title II
highereducationact

News You Can Use

Title II of the *Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA)*, as amended in 2008 by the *Higher Education Opportunity Act*, requires states to report annually on key elements of their teacher preparation programs and requirements for initial teacher credentialing, kindergarten through 12th grade. *Title II News You Can Use* is a series of issue briefs on key data collected through the Title II *HEA* data collection. This issue brief provides information on the characteristics and changing trends of enrollment in teacher preparation programs.

Enrollment in Teacher Preparation Programs

Teachers are primarily prepared in traditional programs

In academic year (AY) 2012–13, states reported 499,800 individuals enrolled in teacher preparation programs. Of those, 89 percent (447,116 individuals) were enrolled in traditional teacher preparation programs. Traditional programs are typically four-year undergraduate programs and often attract individuals who enter college with the goal of becoming a teacher. Traditional programs prepare candidates with instruction in pedagogy as well as the specific content area they plan to teach.

Eleven percent of teaching candidates were enrolled in alternative programs, which often attract individuals who already hold a bachelor's degree in a specific content area and may have prior work experience, but who are seeking to switch careers. Alternative programs often focus less on a specific content area and more on pedagogy. Five percent of teaching candidates (25,135 individuals) were enrolled in alternative teacher preparation programs based at institutions of higher education (IHEs), and 27,549 individuals (6 percent) were enrolled in alternative teacher preparation programs not based at IHEs.

499,800 Total Enrollees in Teacher Preparation Programs

89% Traditional IHE based

5% Alternative IHE based

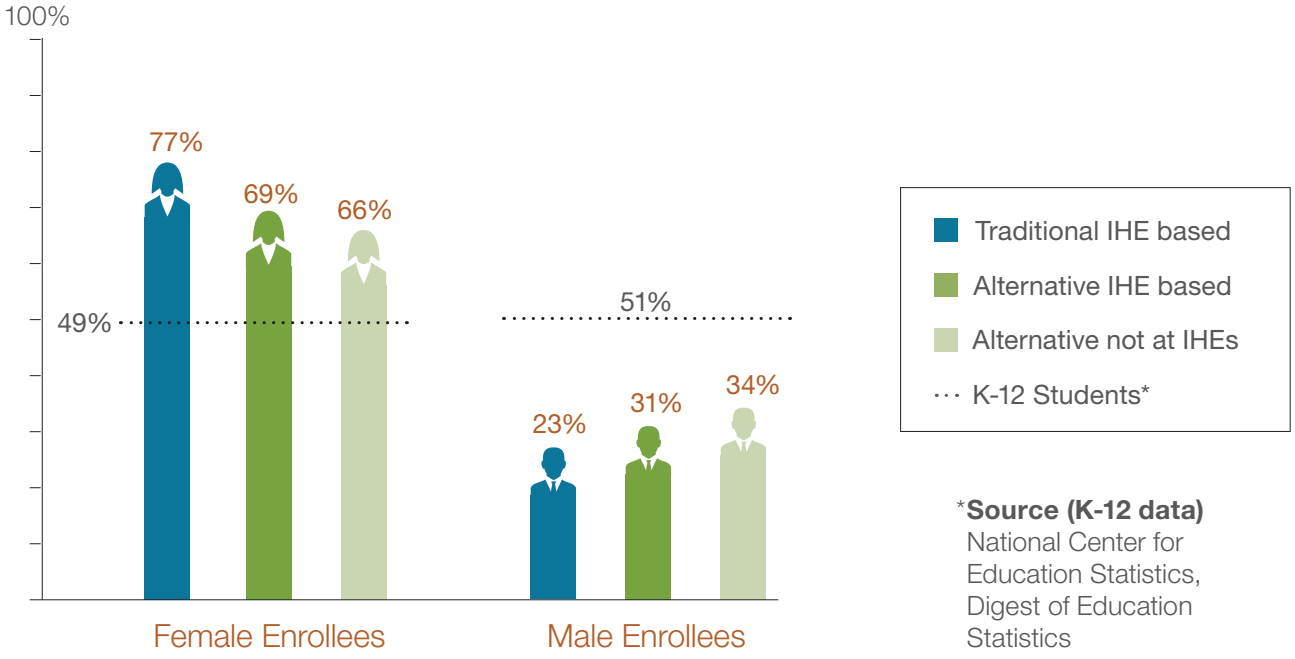
6% Alternative not at IHEs

The Demographic Makeup of Teaching Candidates Does Not Match That of K–12 Students

More than three-quarters (76 percent) of individuals enrolled in teacher preparation programs in AY 2012–13 were female, with males making up less than a quarter (24 percent) of teaching candidates. By contrast, the male-to-female ratio among K–12 students is nearly half and half; 49 percent of K–12 students nationwide are female, and 51 percent are male.

While male teaching candidates are underrepresented in teacher preparation programs, alternative programs enrolled a higher proportion of males than did traditional programs. Fewer than a quarter (23 percent) of the individuals enrolled in traditional teacher preparation programs were male, while slightly more than a quarter (31 percent) of individuals enrolled in alternative programs based at IHEs were male, and one-third (34 percent) of the teaching candidates in alternative programs not based at IHEs were male.

Gender of Enrollees by Program Type*

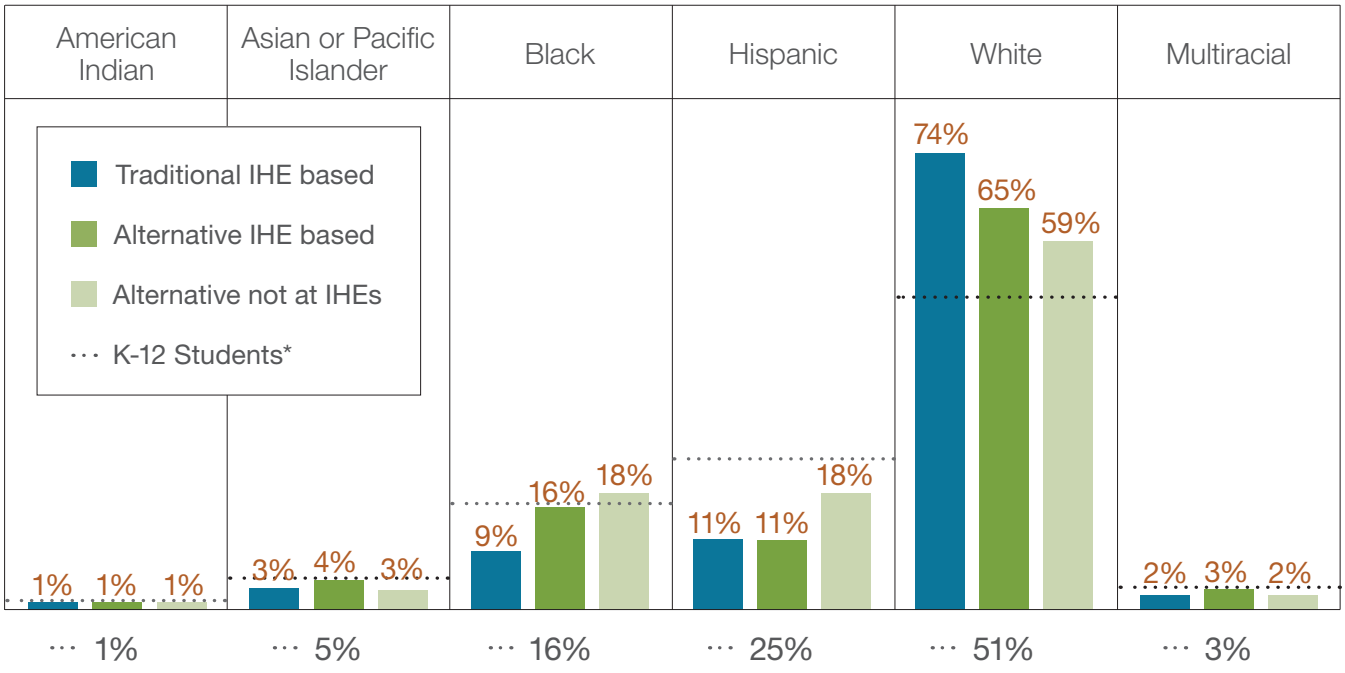


***Source (K-12 data)**
National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics

Similar to the disparity between the gender of teaching candidates and the gender of K–12 students nationwide, the race and ethnicity of individuals enrolled in teacher preparation programs are also very different from the race and ethnicity of the K–12 student population nationwide. In AY 2012–13, 73 percent of teaching candidates identified as white, while only 51 percent of K–12 students were white. Individuals identifying as Hispanic or Latino of any race, or as black or African American were underrepresented in teacher preparation programs:

- While 25 percent of K–12 students were Hispanic or Latino, only 11 percent of teaching candidates identified as Hispanic or Latino.
- Similarly, while 16 percent of K–12 students were black or African American, only 10 percent of individuals enrolled in teacher preparation programs identified as black or African American.

Race/Ethnicity of Enrollees by Program Type*



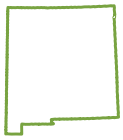
While there are proportionately more white individuals and fewer racial minorities enrolled in teacher preparation programs as compared to the K–12 student population nationwide, alternative programs prepared a higher proportion of racial minorities as compared to traditional programs in AY 2012–13:

- Sixteen percent of individuals enrolled in alternative programs based at IHEs and 18 percent of individuals enrolled in alternative programs not based at IHEs were black or African-American, compared to only 9 percent in traditional programs.
- Eighteen percent of individuals enrolled in alternative programs not based at IHEs were Hispanic/Latino, compared to 11 percent in traditional programs.

New York Leads the Nation in Enrolling the Most Teaching Candidates

In AY 2012–13, the five states that reported the greatest number of individuals enrolled in teacher preparation programs were:

New York
(47,872, or 10 percent of all individuals enrolled)



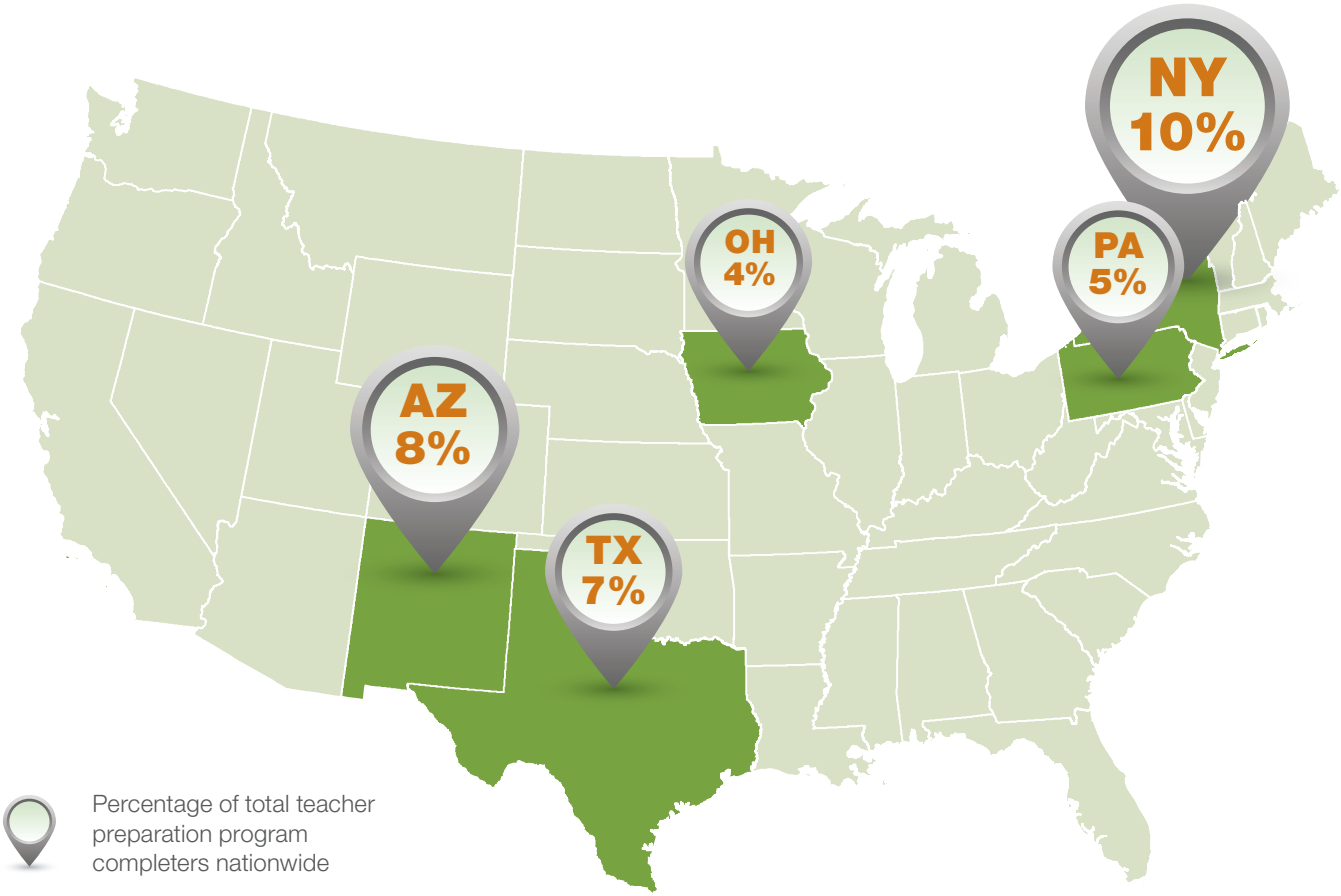
Arizona
(42,251, or 8 percent of all individuals enrolled)

Texas
(33,767, or 7 percent of all individuals enrolled)

Pennsylvania
(23,546, or 5 percent of all individuals enrolled)

Ohio
(21,607, or 4 percent of all individuals enrolled)

States with Highest Enrollment in Teacher Preparation Programs



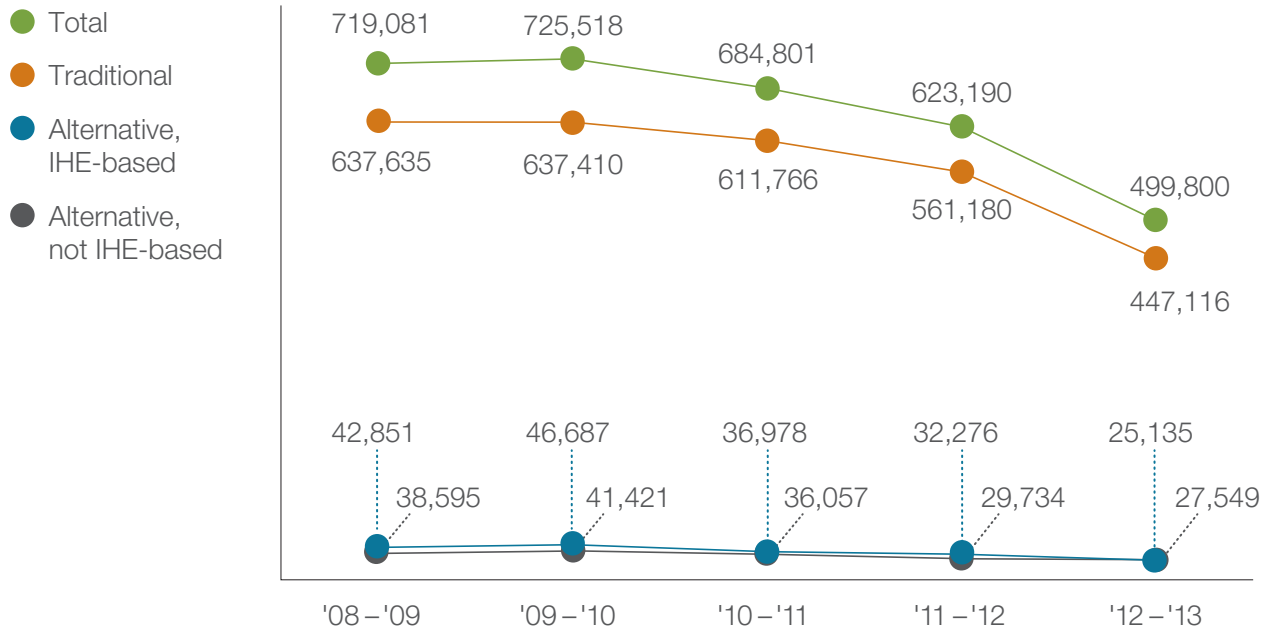
Across the Nation, Enrollment in Teacher Preparation Programs Is on the Decline

States began reporting the number of individuals enrolled in teacher preparation programs beginning with AY 2008–09. After a small increase in teacher candidates enrolled in teacher preparation programs between AY 2008–09 and AY 2009–10, enrollment steadily declined for three years between AY 2009–10 and AY 2012–13.

The downward enrollment trend is present across all three teacher preparation program types:

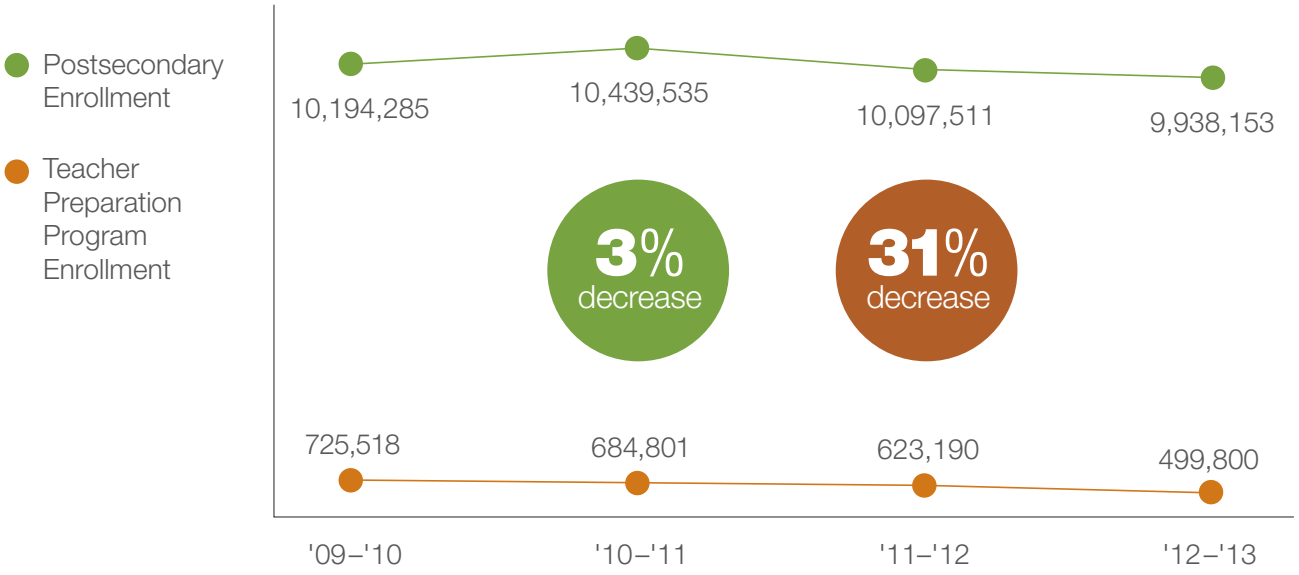
- Traditional programs
- Alternative programs based at IHEs, and
- Alternative programs not based at IHEs.

Enrollment in Teacher Preparation Programs by Total Enrollment and Program Type: AY 2008–09 Through AY 2012–13



The decrease in teacher preparation program enrollment follows a larger trend of declining enrollment in postsecondary education between AY 2010–11 and AY 2012–13. However, teacher preparation program enrollment declined at a faster rate than overall postsecondary education enrollment. Enrollment in teacher preparation programs decreased 31 percent between AY 2009–10 and AY 2012–13, while enrollment in overall postsecondary education only decreased by 3 percent in that same time period. decreased by 5 percent in that same time period.

Trends in Enrollment Compared to Postsecondary Enrollment



The disparity between the rate of decline in overall postsecondary education enrollment and teacher preparation program enrollment suggests that, proportionate to the overall college-going population, fewer individuals are choosing to pursue a career in teaching. According to an ACT report, 16 percent fewer high school students over the past four years say they are pursuing a career in teaching (Higgins, 2015). Several factors may contribute to this trend. Research suggests that declining morale and job satisfaction among current teachers may contribute to the decrease in individuals pursuing teaching as a career.

The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher reported that teacher job satisfaction had declined to its lowest point in 25 years, after having dropped 23 percentage points since 2008. The report also described that over half of all teachers report feeling a great amount of stress and that budget decreases have led to lower morale for teachers (MetLife, 2013). The “last-hired, first-fired” practice that many districts follow for staff reductions due to budget cuts may also dissuade young students from becoming teachers (Gordon, 2011).

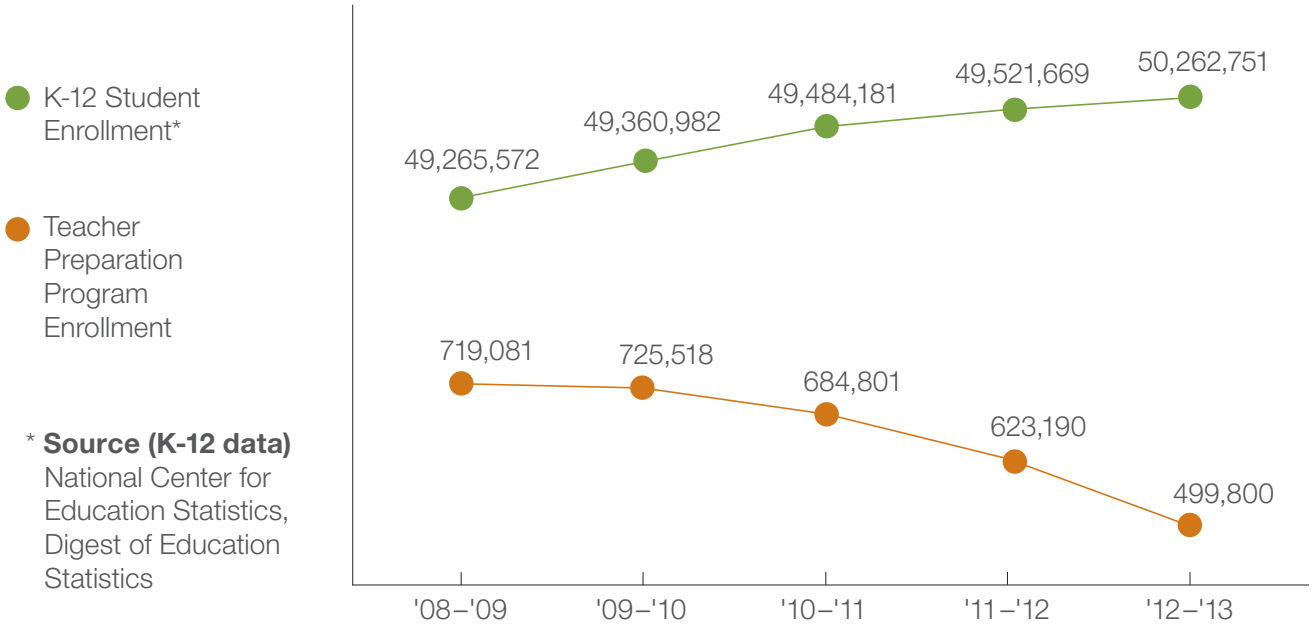
Many states also reported the economy as a contributing factor to the decline in teacher preparation enrollment.

For example:

- The economic downturn in California led to many layoffs in education, prevented many teachers from retiring, and created furloughs across the districts that reduced teachers' pay. Aside from the effects of the recession, the teaching climate has become more negative in recent years, discouraging prospective teachers from entering the profession (Suckow, 2015, personal communication).
- In Oregon, 70 percent of graduates from teacher preparation programs between 2009 and 2014 did not get teaching jobs after graduation due to reduced funding of schools. Additionally, because of reduced funding in schools, teacher salaries were cut through freezes, direct cuts, or furloughs, thus providing a disincentive to new candidates (Chamberlain, 2015, personal communication).
- The recession in 2008 led to a decrease in funding for most school districts throughout New York. These decreases forced most school districts within the state to downsize through attrition, program cuts, and in most districts, elimination of teaching positions. These teacher layoffs began in 2009 and, in some districts, continued through 2013. Four to five years of teacher layoffs has created a depressed job market, which in turn has negatively affected the number of students enrolling in teacher preparation programs (Oleaga, 2015, personal communication).

While teacher preparation program enrollment numbers have decreased, K–12 student enrollment has increased every year since AY 2008–09. Given the continued growth of K–12 enrollment, along with the expectation that a large number of baby boomers may soon be retiring from teaching, schools districts could experience growing teacher shortages in the coming years (Gordon, 2011).

Trends in Enrollment Compared to K-12 Students



* **Source (K-12 data)** National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics

References

Gordon, L. (2011, April 3). Today's teacher layoffs threaten tomorrow's college classrooms. *Los Angeles Times.*

Higgins, L. (2015, April 25). Who wants to teach? Prep program numbers declining. *Detroit Free Press.*

MetLife (2013). *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Challenges for School Leadership.*
Retrieved from: https://www.metlife.com/metlife-foundation/about/survey-american-teacher.html?WT.mc_id=vu1101

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education (2015). *Higher Education Act Title II Reporting System.*

Data Notes

For the purposes of the Title II data collection, an enrolled student is defined as a student who has been admitted to a teacher preparation program, but who has not yet completed the program during the academic year being reported. An individual who completed the program during the academic year being reported is counted as a program completer and not an enrolled student.

Unless otherwise noted, the data in this issue brief reflect AY 2012–13 data reported through Title II HEA by all 50 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Puerto Rico, and Virgin Islands.

For more information, go to title2.ed.gov.

Data as of July 17, 2015.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education.
Higher Education Act Title II Reporting System (2015).