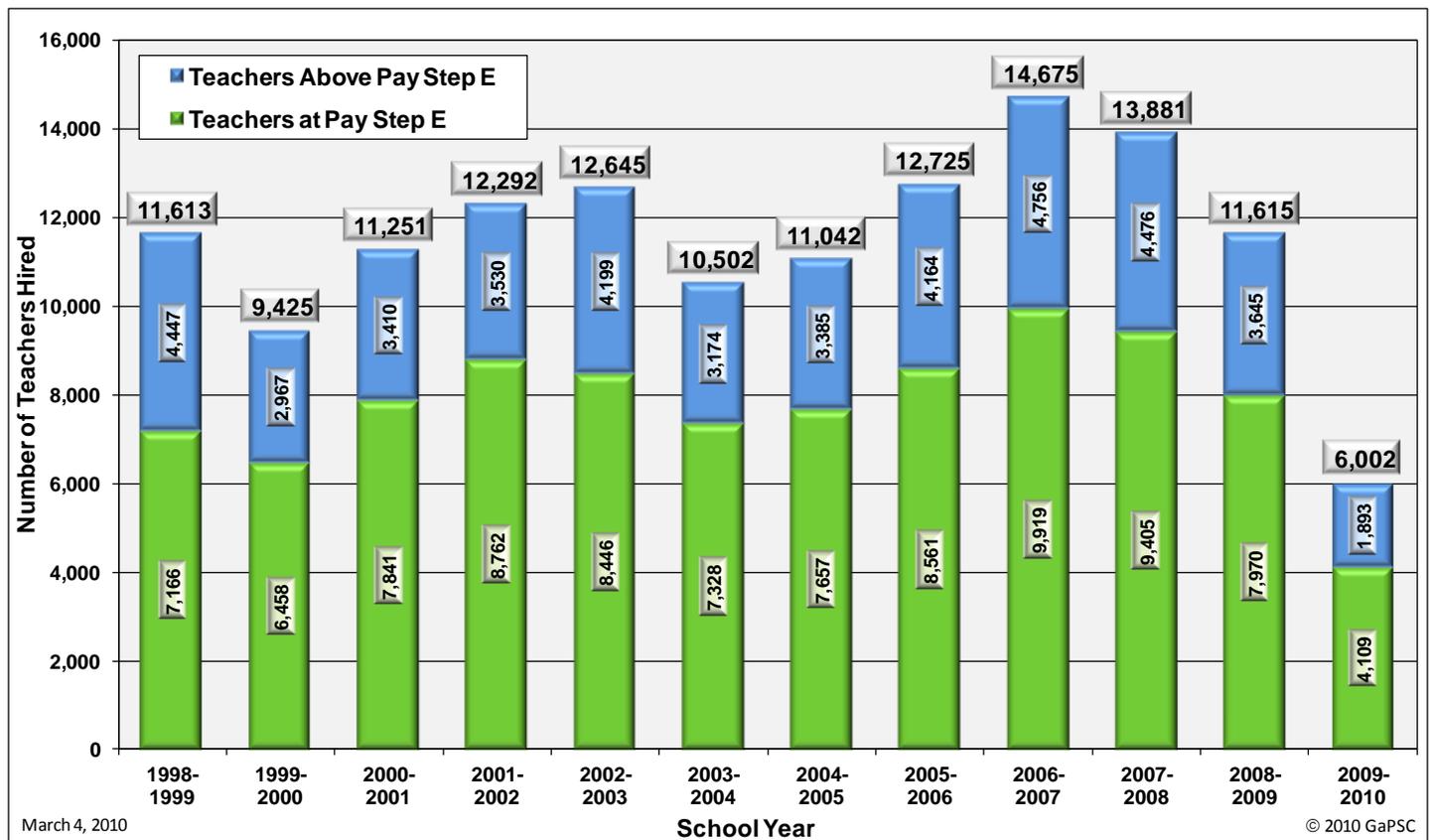
Figure 5. Teacher attrition, promotion and reassignment rates: Percentages of teachers reported in the previous year who were either reported as promoted or reassigned, or were no longer employed in a certified capacity in Georgia public schools



Teacher Hiring

As shown in Figure 4, the 2009-10 school year is the first time the Georgia public school teaching workforce has actually decreased in size. This graph shows the number of teachers hired or who returned after an absence of one or more years. State salary schedule pay step “E” is the beginning step for educators with fewer than three years’ experience. Almost all newly hired teachers at pay step “E” will be beginning teachers with no prior experience as educators. They constituted 68.5% of the new teachers hired in the fall of 2009. Teachers at higher salary step levels are generally those who have returned to teaching after one or more years’ absence, or were credited for other experience, such as years teaching in another state. The number of individuals hired was cut virtually in half this fall, from 11,615 in 2008-09 to 6,002 in 2009-10.

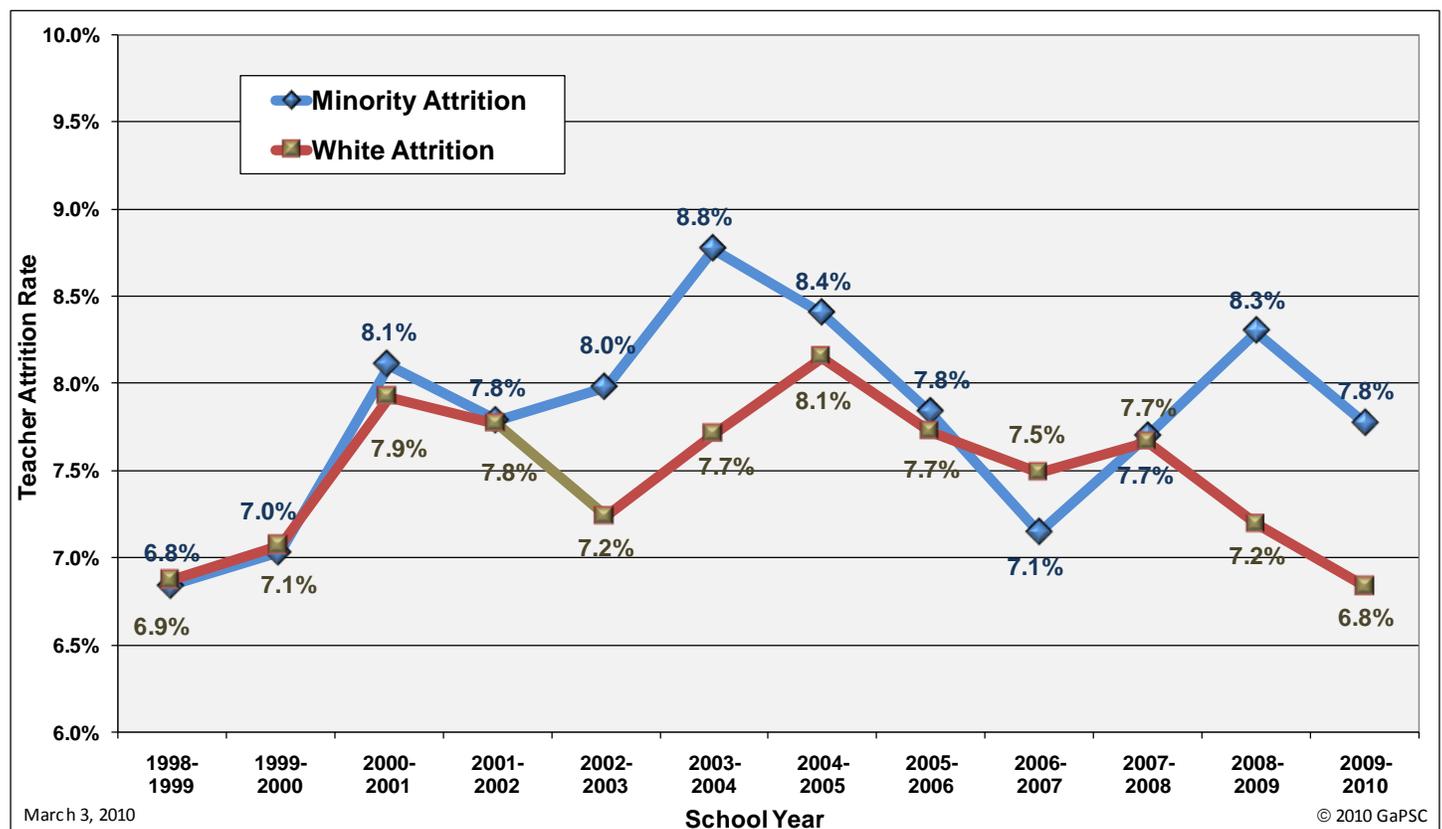
Figure 6. Number of teachers hired for replacement, enrollment growth and policy changes



Teacher Attrition

The attrition rate for minority teachers has generally been slightly higher than for white teachers since the data have become available. The attrition rate for minority teachers reached a high of 8.8% in 2003-04 compared to 7.7% that year for white teachers. The attrition rate for minority teachers dropped below that for white teachers in 2006-07, but again rose in subsequent years.

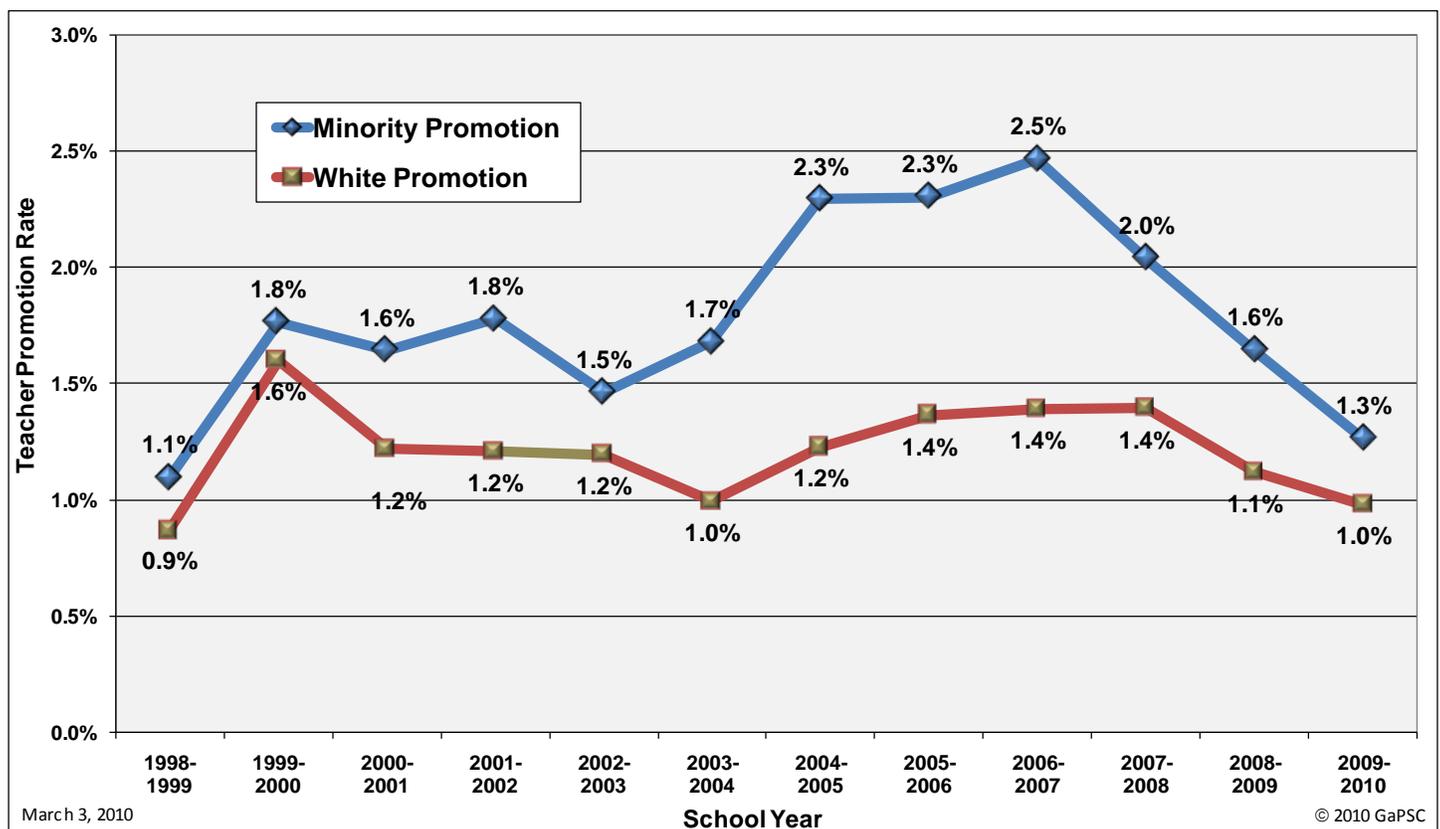
Figure 7. Attrition rates for white and minority teachers



Teacher Promotion

The promotion rate for minority teachers has remained higher than for white teachers since the data have become available. Promotion rates for minority teachers approached double that of white teachers from the 2004-05 through the 2006-07 school years. As the recession began to slow enrollment growth there became fewer opportunities for promotion; the rates for all teachers began to decline. In the current 2009-10 school year the promotion rate for minority teachers decreased to 1.3% while that for white teachers dropped to 1%.

Figure 8. Promotion rates of white and minority teachers

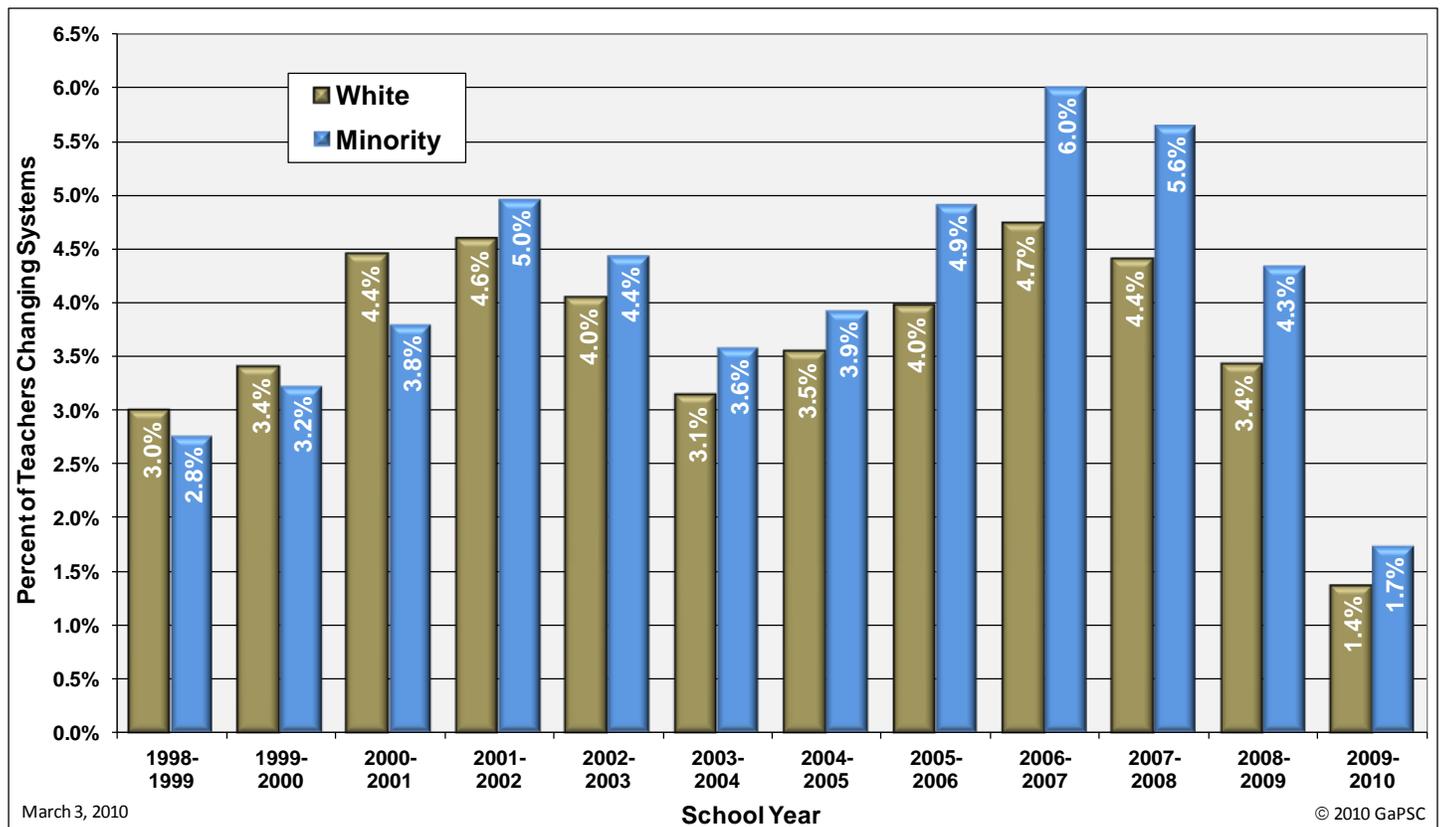


Teacher Mobility

The movement of teachers from one school system to another is as much an economic burden to systems as is departure from the public school workforce, and may also reflect the condition of the economy as hiring increases and decreases, making mobility easier or more difficult. Fully 4.7% of Georgia’s white teachers and 6% of its minority teachers moved from one school system to another between 2005-06 and 2006-07. Those numbers have declined radically to 1.4% and 1.7% this year. As fewer jobs were available, less opportunity was available to move from one school system to another.

Mobility includes those individuals who are promoted to non-teaching assignments in different school systems.

Figure 9. Teacher system mobility: Percentage of teachers in the previous year who remained employed in Georgia public education but changed their school system of employment

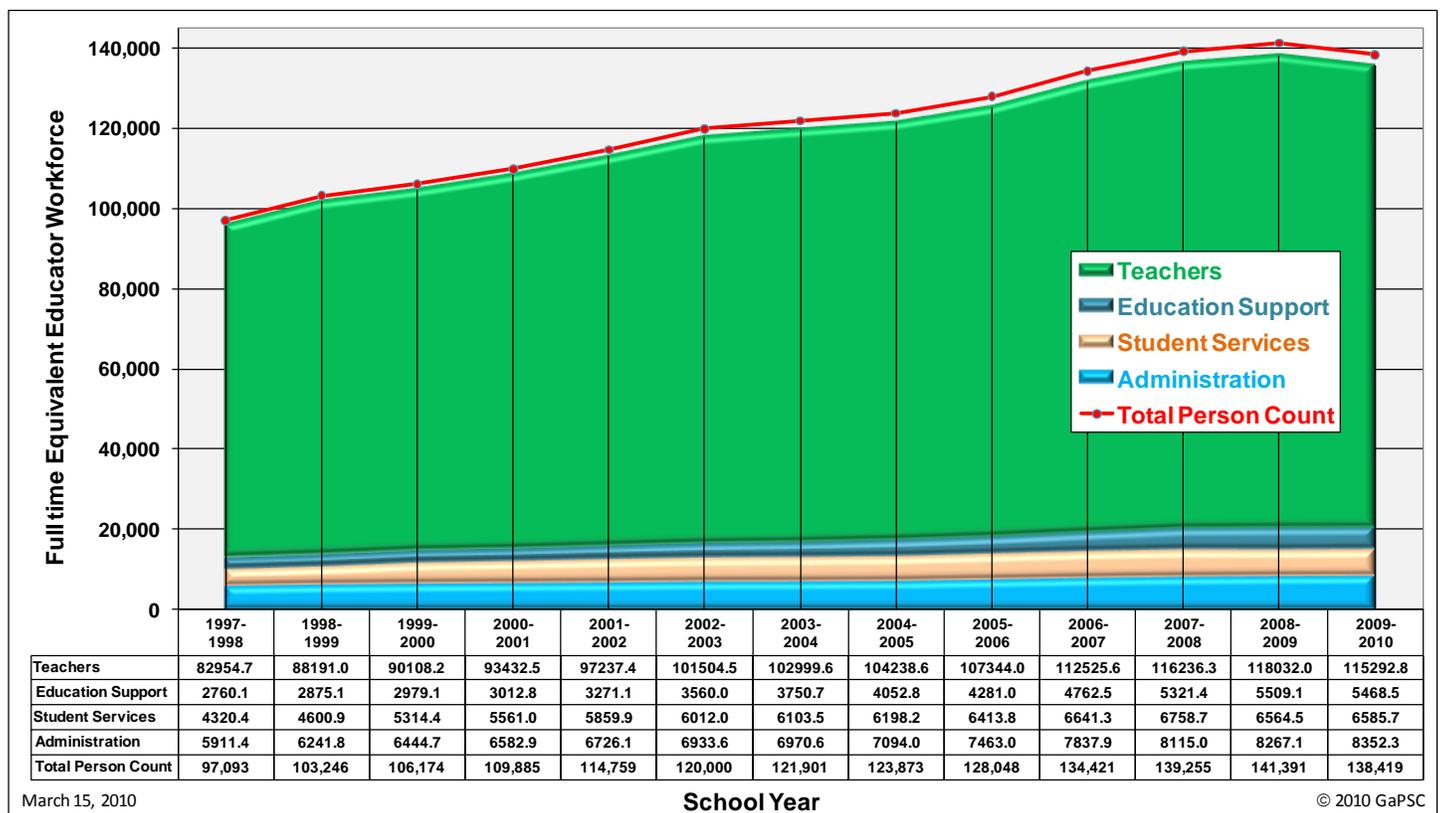


Georgia P-12 Education Workforce in Full-time Equivalent (FTE)

The graph below shows the number of certified educators in four categories in terms of their full-time equivalency (FTE) employment, as if all educators worked full time and were employed only in one category. There were 4,009 certified educators working less than 95% time reported in October 2009, down from 5,017 in October 2008. FTE must be used for comparing different educator categories because many individuals have multiple job assignments. For example, 2,839 teachers also have duties other than teaching in this 2009-10 school year.

In response to expanding student enrollment, the number of certified educators in Georgia public schools grew annually until the 2009-10 school year. The 2009-10 school year is the first time since 1997-98 that statewide public school staffing actually declined. Teaching declined 2,739.2 FTE. There were 2,972 fewer certified individuals reported employed in October 2009 than were reported in October 2008.

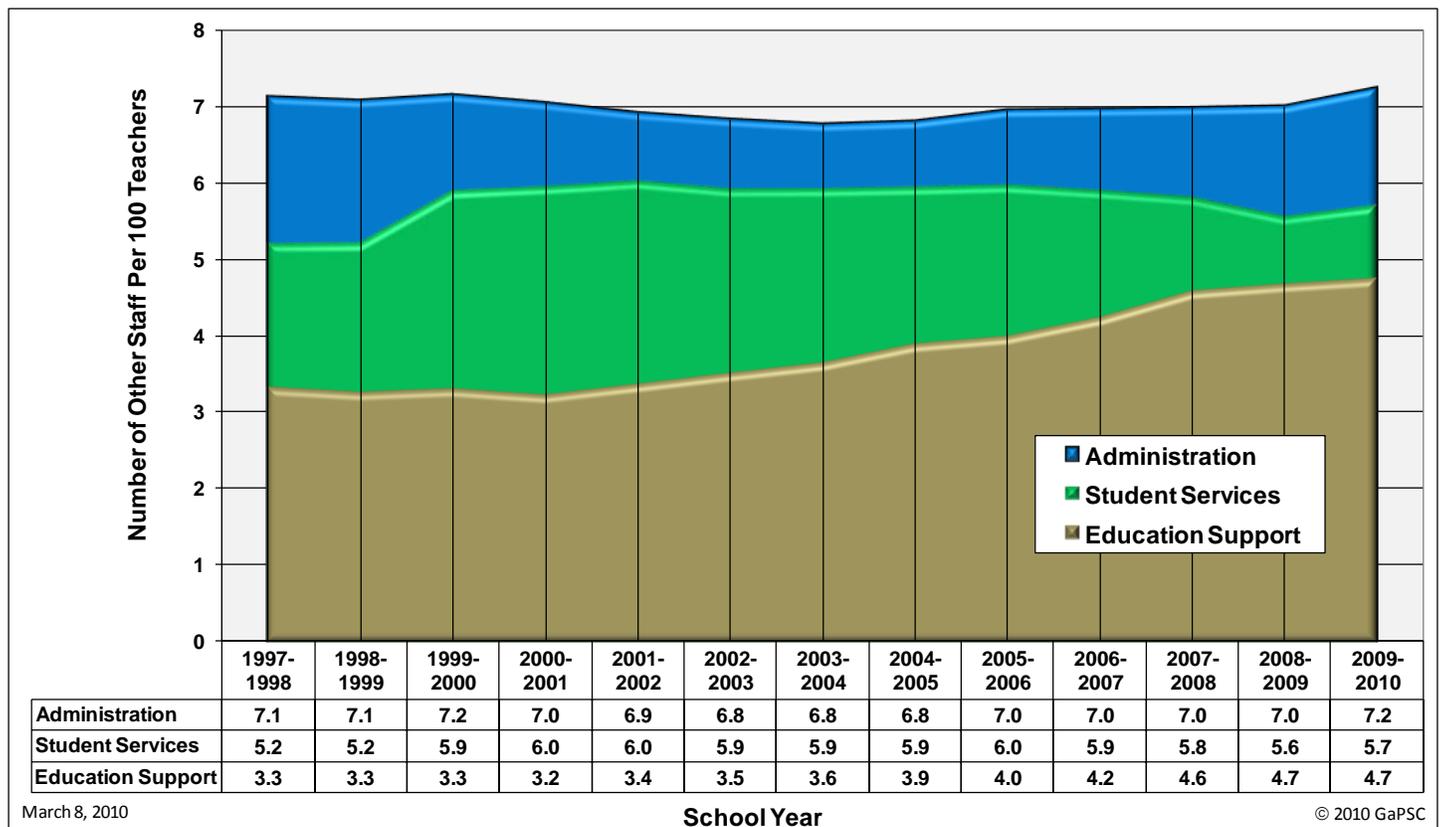
Figure 10. Full-time equivalent counts of Georgia’s educational workforce



Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Ratios of Administrative and Support Personnel to Teachers

Another way to look at staffing changes is the number of support staff relative to teaching staff, similar to following changes in the student-teacher ratio. The FTE of school and district administrators per 100 teacher FTE has remained very stable over the years, as has student services FTE. The category of staff referred to as Education Support, however, has risen substantially since the 2000 school year. Education Support individuals hold such positions as Literacy Coach, Work Study Coordinator, and Graduation Coach. Their ratio has increased from 3.3 FTE per hundred teacher FTE in 1997-98 to 4.7 per hundred this year. These individuals, at least by job category definition, work directly with student issues but do not have direct responsibility for students.

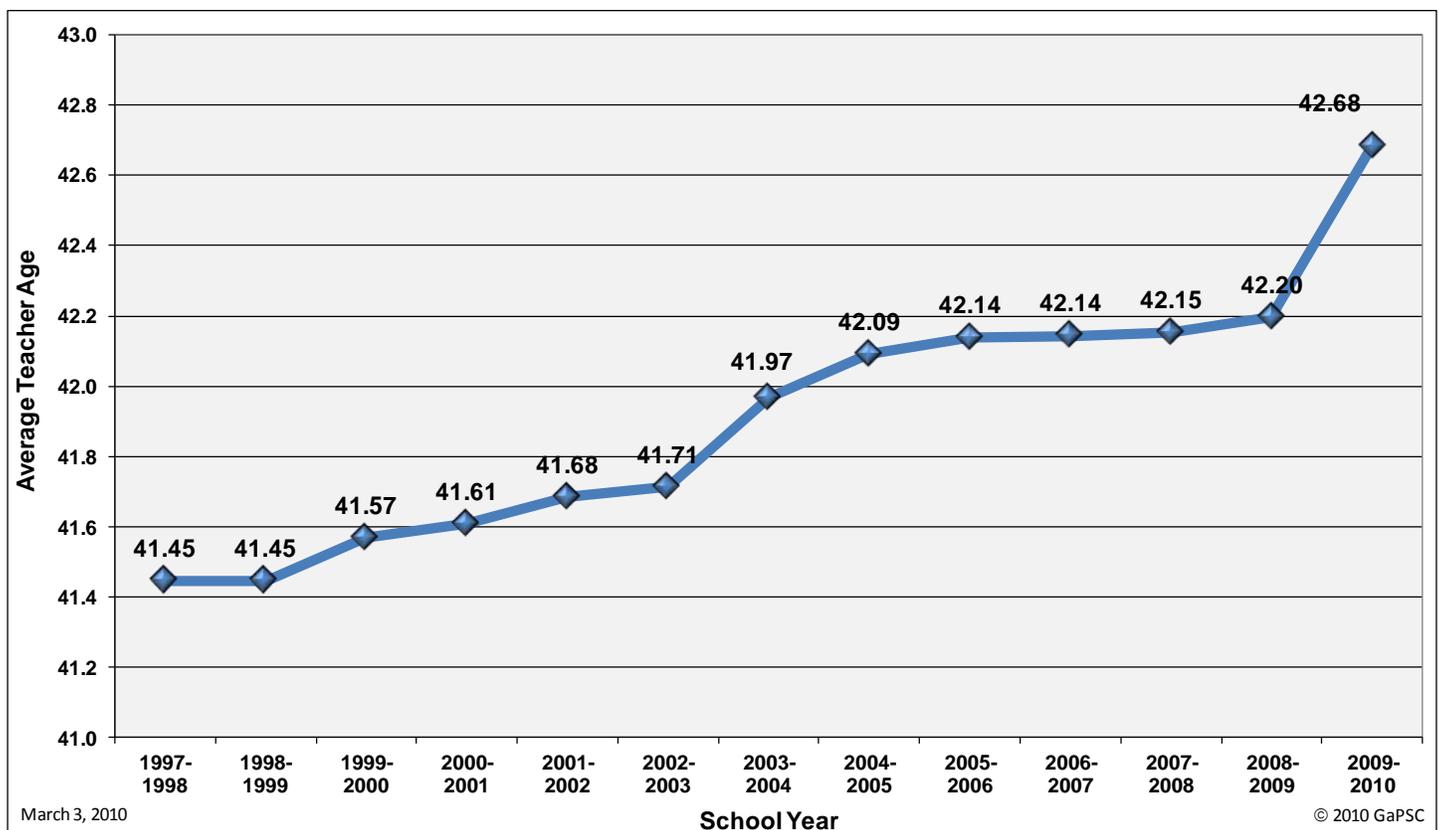
Figure 11. Ratios of categories of administrative and support personnel per 100 teacher FTE



Teacher Age

The average age of Georgia’s teachers had been increasing gradually each year until now. The increase for the 2009-10 school year was substantial, due in large part to a sharp decline in the number of new, younger teachers hired as well as an increase in the number of older teachers postponing retirement. It is possible that as the economy recovers there will be a decline in average age as these older teachers retire and younger teachers are hired to replace them as well as to meet staffing demands resulting from student enrollment growth.

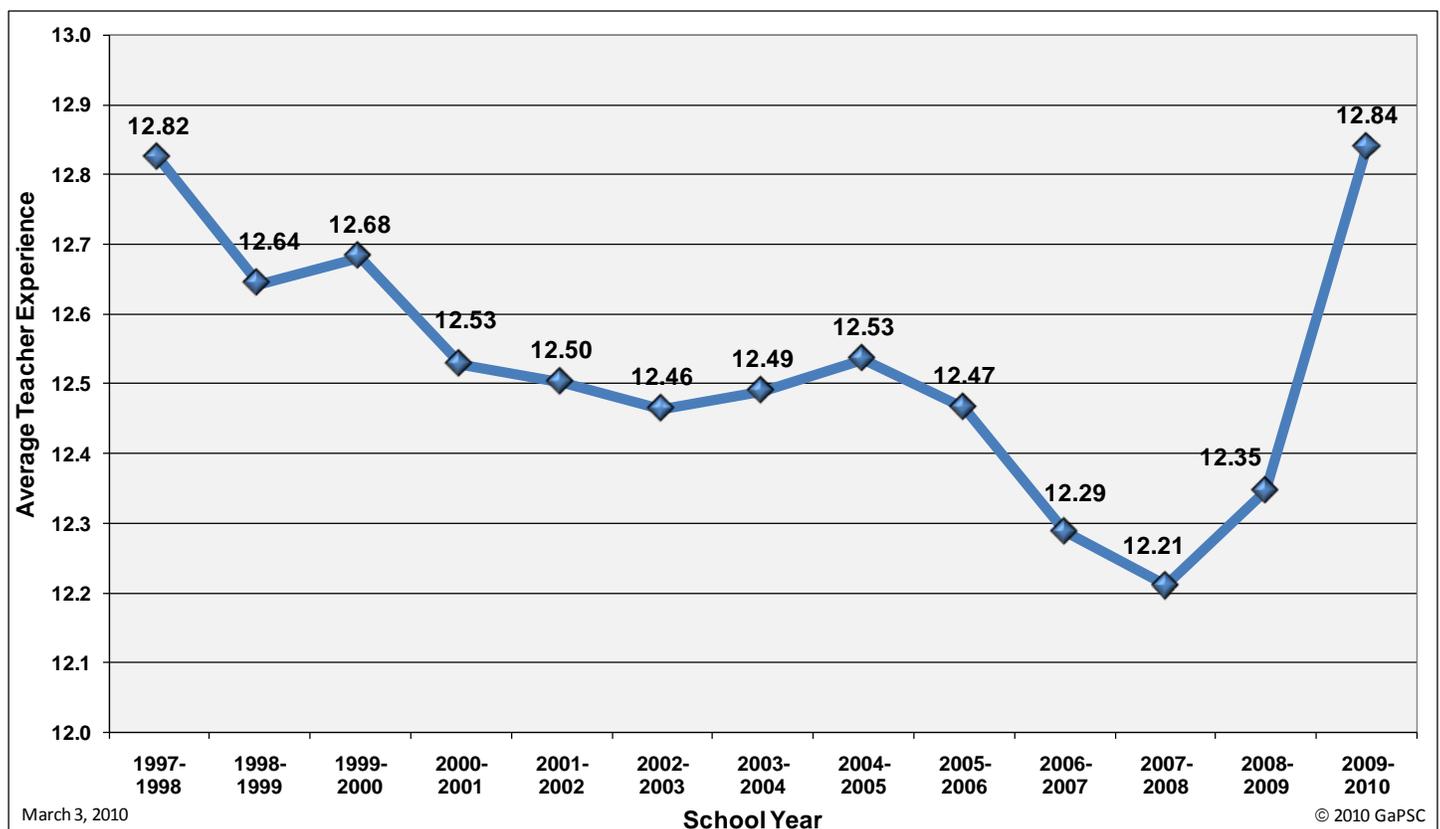
Figure 12. Average age of Georgia public school teachers



Teacher Experience

As with teacher age, the overall average experience of Georgia’s teachers increased substantially from two years ago for 2007-08 to 12.84 years in 2009-10, due to the large decline in new teacher hiring. The interaction of age and experience is somewhat complex. Teacher age continued to increase in recent years as average experienced declined during the previous decade, a function of policy and program changes in teacher development and certification. Programs such as Georgia’s Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP) provide opportunities, for example, for older “career switchers” to enter the teaching profession without having to return to “traditional” college preparation programs. These changes led to an increase in age, yet a decrease in overall experience, particularly when the programs began to produce substantial numbers of new teachers in the 2004-05 school year. This trend was overshadowed by declines in hiring these past two years.

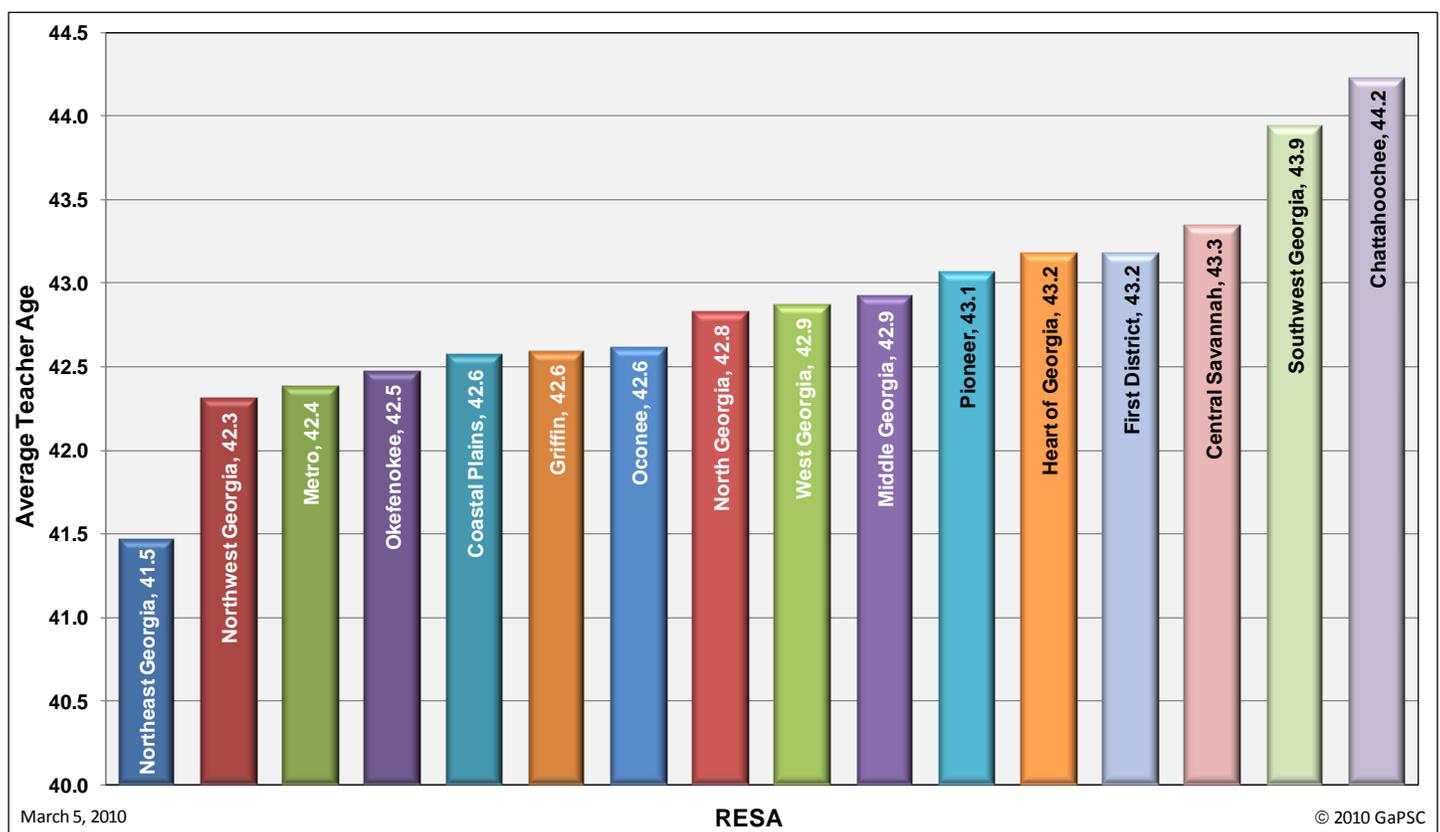
Figure 13. Average experience of Georgia public school teachers



Regional Differences in Teacher Age

Teacher age varies substantially among different parts of the state. The average teacher age in the school systems served by the Northeast Georgia Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) is only 41.5 years, but 44.2 years in the systems served by the Chattahoochee RESA. School systems with generally older teachers may experience greater hiring needs as the economy begins to recover and older teachers who have postponed retirement leave the profession.

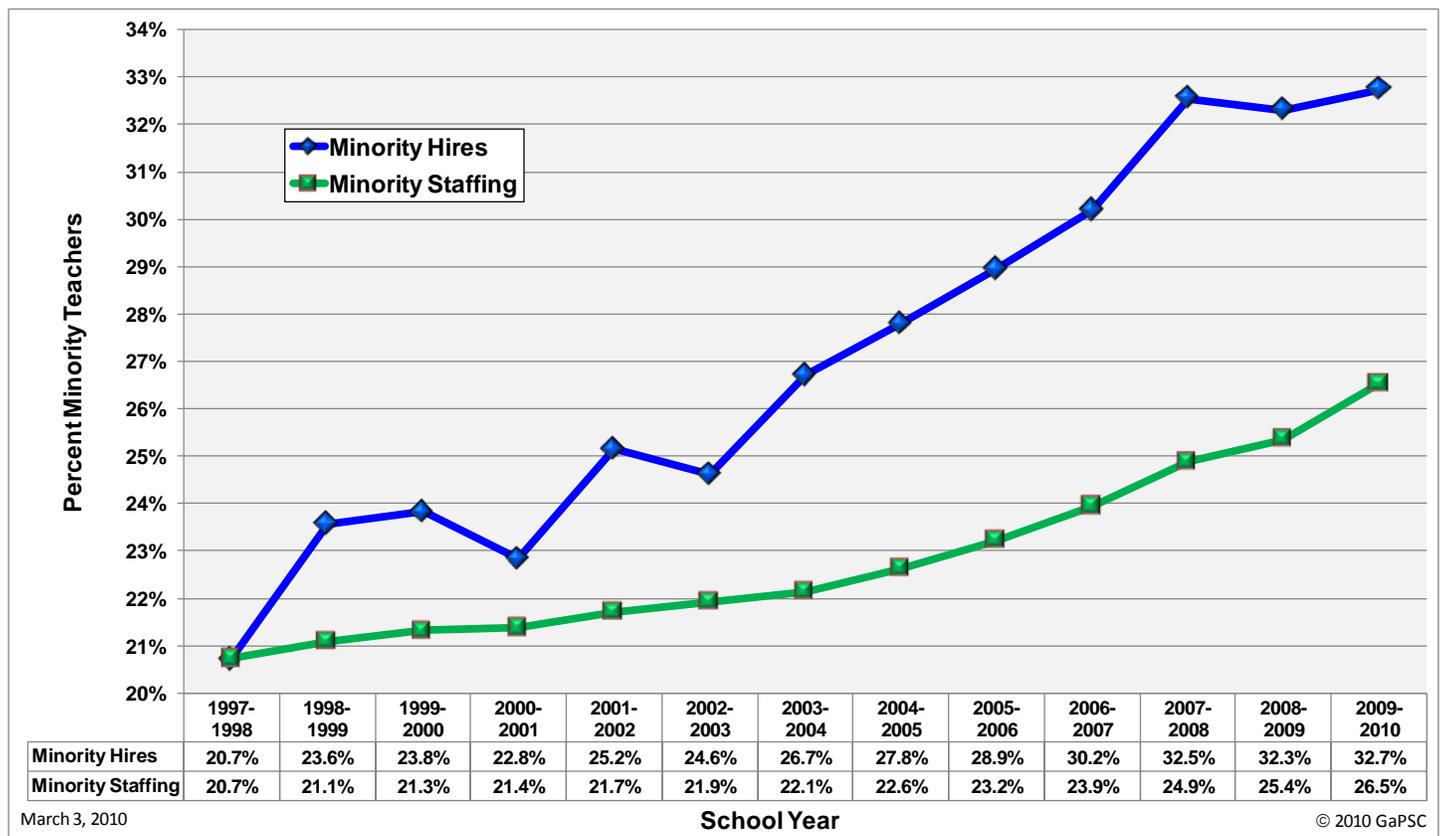
Figure 14. Average age of teachers by Georgia Regional Education Service Agency, October 2009



Georgia Minority Teacher Staffing and Hiring

This graph shows minority teachers as a percentage of total staff and of teachers hired each year. Overall, minorities now comprise 26.5% of the teacher workforce this year, up from 20.7% in 1997-98. New minority teacher hiring each year has increased from 20.7% of total hires in 1997-98 to 32.5% this year.

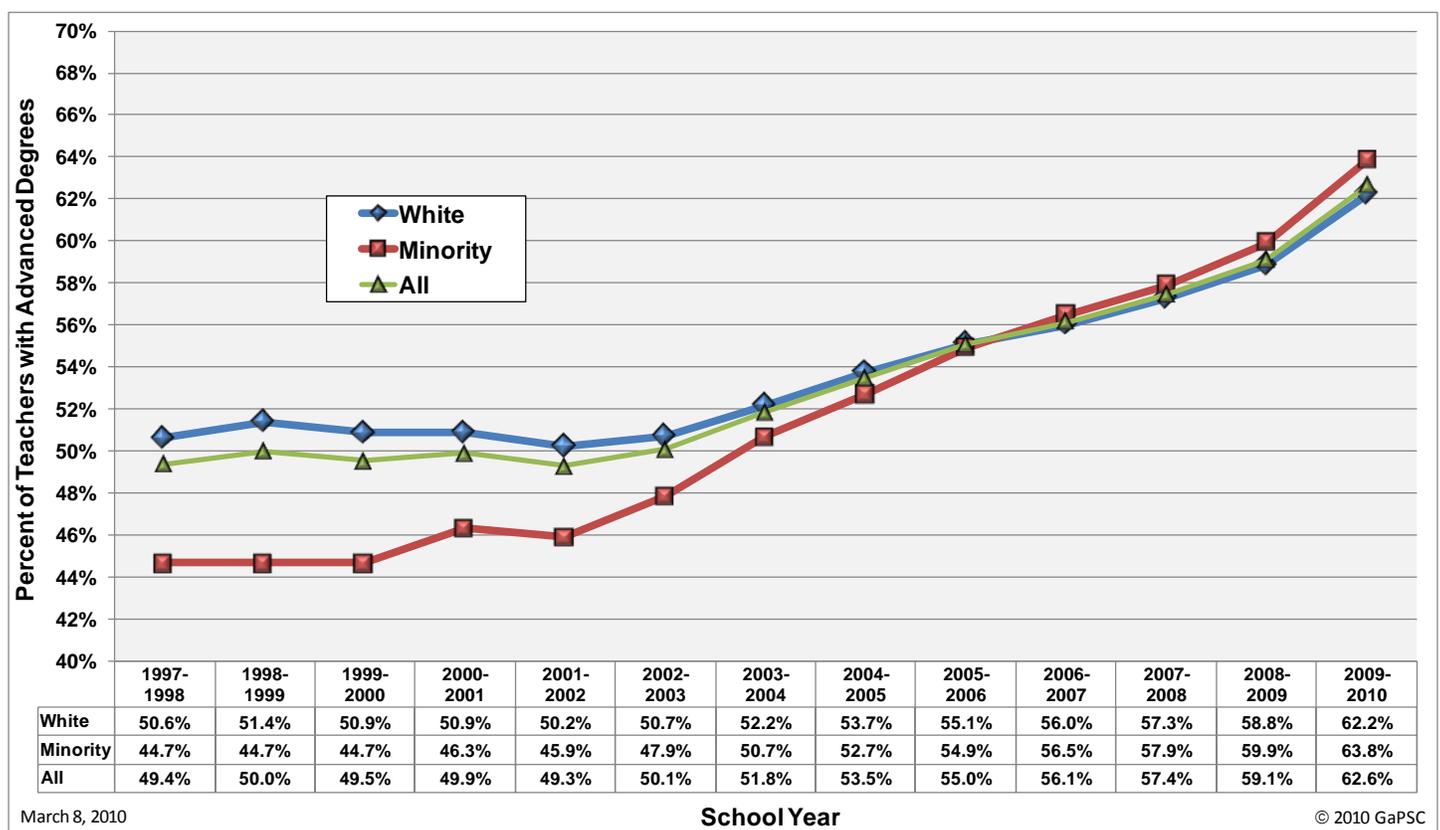
Figure 15. Percent of teachers of minority racial or ethnic groups as a percentage of total hiring and staffing



Advanced Degrees

The overall percentage of teachers with master's, specialist or doctoral degrees has increased substantially, particularly beginning with the 2002-03 school year. In 2001-02 the percentage of all teachers with an advanced degree was 49.3%; this year that percentage has grown to 62.6%. The percentage of minority teachers with advanced degrees has increased more rapidly than the percentage of white teachers, such that 63.8% of minority teachers now hold advanced degrees, compared to 62.2% of white teachers.

Figure 16. Percent of teachers with advanced degrees, total and by white and minority.



Educator Certificate Level Changes – Acquisition of Advanced Degrees

The following graph displays the total number of certificate level increases at the masters, specialist and doctorate level for all certified educators reported in the Certified and Classified Personnel Information (CPI) data each year. The counts are created by comparing an individual’s reported level in the previous year with the level reported the next year. For example, 9,698 educators reported in the October 2008-09 count with at least a bachelor’s degree or equivalent were reported at least one level higher in 2009-10.

Figure 17. Number of certification level increases issued by the Professional Standards Commission each year

