

K-12 Teacher Shortage in the Southeast: What the Data and District Leaders Say

A regional snapshot of K-12 educator **supply, demand**, and administrator perceptions — drawn from **longitudinal data of 125 Southern districts** that used Frontline's Recruiting & Hiring platform between 2019 and 2024.

District Leaders Weigh In: Staffing Pressures Across the South

Fewer districts in the Southeast reported experiencing a teacher shortage compared to the [national average](#) (62% vs. 66%), with consistent results across district types:

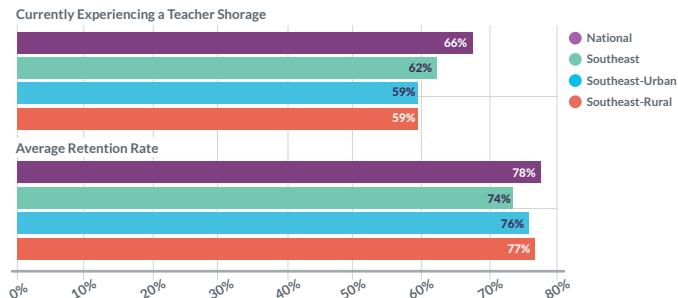
- **Both urban and rural districts** reported shortages at **59%**, notably below the national average.

On the retention front, the Southeast performed just under the national benchmark but showed strong consistency:

- **Urban districts** reported **74%** retention rate
- **Rural districts** were slightly higher at **76%**
- **The regional average** came in at **77%**, just one point shy of the national average of 78%

These results point to **relatively strong retention** and fewer reported shortages, which may be helping Southeast districts manage staffing more effectively than some other regions.

Teacher Shortage & Retention in the Southeast vs. National Average



Recruiting & Hiring: A More Balanced Outlook

District perceptions suggest a more stable hiring landscape:

- **41%** said it has become more difficult to recruit and hire – **below the national average**
- Another **41%** reported no change
- **17%** said it has become easier – the highest “easier” response across all regions

This mix suggests that while some districts still face pressure, **many are beginning to experience stability or even improvement** in their hiring efforts – likely supported by the region's solid retention performance.

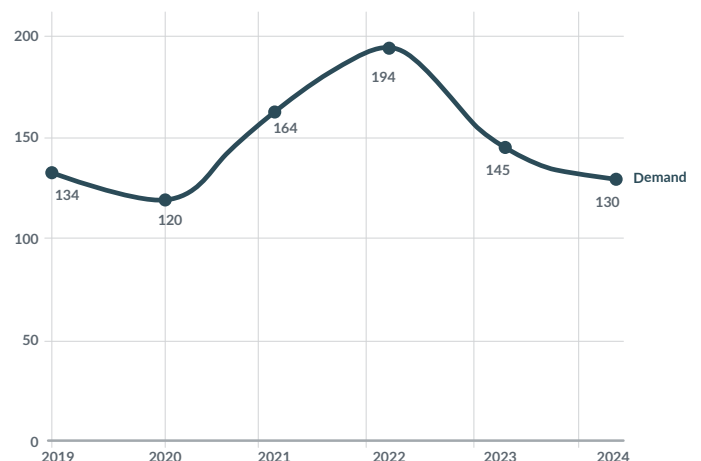
Labor Market Trends from Frontline Recruiting & Hiring

This snapshot of K-12 staffing in the Southeast is based on longitudinal data from over 100 districts using Frontline's Recruiting & Hiring platform between 2019 and 2024.

Hiring Demand: Postings per District

- Postings declined from **134 in 2019** to **120 in 2020**
- Demand then surged: **164 in 2021**, peaking at **194 in 2022** – likely driven by **ESSER-funded roles** to support recovery efforts
- Postings have since then dropped: **145 in 2023**, and **130 in 2024** – returning close to pre-pandemic levels

This trend may reflect the **end of temporary ESSER-funded expansion**, improving retention, or more strategic staffing strategies, signaling a **more stable, sustainable labor market**.

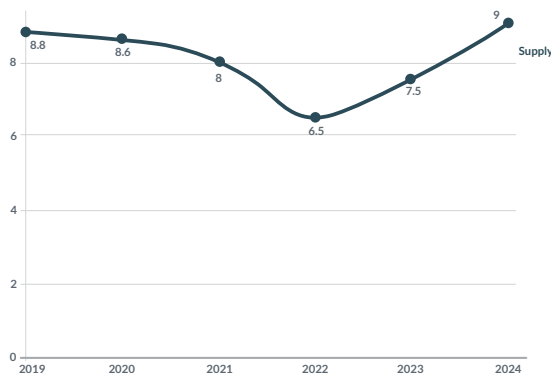


Candidate Supply: Applicants per Posting

- The region started at **8.8 applicants per posting in 2019**, falling to a low of **6.5 in 2022**
- Since then, supply has steadily rebounded: **7.5 in 2023**, and **9.0 in 2024** – now **exceeding pre-pandemic levels**.

This positive trajectory suggests **growing candidate interest** and a healthier educator pipeline, offering relief for districts that faced supply constraints in recent years.

Where Perception Meets Reality



District leaders in the South continue to feel pressure, and **51%** say hiring is still harder than before. But the data shows a dynamic shift underway:

- **Fewer leaders report worsening conditions**, and many are seeing improvements
- **Hiring demand is declining**, suggesting fewer vacancies or more deliberate staffing
- **Candidate supply is climbing**, surpassing 2019 levels for the first time in six years

Taken together, these trends point to a **more balanced labor market** – one where stronger retention, reduced demand, and increasing applicant pools are helping districts regain stability.

How Frontline Helps Districts Take Action

Frontline's purpose-built K-12 solutions turn insights into strategy – helping districts navigate the current labor market and plan for what's next:

- **Track historical posting and applicant trends** to time recruiting efforts effectively.
- **Automate key workflows** to reduce admin burden and appeal to today's educators
- **Benchmark against peer districts** for regional context and smarter decisions
- **Strengthen retention** through personalized, flexible professional learning that supports long-term growth



About Frontline Education

Frontline Education is the leading provider of school administration software, empowering K-12 leaders with the right tools, data and insights to proactively manage human capital, business operations and special education. Educational organizations representing over 80,000 schools and millions of educators, administrators and support personnel have partnered with Frontline Education in their efforts to develop the next generation of learners.



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