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### NEWS

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### **Rockefeller Institute Releases Preliminary Analysis of Teacher Workforce in South Dakota as Part of a Multi-State Study**

#### ***Report Reveals Important Differences from National Trends, Need for Detailed Local Data***

Albany, NY — The Rockefeller Institute of Government has released “Phase One Analysis of the Teacher Workforce in South Dakota,” the first in its comprehensive, multi-state study of teacher supply and demand across the United States.

“The South Dakota study lays the groundwork for a detailed, actionable analysis of the teacher workforce in the state,” said Jim Malatras, President of the Rockefeller Institute of Government. “It also reveals that while national trends may raise the alarm about a potential teacher shortage across the nation, we need more granular data to address problems at the local level, where we can see high levels of variation from one district to another, and even from school to school and from one subject area to another. Only this localized information will allow us to develop targeted policy solutions to address the teacher supply problem.”

“What we all want for students is a great teacher in every classroom,” said South Dakota’s Secretary of Education Dr. Melody Schopp. “In South Dakota, we started down the path of analyzing our teacher recruitment and retention data with the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Teachers and Students. This study furthers that work. By continuing to review the trends within our own state, we will be better equipped to deploy solutions designed to ensure that all students have access to great teaching.”

The Rockefeller Institute’s report was conducted in cooperation with the South Dakota Department of Education, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the College Football Playoff Foundation’s Extra Yard for Teachers program. Special thanks to Governor Dennis Daugaard and Secretary of Education Melody Schopp, and their teams, for their time and data needed to complete this report.

The report reveals a high degree of variation, even in the relatively small, homogeneous state. It found the following:

- Like national trends, between 2006 and 2016, the number of K-12 students in South Dakota public schools increased by 8.9 percent, while the number of teachers increased

by 4.7 percent. But the demand differs greatly across grade levels and specializations, and the patterns are very different from what is reflected at the national level.

- National-level conclusions that high schools are in greatest need of teachers are not necessarily true for South Dakota, where demand is greatest in elementary and middle schools.
- Teacher turnover and vacancies differ enormously across specializations. Special education is the biggest source of turnover in South Dakota. Unlike other states, however, math and science and English as a Second Language (ESL) have relatively modest shortages in South Dakota.
- South Dakota's relatively low demand for math teachers compared to national trends could potentially be linked to the state's deployment of innovative educational models in certain subject areas. Further study will examine the role of those programs in mitigating teacher shortage areas and whether they could be replicated elsewhere.
- Within the state, the districts vary greatly in turnover and, to a lesser degree, vacancies. Turnover is greater in districts with higher rates of children from low-income families, with high proportions of teachers serving Native American students (particularly when proportions exceed 75 percent), with lower average salaries (despite recent legislation that raised teacher salaries across the state) and, most of all, turnover in rural, small population districts.
- The smallest school districts (population of less than 1,000) are more likely to have teachers without advanced degrees, higher proportions of teachers that are not traditionally certified, and are more likely to have teachers who have less than five years of experience.
- Although small rural districts differ, on average, in turnover rates and teacher characteristics, we are also finding large differences among these small districts, not just in the teacher workforce but also in certain student outcomes. This variation may be very useful in understanding how challenged districts overcome problems.

These preliminary findings underline the importance of seeing the teacher workforce in a more local way. Teacher shortage areas are changing; the changes and challenges vary from state to state; and the differences within the state suggest that there's a need to target efforts to secure a stronger, more stable teacher workforce.

Read the full report at [www.rockinst.org/pdf/education/2017-11-14-Teacher\\_Workforce\\_SD.PDF](http://www.rockinst.org/pdf/education/2017-11-14-Teacher_Workforce_SD.PDF)

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