



Teacher Recruitment and Turnover in the NYC Teaching Fellows Program

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Introduction	3
New York City Teaching Fellows.....	3
NYC Policy Context: Teacher Shortages, Diversity, and State Class Size Mandate	4
IBO Analysis.....	6
New Teachers in NYCPS Schools.....	6
Data and Analytic Sample.....	7
Turnover Measures.....	8
Findings: Fellows vs. Traditionally Certified (TCert) Teachers.....	9
Recruitment	9
Placement.....	14
Turnover Analysis Methodology.....	15
Turnover Results.....	15
Conclusion	16

Executive Summary

The New York City Teaching Fellows (NYCTF) program is a long-standing alternative certification program for teachers run by NYC Public Schools (NYCPS). The NYCTF program recruits teachers for hard-to-staff subjects and schools. According to NYCPS, over one-fifth of the district's current math, science, and special education teachers came to the profession through the NYCTF program.

The NYCTF program aims to address numerous policy challenges: teacher shortages in certain subject areas and schools, a lack of diversity among educators, and more recently, the New York State class size mandate for NYC. IBO estimates NYC needs to hire [16,300 additional new teachers](#) by the 2027-2028 school year (inclusive of new hires in 2025) to meet the class size mandate. The NYCTF program was specifically mentioned in the [November 2025 NYCPS Class Size Implementation Report](#) as a key component of the City's teacher recruitment strategy.

In this report, IBO analyzes the NYCTF program at a critical moment in teacher recruitment and retention for NYCPS. IBO used detailed annual data on teachers from the 2010-2011 through the 2025-2026 school years to compare newly hired teachers who came through the NYCTF program to traditionally certified teachers.

Among IBO's findings:

-  The NYCTF program is the largest source of new teachers in NYCPS besides traditional certification. Since 2010-2011, 15% of new NYCPS teachers were Fellows.
-  Fellows are more diverse than traditionally certified teachers. Fellows who started teaching in Fall 2025 were 32% Hispanic, 26% Black, 25% White, and 11% Asian, while new traditionally certified teachers were 23% Hispanic, 12% Black, 11% Asian, and 46% White. In addition, 37% of new Fellows in Fall 2025 were male, compared with 22% of new traditionally certified teachers.
-  NYCTF is a significant source of special education teachers for NYCPS. Since the 2010-2011 school year 60% of new Fellows initially taught in a special education title.
-  Fellows start their teaching assignments in schools that are higher need, on average, than those where traditionally certified teachers begin work. From 2011-2025, Fellows initially taught in schools with larger portions of lower-income students (80% vs. 74%), Hispanic students (50% vs. 44%), and Black students (32% vs. 28%), compared with schools where traditionally certified teachers initially taught.
-  From 2011-2025, Fellows were 24% (3 percentage points) more likely to leave their school than traditionally certified teachers (15.4% vs. 12.5%), controlling for differences in teacher and school characteristics.

From 2011-2025, Fellows were also 24% (1.4 percentage points) more likely to leave teaching in the NYCPS system altogether than traditionally certified teachers (7.3% vs. 5.9%), controlling for teacher and school characteristics.

Significant differences in the turnover rate between Fellows and traditionally certified teachers existed for teachers in every subject, starting cohort, school year, across years of teacher experience, and for teachers entering the profession at different ages.

On observable measures of recruitment and placement, the NYCTF program is meeting its goals, supplying NYC schools with diverse educators and filling positions that might otherwise be vacant. Higher turnover among Fellows likely reflects features of the program: it places teachers in hard-to-staff schools, and individuals have relatively little education experience before becoming the teacher of record. Because Fellows leave their schools and the NYCPS system at higher rates than traditionally certified teachers, increasing the portion of NYCPS teachers coming from NYCTF may lead to more school-level staffing instability, and require more teacher hiring in the long run. This may be a worthwhile tradeoff given the need to hire teachers to comply with the State class size mandate (even if the timeline is extended) and the limited capacity of traditional teaching pathways to scale up in the short term.

Introduction

New York City Teaching Fellows (NYCTF)

Since 2000, the New York City Teaching Fellows (NYCTF) program has been a critical alternative certification (AC) program for teachers in NYC Public Schools (NYCPS). According to NYCPS, over 9,000 educators in NYC schools were trained in the NYCTF program, and over one-fifth of the NYCPS's current math, science, and special education teachers initially came through the [NYCTF program](#).

The most common, traditional certification (TCert) pathway to becoming a teacher in NYC is completing a college certificate program (master's or bachelor's degree) that leads to New York State (NYS) certification. This includes completing a student teaching placement and passing required teacher certification exams. Enrollment in the State's [teacher preparation programs has dropped](#) 42% since 2010 and program completions are down 35% from 2012. Thus, the number of teachers available to NYCPS through the TCert pathway has significantly declined. AC programs typically offer faster and less expensive pathways into the teaching profession, particularly for teachers in high-need subjects and schools. The NYCTF program is the largest AC program in NYC.

The NYCTF program was established in 2000, in response to a significant shortfall in certified teachers. From 1996-2002, half of all new teachers in NYC were uncertified (temporarily licensed), but in 1998, [state policy changed](#), eliminating temporary licenses for uncertified teachers as of 2003.¹ The creation of the NYCTF program, along with significant increases to teacher compensation from 2000-2008, allowed NYC to comply with this state mandate. Both the current NYCPS Chancellor, [Kamar Samuels](#), and his predecessor, [Melissa Aviles-Ramos](#), began their teaching careers as Fellows.

The NYCTF program focuses on recruiting teachers in hard-to-staff subjects and schools. NYCPS adjusts the specific list of certifications supported, and the list of schools where Fellows are eligible to teach, each year. However, in general, certifications are related to educating students with disabilities, bilingual students, and math and science subject areas (such as biology, chemistry, earth science, and physics). Most of the schools in which Fellows are eligible to teach are Title I schools (schools that serve high portions of low-income students), and most are in the Bronx or Brooklyn. The NYCTF program currently provides specific incentives for Fellows who become teachers in the Bronx ("The Bronx Cohort").

The NYCTF program requires no prior teaching experience but does require a bachelor's degree in a field other than education with a minimum GPA of 2.5 (with a preference for applicants with a GPA of 3.0 or higher). Prospective Fellows participate in a seven-week paid summer training program, which runs from June to August. Though they are not yet NYCPS employees and don't receive benefits during this training period, Fellows receive a stipend: in the summer of 2025 the training stipend was \$3,500. Fellows must pass the same teacher certification exams required of TCert teachers (exams that measure pedagogical skills and specialized content knowledge).

After successfully completing the summer training program and certification exams, Fellows obtain a Transitional B Certification. This certification is specifically for educators in approved AC programs, because NYS requires a master's degree in education for a traditional teaching certification. Fellows are hired as full-time teachers starting in September. They are responsible for finding their own school placement, with support from the NYCTF program office. Fellows spend their first two to three years teaching under a Transitional B Certification while earning a master's degree in education. Once they earn a master's degree, Fellows are eligible to obtain an Initial Certification, that is, the same certification teachers coming through the TCert pathway receive.

Cost of NYCTF

NYCPS contracts with various universities to offer Fellows their master's degree. In the 2024-2025 school year, partner universities included Adelphi University, Bank Street College of Education, Brooklyn College, City College, Fordham University, Hunter College, Lehman College, Pace University, and Touro University. Partner universities offer the required coursework outside of working hours (evenings, summer, and/or weekends). The [NYCTF program subsidizes the cost of Fellows' master's degrees](#); as of 2025, NYCPS charges Fellows \$12,000 for their university tuition (deducted directly from their salary once they start teaching full time), and NYCPS covers the rest of the tuition cost. (Fellows in the Bronx Cohort pay slightly less for their university coursework.)

Spending on the NYCTF program, as well as teacher recruitment and retention more broadly, is allocated across various areas of the NYC Department of Education (DOE) budget. In fiscal year 2024, expenditures for DOE's Office of Teacher Recruitment and Quality (TRQ), which runs the NYCTF program, totaled \$40.4 million. The majority of TRQ spending, \$30.7 million (76%), went to the NYCTF program.² This funding supported program staff and tuition payments for approximately 1,000 total Fellows across the Fall 2022 and Fall 2023 entering cohorts.

The \$40 million in funding for TRQ includes \$15 million through the NYS [Teachers of Tomorrow](#) grant. NYS began the Teachers of Tomorrow grant in 2000, the same year the NYCTF program began, to address teacher shortages (particularly in NYC). However, total statewide funding through this Teachers of Tomorrow grant has remained at \$25 million [since it began](#).

NYC Policy Context: Teacher Shortages, Diversity, and State Class Size Mandate

The NYCTF program currently aims to address numerous policy challenges: teacher shortages in certain subject areas and schools, a lack of diversity among educators, and the State class size mandate for NYC.

Teacher Shortages

NYC faces [teacher shortages](#) in subject areas that are similar to those faced by the State and much of the country. For example, secondary-level Special Education, Science, and Math are longstanding [shortage areas in NYS and NYC](#). The NYCTF program is limited to the specific set

of NYS teaching certifications where such shortages persist.

In addition to specific subjects with teacher shortages, specific [schools struggle to recruit and retain teachers](#)—typically schools serving high portions of lower-income students, low-performing students, and Black and Hispanic students. The NYCTF program recognizes these challenges by providing a specific list of high-need schools where Fellows are allowed to begin their teaching career, and providing incentives (for example, higher tuition reimbursement) for teachers in the Bronx Cohort.

Teacher Diversity

NYC’s teaching force is predominately White and female, as is the teaching force nationally.³ The State has a longstanding goal to improve teacher diversity as a matter of equity.⁴ The lack of gender and racial/ethnic diversity among teachers is also a concern given evidence that teacher-student gender and race match can improve student outcomes, particularly for Black students.⁵ In NYC, the [demographics of students and teachers](#) differ significantly: while 42% of traditional public school students are Hispanic, 20% are Black, and 19% are Asian, only 19% of teachers are Hispanic, 16% of teachers are Black, and 9% of teachers are Asian.

While teacher diversity was not an explicit goal of the NYCTF program when it was created, NYCPS now recognizes that a particular strength of the program is its [ability to recruit teachers of color](#). This is a common goal of AC programs.

State Class Size Mandate

Addressing the need for teachers based on the 2022 State class size mandate is a new and immediate goal for the program. Based on data from the 2023-2024 school year, IBO estimated that NYC needs to hire 16,300 additional new teachers by the 2027-2028 school year to meet the State class size mandate (see [report](#) for further detail). NYCPS did not significantly increase hiring in the first two years the mandate took effect. However, during the 2024-2025 school year, NYCPS officials [acknowledged the need to increase their new teacher pipeline](#) and expressed hope that the NYCTF program would be “[one pillar of that strategy](#),” since the program had been “[at times in the past much bigger](#).” The [November 2025 NYCPS Class Size Implementation Report explicitly referenced the](#) NYCTF program as a key component of their teacher recruitment strategy, and the program significantly increased the number of Fellows recruited for the 2025-2026 school year to almost 1,000. During his campaign Mayor Mamdani [proposed programs](#) similar to NYCTF to recruit additional teachers to meet the State class size mandate, and in January 2026, NYCPS released a [request for information \(RFI\)](#) from vendors looking to provide AC programs.

Prior Research

Research on AC programs has found that retention of AC teachers is lower than retention of TCert teachers, but their effectiveness (typically measured by teacher value-add on student test scores) is similar or higher.⁶ Prior research on NYCTF, which used data from teacher cohorts through 2008, focused on math teachers.⁷ Findings from this research matched the findings from research on AC programs generally: Fellows performed similarly to TCert

teachers but turned over at higher rates. The focus on math teachers and early cohorts limits the applicability of these findings in the current NYC policy context.

This IBO assessment of NYCTF offers insight into how the NYCTF program is meeting its policy goals, particularly whether it is an effective way to expand teacher recruitment related to the State class size mandate.

IBO Analysis

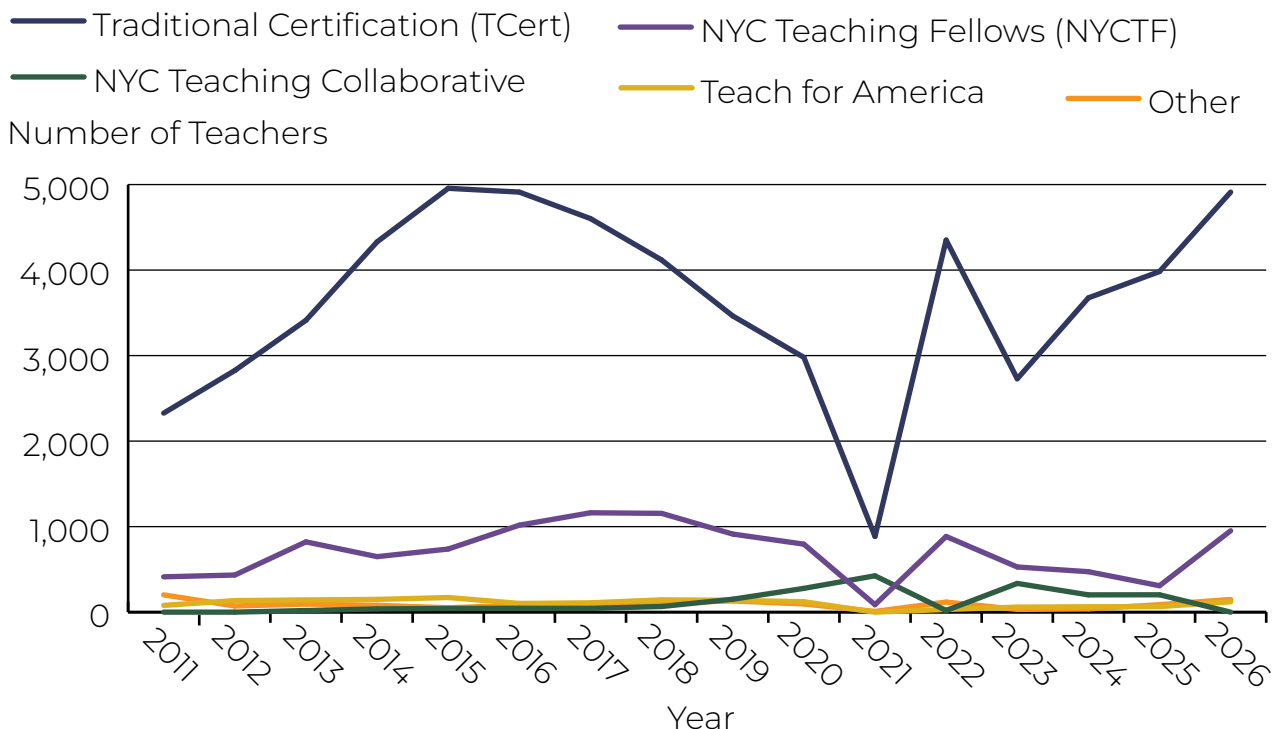
New Teachers in NYCPS Schools

NYCPS provides IBO with annual data on newly hired teachers in NYCPS-run public schools. (This data set does not include teachers in charter schools and does not reflect whether new hires had teaching experience outside NYCPS-run schools.) Where applicable, these data include the specific AC program for new hires who are not traditionally certified.

Figure 1 shows the number of new teachers in each school year by their pathway to teaching. In all figures in this report school years are abbreviated to the Spring calendar year of the school year for brevity (for example, the 2025-2026 school year is listed as 2026).

FIGURE 1

New Teachers in NYCPS, by Pathway to Teaching and School Year



SOURCE: IBO analysis of NYCPS data

NOTES: Other includes all other alternate certification (AC) programs not listed. Year reflects the Spring calendar year of the school year (for example, the 2025-2026 school year is listed as 2026). This figure reflects 74,726 unique teachers in NYCPS pathways data from the 2010-2011 through 2025-2026 school years; see the Appendix for additional details on identifying new teachers.

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The NYCTF program is the largest pathway to teaching in NYC outside of traditional certification. Over 11,300 new teachers came through the NYCTF program between 2010 and 2025. This represents 15% of all teachers new to NYCPS in this period. Hiring through the NYCTF program peaked in the 2016-2017 school year at 1,162 and peaked as a portion of all new teachers in the 2017-2018 school year, when one out of five new teachers in NYCPS were Fellows. The NYCTF program is still responsible for a significant portion of all new hires: 952 new teachers (16% of all new teachers) came from the NYCTF program in the 2025-2026 school year.

The NYC Teaching Collaborative is another AC program run by NYCPS similar to NYCTF. The main difference is the training model: the [NYC Teaching Collaborative program](#) requires a 4–5-month (semester-long) residency in the spring before a teacher begins full time in September (rather than the seven-week summer training provided by the NYCTF program). The NYC Teaching Collaborative program started in 2012, so it is not responsible for as many new teachers over the past fifteen years, though it brought 205 new teachers to NYCPS in the 2024-2025 school year. Teach for America (TFA), a national AC program that is run by an independent non-profit, has generally declined as a pathway to teaching in NYCPS. TFA peaked as a source of new teachers for NYCPS at 171 teachers in the 2014-2015 school year but provided less than 100 teachers annually from the 2020-2021 through 2024-2025 school years. There are several other AC programs that provided NYC teachers over this period, such as Math for America and Peace Corps Fellows; these programs are combined in the “Other” category in Figure 1. None of these AC programs have been a significant or sustained source of new hiring.

Across both traditional and alternative certification pathways, new teacher hiring increased in the years after the Great Recession, following what had been a hiring freeze. New hiring dropped significantly in the 2020-2021 school year given COVID-19 disruptions but rebounded in the 2021-2022 school year. Hiring of new teachers has steadily increased since the 2022-2023 school year, the first year of implementation of the State class size mandate.

Data and Analytic Sample

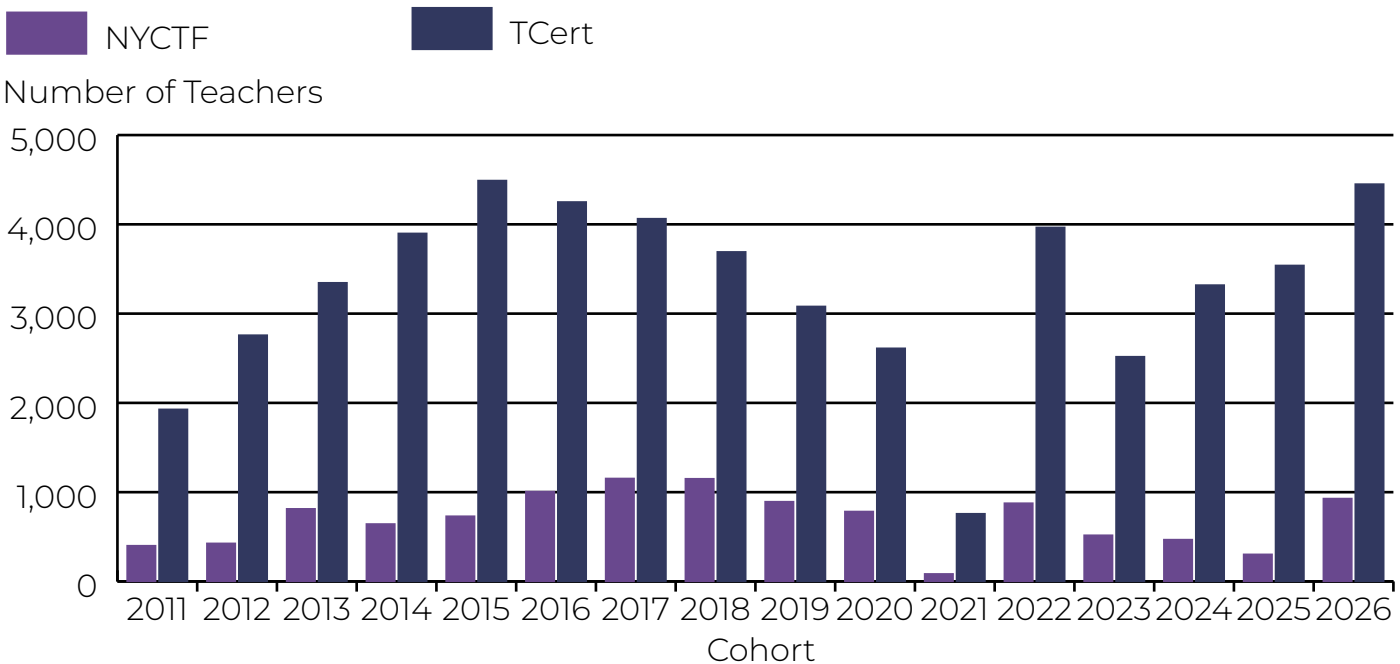
In addition to data on teachers NYCPS considers new teachers, NYCPS provides IBO with detailed annual data on all teachers in NYCPS-run schools. (Again, this data set does not include teachers in charter schools.) These data include teachers’ gender, race/ethnicity, age, home zip code, years of teaching experience in NYCPS, school assignment, title (general education vs. special education; see the [Appendix](#) for additional details), and subject (described further in Findings). These data also allow IBO to track teachers over time.

IBO combined the NYCPS data on new hires’ pathways to teaching and all NYC public school teachers to identify the sample of new teachers used for analysis in this report. See the [Appendix](#) for more details.

Figure 2 shows the number of new teachers included in IBO’s analysis sample, by pathway (traditional certification or the NYCTF program), and by cohort—a teacher’s first year as a Fellow (again, the Spring calendar year of the school year). Because this report focuses on comparing Fellows to TCert teachers, teachers who came through any other AC pathway were

FIGURE 2

New Teachers in IBO Analytic Sample, by Pathway and Cohort



SOURCE: IBO analysis of NYCPS data

NOTE: See the Appendix for additional details on new teachers in IBO's analytic sample.

New York City Independent Budget Office

excluded from IBO's analysis. The analysis sample included a total of 63,898 unique teachers: 48,218 who were traditionally certified and 10,274 Fellows.

Turnover Measures

IBO used the longitudinal teacher-level data to construct three measures of turnover—whether a teacher was not observed in the following year:

- As an active teacher in the same **school**,
- As an active **teacher** (teachers may remain employed by NYCPS but move to, for example, an administrative role, in which case they are no longer an active teacher), and
- As active in the **NYCPS system**.

These turnover indicators were not mutually exclusive. By definition, a teacher who left teaching in the NYCPS system also left their specific school. IBO presents results for these three outcomes separately because a teacher leaving a specific school but remaining within the NYCPS system raises different concerns than a teacher leaving the NYCPS system altogether. A principal who hires a Fellow will be concerned about increased likelihood of turnover from their school, regardless of their turnover from the NYCPS system. For central NYCPS staff, turnover from teaching and turnover from the NYCPS system may be the first-order concern.

Findings: Fellows vs. Traditionally Certified (TCert) Teachers

Recruitment

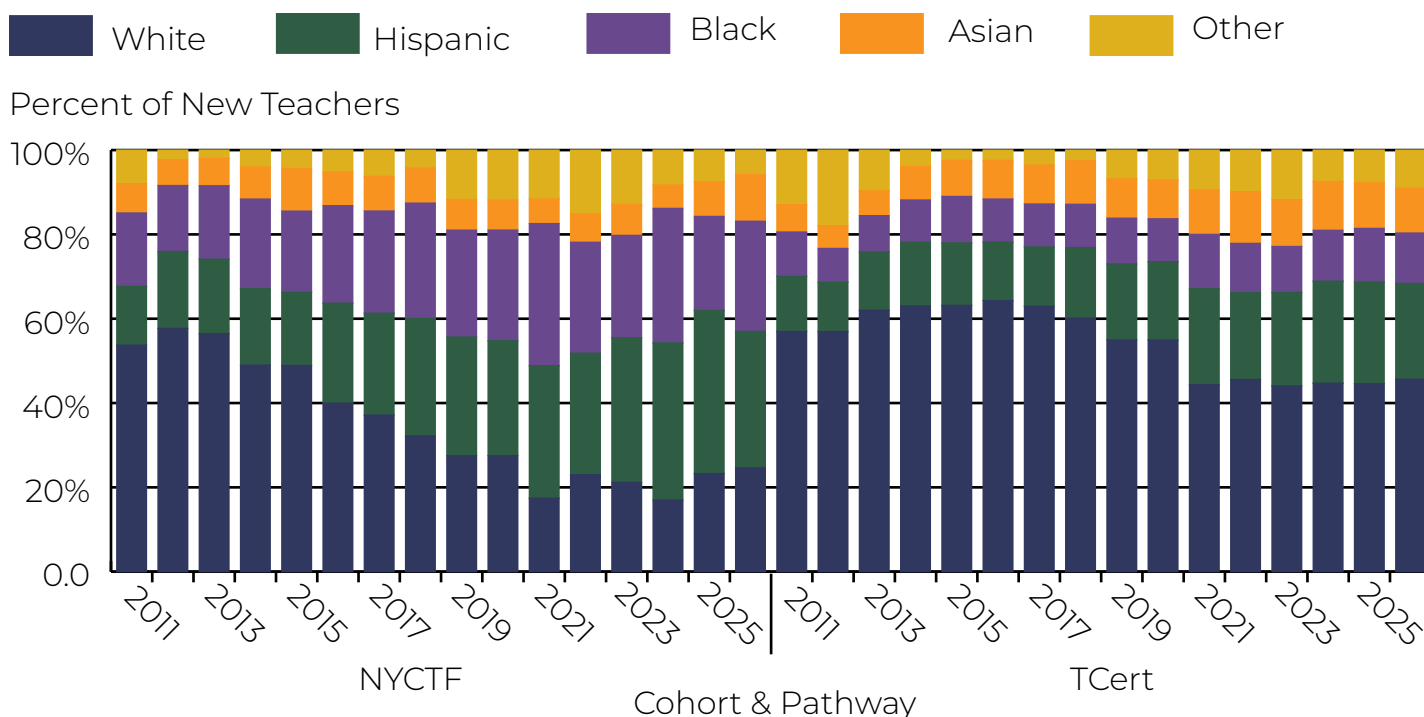
IBO first assessed how the demographic characteristics of Fellows differed from the characteristics of TCert teachers.

Figure 3 shows that Fellows were much more likely to be Hispanic or Black than TCert teachers. The racial demographics of TCert teachers has become more diverse over time—in the 2010-2011 school year, 57% of new TCert teachers were White, but this declined to 46% in the 2025-2026 school year. Fellows were notably more diverse than TCert teachers in all entering cohorts from the 2011-2012 through the 2025-2026 school years. Among the most recent cohort of Fellows, 32% were Hispanic, 26% were Black, 25% were White, 11% were Asian, and 6% were one of four categories grouped together as “Other” (these categories are Other/Unknown/Unspecified, Native American, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Two/More Races) in Figure 3.

As shown in Figure 4, Fellows were also more diverse in terms of gender—37% of new Fellows in the 2025-2026 school year were male, compared with 22% of new TCert teachers. There are similar differences going back to the cohort of new teachers in the 2010-2011 school year.

FIGURE 3

New Teacher Race/Ethnicity, by Pathway and Cohort



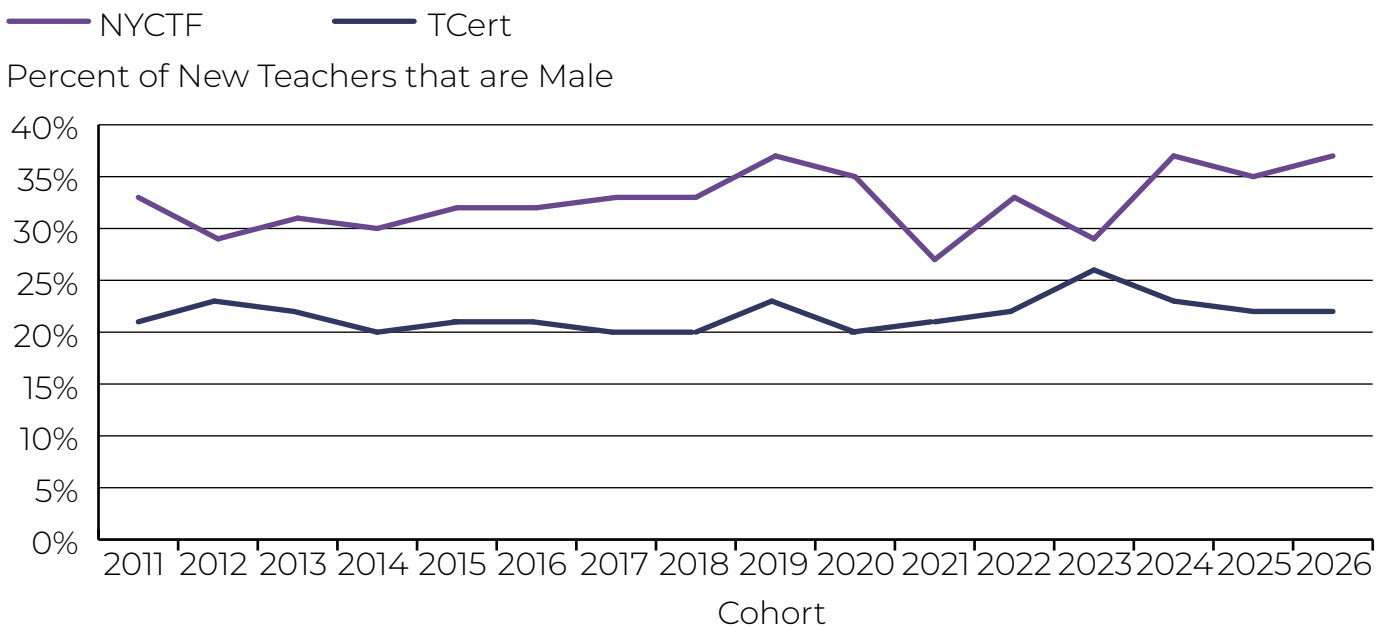
SOURCE: IBO analysis of NYCPS data

NOTE: Race/ethnicity categories are defined in NYCPS data, and not defined by IBO, except for “Other” which includes four unique categories in NYCPS data: Other/Unknown/Unspecified, Native American, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Two/More Races. Beginning in the 2015-2016 school year, NYCPS data included a separate, binary variable for Hispanic, in addition to the categorical race variable. IBO categorized teachers as Hispanic if the Hispanic indicator identified them as such, regardless of the value of the race/ethnicity categorical variable.

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FIGURE 4

Percent of New Teachers that were Male, by Pathway and Cohort



SOURCE: IBO analysis of NYCPS data

NOTE: IBO assumed the less than 1% of teachers missing gender data were female; see the Appendix for further details on missing data.
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Unlike many other City jobs, there is no NYC residency requirement for NYC teachers. IBO used teachers' address in the Fall of their first year teaching (when IBO first observed them) to place a teacher's home address in one of three categories: (1) NYC, (2) NYS outside of NYC, or (3) any state besides NYS. This may not fully capture the origin of teachers—for example, a teacher from outside NYS may have an NYC address by the time they provide address data to NYCPS. However, even this limited measure suggests Fellows were more likely to be from NYC than TCert teachers, as shown in Figure 5. The majority—85%—of Fellows in the 2025-2026 entering cohort had a NYC address, compared with only 68% of TCert teachers. This difference is similar going back to the 2010-2011 entry cohort.

As shown in Figure 6, the average age at which Fellows and TCert teachers started their career in NYCPS was similar: 33 or 34. Historically, Fellows have been slightly younger than TCert teachers when they began teaching, on average, though this reversed by the 2018-2019 cohort and the difference in average age was small.

As shown in Figure 7, the portion of Fellows entering NYC public schools as special education teachers was much higher than that of TCert teachers. This is by design, as special education is a shortage area for which NYCTF is specifically recruiting.

The 2020-2021 entering cohort of Fellows was small (due to COVID-19 and a blended offering of remote and in-person instruction, NYCPS hired very few teachers overall that year). All new Fellows that year were special education teachers for schools that only serve special education students (District 75 schools), which were prioritized for in-person instruction due to students' high needs.

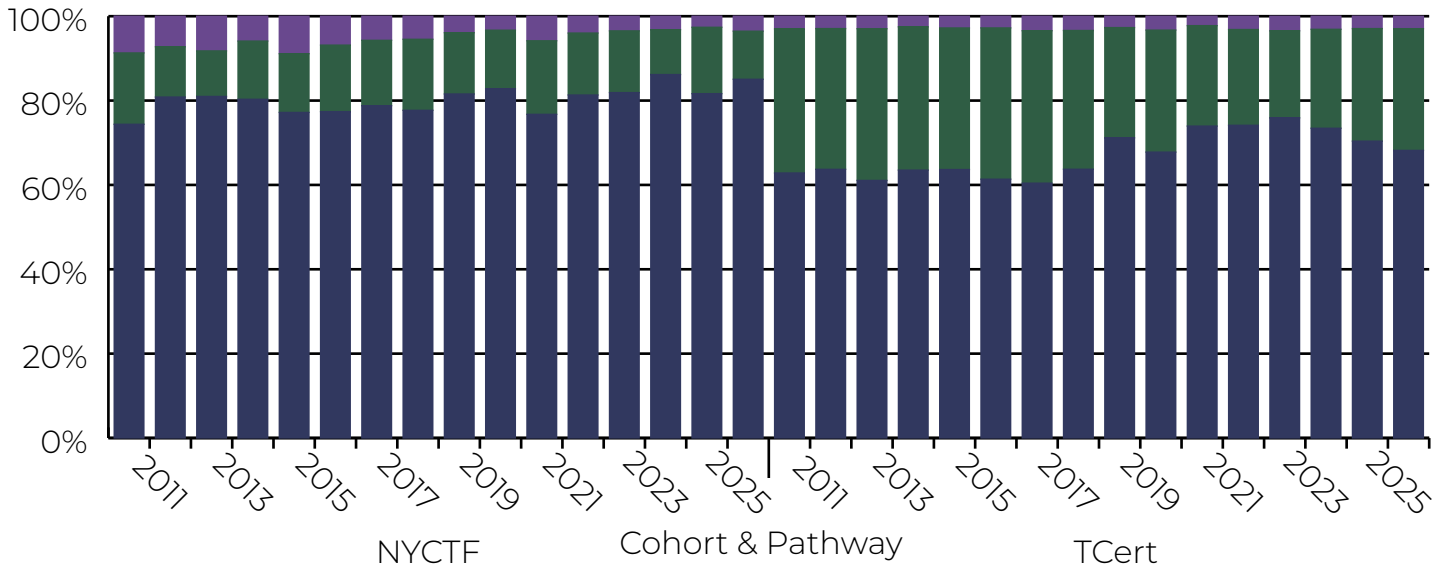


FIGURE 5

New Teacher Home Address, by Pathway and Cohort

NYC NYS Other

Percent of New Teachers



SOURCE: IBO analysis of NYCPS data

NOTE: IBO did not receive address data for teachers in the 2018-2019 school year and filled in data for this cohort using the following year; see the Appendix for further details on missing data.

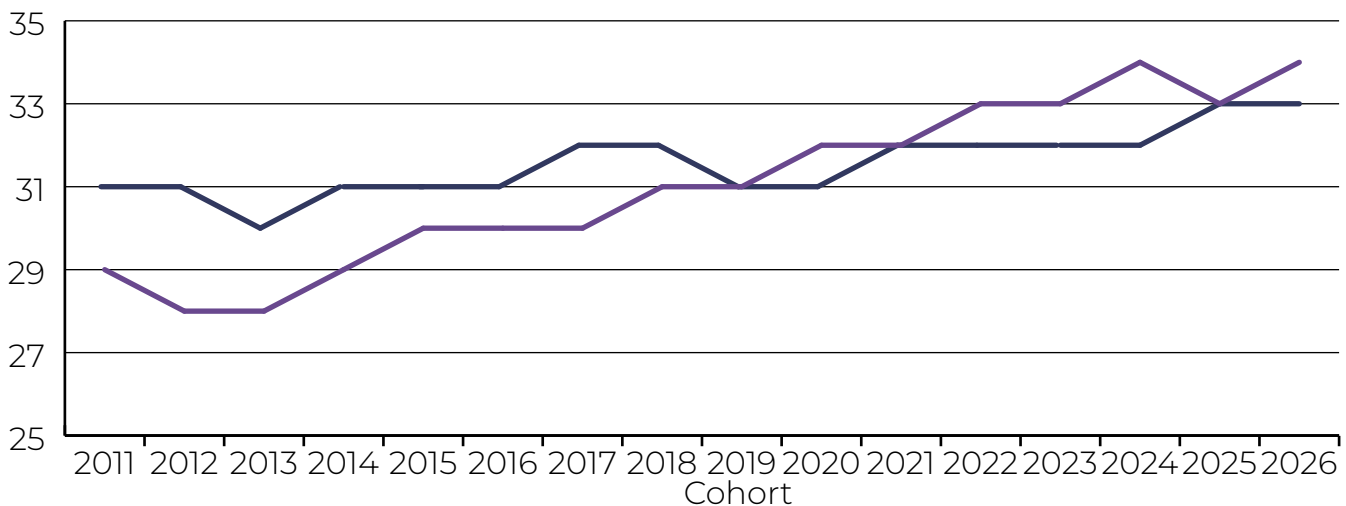
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FIGURE 6

Average Age of New Teachers, by Pathway and Cohort

NYCTF TCert

Average Age of New Teachers



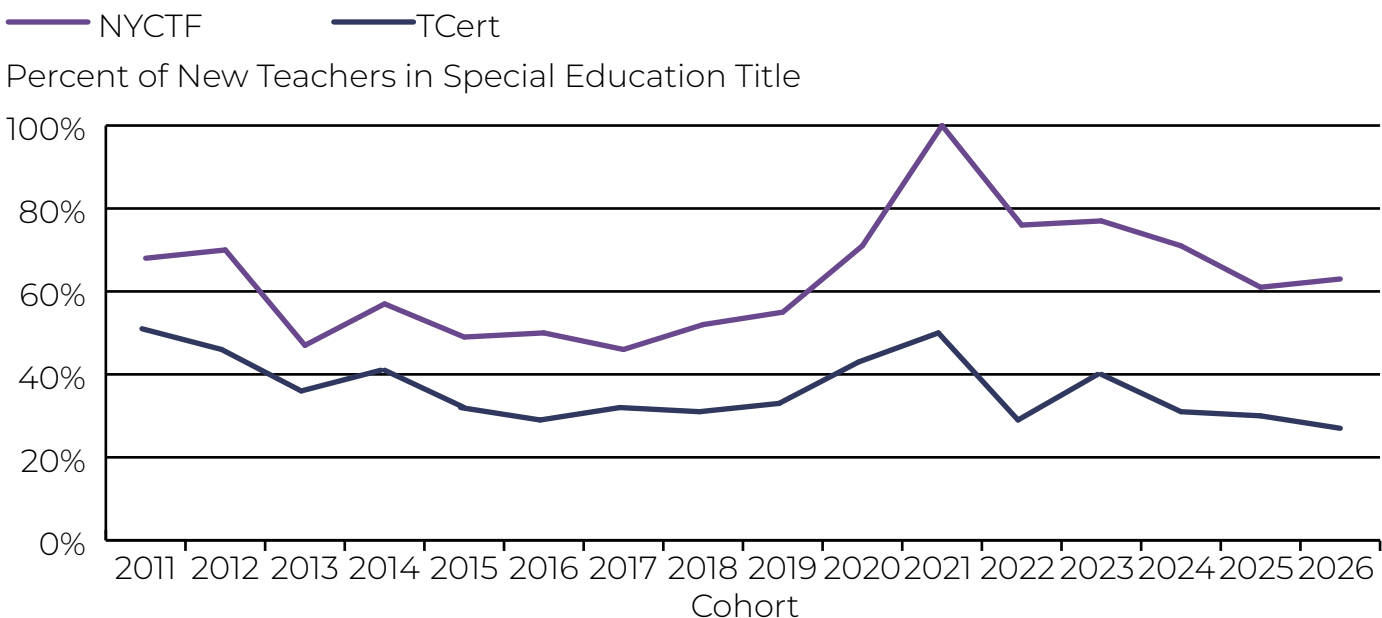
SOURCE: IBO analysis of NYCPS data

NOTE: Age is calculated as of June 30 of the listed calendar year.

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FIGURE 7

Percent of New Teachers in Special Education Title, by Pathway and Cohort



SOURCE: IBO analysis of NYCPS data

NOTE: Title and subject are two distinct variables. See the Appendix for further details on title and subject measures.

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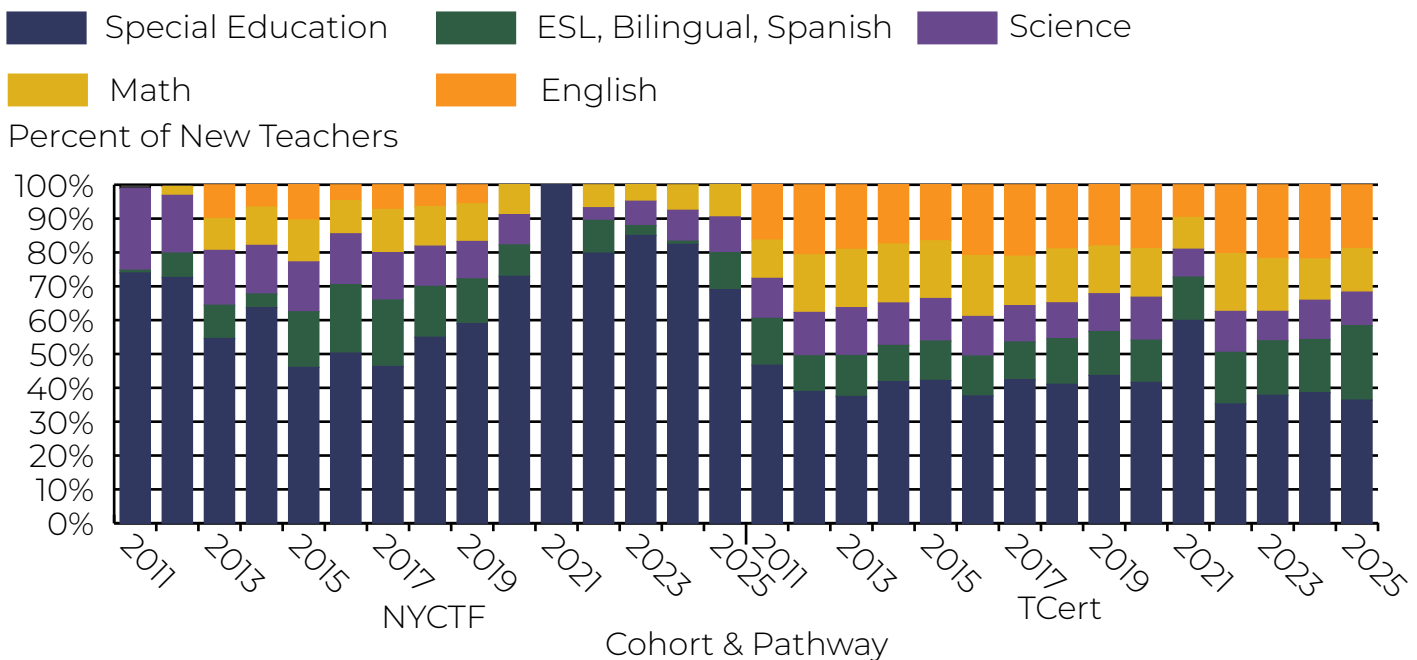
Finally, IBO analyzed the subject areas in which Fellows initially taught, compared with TCert teachers. NYCPS-provided teacher data identifies their subject area as one of 17 categories. For ease of analysis, and because NYCTF is focused on providing teachers in certain subject areas, IBO collapsed these 17 categories into 6 unique categories: five categories with subject areas with high numbers of Fellows, and an “other” category for subject areas that are uncommon among Fellows. Many TCert teachers fall into this “other” category, which includes “Common Branches”—the subject for elementary school general education teachers. Because this is not a shortage area, there were very few Fellows in this subject category. See [Appendix](#) Figure 1 for a crosswalk from the NYCPS-defined subject categories and IBO-defined subject categories.

To focus on the differences in subject areas that are common among Fellows, IBO conducted analyses on a more limited sample of teachers. This restricted sample excluded teachers who initially taught in an elementary school or in the IBO-defined “other” subject category, in which few Fellows taught (for more details on the restricted sample, see the [Appendix](#)).

Figure 8 shows the portion of Fellows and TCert teachers across the five subject areas (see the [Appendix](#) Figure 2 for the same analysis inclusive of the “other” category, which is rare among Fellows but common among TCert teachers). As previously discussed, the portion of Fellows entering teaching special education has always been high, by design. While it appears the 2015-2017 NYCTF cohorts included fewer special education teachers, these cohorts reflect significant increases in overall teacher hiring and hiring through NYCTF (total new hiring by pathway and the number of Fellows by cohort are shown in Figures 1 and 2). That is, while

FIGURE 8

Percent of New Teachers by Subject, by Pathway and Cohort—Restricted Sample



SOURCE: IBO analysis of NYCPS data

NOTES: IBO defined five subject categories in which most Fellows initially taught based on 17 NYCPS-provided subject categories. See Appendix Figure 1 for further details on this subject measure. Figure 8 limits the analysis to a restricted sample, excluding teachers in the IBO-defined "Other" subject category and teachers who initially teach in elementary schools. See the Appendix for further details on the restricted sample and see Appendix Figure 2 for the same analysis on the full sample.

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special education teachers as a portion of new hires through NYCTF declined from 2015-2017, a similar (or higher) number of new special education teachers were hired through NYCTF.

The portion of Fellows entering to teach subjects other than special education has fluctuated. For example, a higher portion of Fellows were English teachers in the 2015-2019 cohorts than earlier or later cohorts. In most entering cohorts since the 2014-2015 school year, the next largest set of subjects after Special Education for Fellows has been English as a Second Language (ESL), Bilingual, and Spanish (NYCPS offers both English as a New Language programs and bilingual programs, the latter of which includes instruction in both students' home language and English; NYCPS also offers Spanish as a foreign language course). For the 2025-2026 entering cohort of Fellows, 65% are teaching in subjects categorized as special education; 14% in ESL, Bilingual, or Spanish; 11% in Science; 8% in Math; and 2% in various other subjects.

TCert was still an important source of recruitment for ESL, Bilingual, Spanish; Science; and Math. However, a much higher portion of Fellows taught in subjects categorized as special education. That is, NYCTF is a critical source of special education teachers in NYC public schools.

Placement

IBO used detailed annual student-level data to construct school-level measures (for example, the portion of students by race, economic disadvantage, served in special education, etc.). IBO then assessed how the characteristics of schools where Fellows initially taught differed from the schools where TCert teachers initially taught. Fellows were usually hired in middle or high schools (only 6% initially taught in elementary schools). Therefore, Figure 9 limits the comparison of NYCTF and TCert teachers to the more restricted sample previously discussed: teachers who first taught in a middle or high school and one of the five IBO-created subject categories in which most Fellows teach (for more details on the restricted sample, see the [Appendix](#)). This is to ensure the differences in school characteristics that IBO identified between Fellows and TCert teachers were not driven by differences in school level (see Appendix Figure 3 for the same analysis on the full sample). In addition, the difference in school characteristics were similar for Fellows and TCert teachers in all entering cohorts, so Figure 9 focuses on the differences across all cohorts.

FIGURE 9

Average School Characteristics for New Teachers, by Pathway—Restricted Sample

	NYCTF	TCert
Student Enrollment	737	881
School Level		
Elementary (No grades > 6)	0%	0%
Middle (No grades > 8)	35%	43%
High (Includes a grade >= 9)	65%	57%
Title I School	79%	70%
Student Characteristics		
Lower income	80%	74%
Students in Temporary Housing (STH)	11%	9%
Race/Ethnicity		
Hispanic	50%	44%
Black	32%	28%
Asian	9%	13%
White	7%	13%
English Language Learner (ELL)	17%	16%
Students with Disabilities (SWD)	33%	31%
Other School-level Characteristics		
Attendance Rate	88%	89%
Chronic Absenteeism Rate	39%	34%
Suspension Rate	5%	4%

SOURCE: IBO analysis of NYCPS data

NOTE: This does not include data on new teachers in the 2025-2026 school year, as school-level data for the current school year were not yet available at the time of analysis. See the Appendix for additional details on missing data. Figure 9 limits the analysis to a restricted sample, excluding teachers who initially teach in elementary schools and the "Other" IBO-defined subject category. See the Appendix for further details on the restricted sample and see Appendix Figure 3 for the same analysis on the full sample.

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Fellows initially taught in schools that were smaller, on average. Fellows were also more likely to teach in Title I schools (schools that serve high portions of lower-income students)—though most schools in NYC are Title I schools. It then follows that Fellows initially taught in schools with slightly larger portions of lower-income students than TCert teachers (80% vs. 74%).

There were also more Hispanic and Black students, and fewer Asian and White students, at schools where Fellows initially taught. The portion of students in temporary housing (STH) and English language learners (ELLs) were slightly higher in the schools of Fellows compared with the schools of TCert teachers. Fellows also initially taught in schools with a higher portion of students with disabilities (SWDs) than TCert teachers. This is consistent with IBO's finding that many Fellows are special education teachers. Finally, Fellows initially taught in schools with slightly higher chronic absenteeism (39% vs. 34%) and suspension rates (5% vs. 4%).

Overall, Figure 9 confirms that, consistent with the NYCTF program design, Fellows were more likely to initially teach in schools with higher need than TCert teachers.

Turnover Analysis Methodology

Because teacher and school characteristics differ for Fellows and TCert teachers, IBO used regression analysis to assess how the turnover of Fellows compares with the turnover of TCert teachers. Regression analyses can control for multiple factors—in this case, teacher and school characteristics—simultaneously.

IBO ran a model predicting teacher retention as a function of whether teachers were Fellows (compared with TCert teachers). This estimates how much more likely a Fellow was to leave their school (or teaching, or the NYCPS system) compared with a TCert teacher, on average. IBO's estimates of the relationship between NYCTF status and turnover are not causal. However, these estimates allow IBO to compare the turnover likelihood of Fellows and TCert teachers with similar observed characteristics.

The model included controls for years of teacher experience, which is the strongest predictor of retention. It also controlled for a teacher's entry cohort and the specific calendar year, because labor market factors, such as the Great Recession or COVID-19 pandemic, could influence a teacher's employment decisions. Finally, the model included controls for the teacher and school characteristics previously discussed. Differences in turnover could still be driven by individual or school-level factors that IBO did not observe (for example, a teacher's pre-service commitment to the profession, or how supportive school-level supervisors are of new teachers). However, controlling for teacher and school characteristics was an attempt to isolate the association between the NYCTF program and turnover, accounting for who the program selects and where the program places teachers. For more details on the model predicting teacher turnover, see the [Appendix](#).

Turnover Results

IBO found a substantial and statistically significant difference in the likelihood of turnover, comparing Fellows with TCert teachers (see Figure 10). Fellows were 2.98 percentage points (pp) more likely to leave their school, 1.74 pp more likely to leave active teaching status, and 1.39 pp more likely to leave the NYCPS system. That is, even considering the different characteristics of Fellows and the schools they are placed in, Fellows still exhibited a higher likelihood of turnover compared with TCert teachers (see [Appendix](#) Figures 4 and 5 for estimates of models without teacher and school controls, and estimates using the restricted sample, which show similar results).

To put the percentage point differences in context, on average, 12.3% of TCert teachers in the sample left their school each year, 8.2% left active teaching, and 5.9% left the NYCPS system (these are not mutually exclusive). IBO's estimates for turnover for Fellows were therefore a 21-24% increase off these baseline turnover rates.

IBO also considered whether the relationship between NYCTF status and school turnover differed across different subgroups. IBO did not find any differences in turnover likelihood by title (special education vs. general education), subject, years of experience, cohort, school year, or age. That is, the difference in retention between Fellows and TCert teachers existed for all subgroups. See the [Appendix](#) and Appendix Figure 6 for additional details on these subgroup analyses.

Conclusion

IBO's analysis found that Fellows were more racially diverse than TCert teachers (less likely to be White, more likely to be Black/Hispanic), more likely to be male, more likely to come from NYC, and more likely to be special education teachers (as captured by both title and subject measures). Fellows were mostly hired in middle and high schools, and compared with TCert teachers, Fellows initially taught in schools that served slightly more lower-income students, Black and Hispanic students, and SWDs. Schools where Fellows were initially hired also had slightly higher chronic absenteeism rates.

Many of these differences in recruitment and placement are by design. The NYCTF program is faster and cheaper than the TCert pathway, allowing it to recruit diverse candidates who may not otherwise become teachers. Fellows are limited to teaching in high-need subject areas (like special education) and in hard-to-staff schools. On these observable measures of recruitment and placement, the NYCTF program is meeting its goals, providing diverse educators in NYC schools and positions that might otherwise be vacant.

However, Fellows were 4.1 percentage points more likely to leave their school and 1.6 percentage points more likely to leave the NYCPS system than TCert teachers. Accounting for differing teacher and school characteristics explained only a fourth of the difference in school turnover between Fellows and TCert teachers. Compared with baseline turnover rates among TCert teachers, Fellows were 24% more likely to leave their school, and 24% more likely to leave the NYCPS system. The difference in turnover likelihood between Fellows and TCert teachers existed for both special education and general education teachers, all cohorts, and all school

FIGURE 10

Estimated Difference in Probability of Turnover Between Fellows and TCert Teachers

School Turnover	0.0298*** (0.0022)
Teacher Turnover	0.0174*** (0.0016)
District Turnover	0.0139*** (0.0014)

SOURCE: IBO analysis of NYCPS data

NOTE: Each cell presents the estimated average marginal effect (AME) of being a Fellow, relative to being a TCert teacher, from logit models predicting the turnover outcome listed. Each estimate can be interpreted as a change in turnover likelihood, that is, a 0.0298 estimate is a 2.98 percentage-point (pp) increase. Standard errors are in parentheses. All estimates are statistically significant at the 1% level. All models used data on 58,516 unique teachers from the 2010-2011 through 2024-2025 cohorts. The analysis of school turnover used 269,291 teacher-year observations, teacher turnover used 325,314 observations, and NYCPS system turnover used 351,935 observations (the number of observations varies with the outcome measure because teachers were followed until the first turnover event occurred). All models included teacher and school-level control variables. See the Appendix for additional details on the estimated logit model.

New York City Independent Budget Office

years. Notably, even after many years of experience, Fellows remained more likely to turnover from their school and from the NYCPS system than TCert teachers.

Because the turnover of Fellows was higher than traditionally certified teachers, a higher portion of Fellows in NYC schools may lead to more school-level staffing instability, and more teacher hiring in the long-run to maintain the teaching force. This may be a worthwhile tradeoff given the need to hire teachers to comply with the State class size mandate (even if the timeline is extended) and the limited capacity of traditional teaching pathways to scale up in the short term.⁸

Ease of entry into the NYCTF program is a feature of the program's design and may be part of the reason for higher turnover, relative to the TCert pathway. Nonetheless, there may be aspects of the NYCTF program that could be changed to increase retention, without undermining the program's success increasing NYC's teaching force with more diverse teachers in high-need subjects and schools. IBO does not have data on variation in specific NYCTF program features (for example, the location of Fellows' summer training, the institution at which Fellows get their Masters, or the quality of mentorship within the program). However, research has found teacher training experiences are predictive of turnover, so changes to the program experience could affect retention.⁹ Research has also identified changes that improve teacher recruitment and retention for all educators, such as increased salaries and supportive school leadership (see [IBO's 2025 report](#) on NYC teacher salaries relative to surrounding school districts). These kinds of changes might lower the turnover of both Fellows and TCert teachers, though they would not necessarily affect the difference in turnover between Fellows and TCert teachers.

As the State class size mandate continues to prompt increased hiring in NYCPS schools, particularly through NYCTF, it will be important to consider how it changes the composition of NYC's educators, including their turnover across schools and from the NYCPS system.

Endnotes

- 1 “In 1998 the New York State Board of Regents passed a regulation abolishing temporary licenses for uncertified teachers, effective September 1, 2003. In 2000, the Regents created alternative certification routes that would allow school districts to hire teachers participating in approved alternative preparation programs as long as they are able to pass required teacher certification exams” (p. 166). Goertz, M., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2011). Recruiting, Evaluating, and Retaining Teachers: The Children First Strategy to Improve New York City’s Teachers. In J. O’Day, C. Bitter, & L. Gomez (Eds.), *Education Reform in New York City: Ambitious Change in the Nation’s Most Complex School System* (pp. 157-177). Harvard Education Press.
- 2 Teacher recruitment and retention spending is not consistently allocated in specific areas of the DOE budget. DOE Finance provided data on the TRQ and NYCPS budget and spending to IBO.
- 3 For data on teacher demographics in NYC, see NYCPS. (n.d.) Report on School-Based Staff Demographics, 2024-2025. <https://infohub.nyced.org/reports/government-reports/report-on-school-based-staff-demographics>. For data on teacher demographics in the United States, see National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (2023). Characteristics of Public School Teachers. <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/clr/public-school-teachers>
- 4 “The goal of improving educational equity has been a focus of the New York State Board of Regents at least as far back as 1978” and “individuals of color deserve the same access to the education profession as all others” (p. 6). New York State Education Department (NYSED). (2019). Educator Diversity Report. <https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/educator-quality/educator-diversity-report-december-2019.pdf>
- 5 Gershenson, S.; Hart, C. M. D.; Hyman, J.; Lindsay, C. A.; & Papageorge, N. W. (2022). “The Long-Run Impacts of Same-Race Teachers.” *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 14 (4): 300–342. <https://www.doi.org/10.1257/pol.20190573>
- 6 Whitford, D.K., Zhang, D. & Katsiyannis, A. (2018). Traditional vs. Alternative Teacher Preparation Programs: A Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Children and Family Studies* 27, 671–685. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-017-0932-0>. The structure and implementation of AC programs varies widely. Only a few specific AC programs have been studied using quantitative, longitudinal, teacher-level data (most notably, Teach for America). For example, see, Backes, B., & Hansen, M. (2024). Estimates of Teach for America Effects on Student Test and Nontest Academic Outcomes Over Time. *AERA Open*, 10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23328584241234874>
- 7 Boyd, D., Grossman, P., Hammerness, K., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., Ronfeldt, M., & Wyckoff, J. (2012). Recruiting Effective Math Teachers: Evidence From New York City. *American Educational Research Journal*, 49(6), 1008-1047. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831211434579>
- Brantlinger, A., Grant, A. A., Miller, J., Viviani, W., Cooley, L., & Griffin, M. (2022). Maintaining Gaps in Teacher Diversity, Preparedness, Effectiveness, and Retention? A Program Theory Evaluation of Mathematics Teacher Training in the New York City Teaching Fellows. *Educational Policy*, 36(6), 1227-1260. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904820951117>
- 8 In 2025, then-First Deputy Chancellor Dan Weisberg reflected on the teacher pipeline and said, “we can work with our higher ed partners to see if they can expand, but it is going to be a stress and a strain.” Zimmerman, A. (2025, Jul 24). “Dan Weisberg on literacy, migrants, and his decision to step down as NYC’s No. 2 school official.” Chalkbeat New York. <https://www.chalkbeat.org/newyork/2025/07/24/dan-weisberg-nyc-deputy-chancellor-leaving-reads-solves-mamdani/>. In addition, a January 2026 report found that, since 2009, “enrollment in New York’s teacher preparation programs has dropped 42 percent, and program completions are down at least 35 percent.” NYSUT. (2026). Forging A New Future: Teacher Recruitment and Retention. <https://www.nysut.org/news/2026/january/teacher-prep-report>
- 9 Nguyen, T.D., Pham, L.D., Crouch, M., & Springer, M.G. (2020). The correlates of teacher turnover: An updated and expanded Meta-analysis of the literature. *Educational Research Review*, 31. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2020.100355> and Tan, T., Wei, W., Carver-Thomas, D., & García, E. (2026). Teacher turnover in the United States: Who moves, who leaves, and why. Learning Policy Institute. <https://doi.org/10.54300/248.479>



IBO's mission is to enhance understanding of New York City's budget, public policy, and economy through independent analysis.

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