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PASA POINTS

The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators

About PASA

The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA) is an organization that is instrumental in developing successful school leadership through advocacy, support, sustainment of high-quality school administrators and a statewide collegial network.

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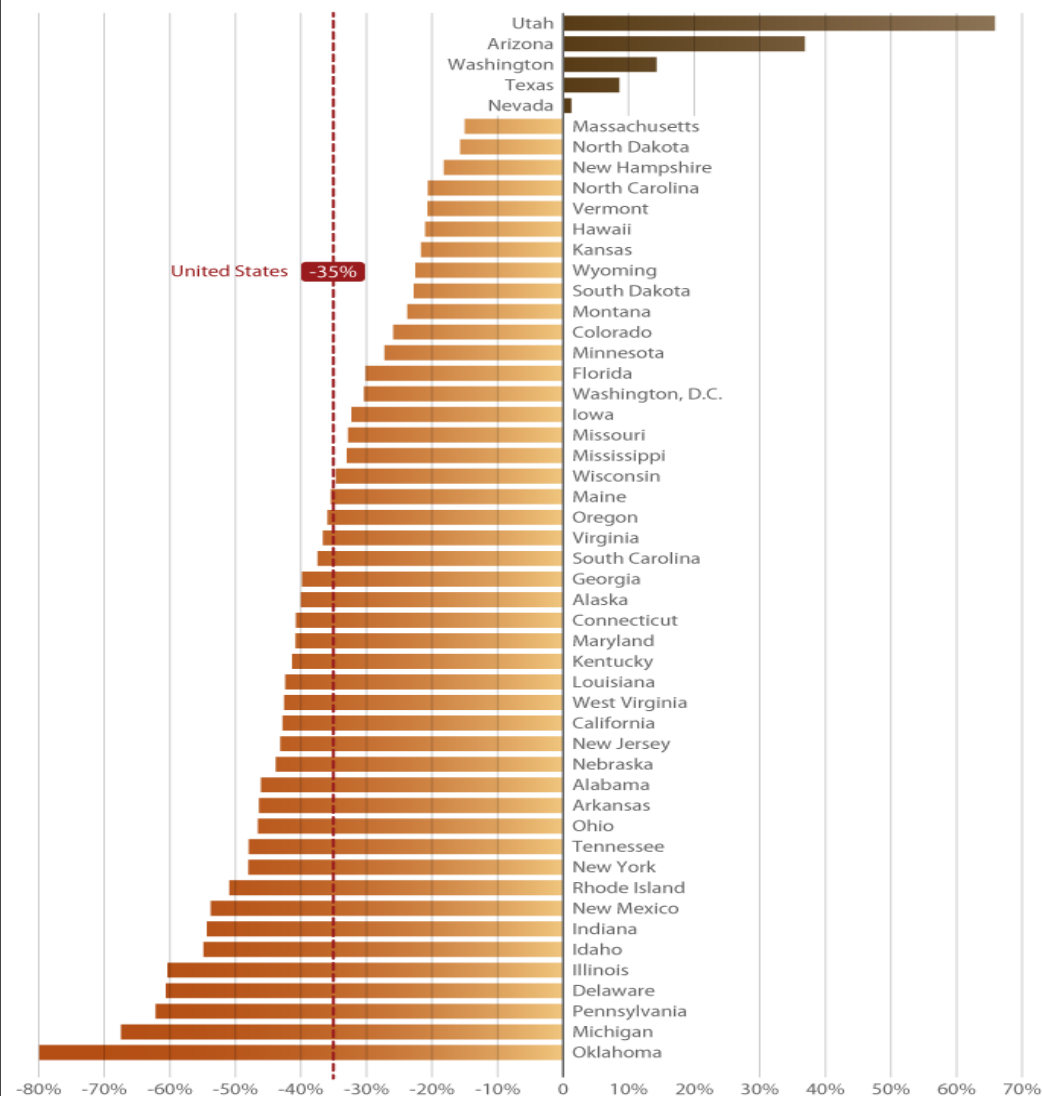
Enrollments in Pennsylvania Teacher Preparation Programs are down **significantly** over the past decade!

In this issue

- School personnel shortages and the impact on our schools

FIGURE 4

Teacher preparation program enrollment is declining in most states
Percentage change in teacher preparation program enrollment by state, 2010–2018



Source: Author's calculations based on U.S. Department of Education, "Title II Reports," available at <https://title2.ed.gov/Public/Home.aspx> (last accessed October 2019).

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Facts to Consider Regarding the Teacher and School Personnel Shortage

- Nationally, there were 575,000 fewer local and state education employees in October 2021 than in February 2020, according to the national jobs report by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- The wage gap between teachers and the educated workforce was about 21% in 2018. That disparity was a much smaller 6% back in 1996 according to the Economic Policy Institute.
- Although teacher pay has gone up this year, the group's wage gains of .07% in the last quarter were just half the 1.5% average for all civilian workers. PASA anticipates that collective bargaining agreements and non-union wages will increase well beyond the increases of the past decade in order to attract and retain professional and support staff employees.
- The chart on page 1 of this document shows that enrollment in Pennsylvania Teacher Preparation Programs is down about 67% over an eight-year period from 2010 – 2018 according to the U.S. Department of Education. We will need to make the teaching profession attractive again to our young people or we will continue to see considerable strain on maintaining qualified staff members to work with our children.

The current situation of the pandemic, wages, and the negativity toward education is causing existing educators and school personnel to pivot to new careers and discouraging young people from entering teacher preparation programs. The pandemic has given pause to those considering working in our schools due to the risk of contracting COVID-19. This has reduced applications for teaching positions, substitute teaching positions, and support staff positions. School bus drivers have been very hard to secure during the pandemic, and student transportation is at a crisis point in many districts across the state.

Inflation is becoming a more significant factor in the job search process for people entering the work force or considering a move to another job. Teacher and support staff wages have not increased at the same rate as many other career fields, causing people to consider other career choices. Many school districts are suddenly finding themselves competing with restaurants, retail stores, and delivery services for support staff employees as most of these businesses have raised their starting rates well above Pennsylvania's minimum wage and district starting salaries. It is only logical that costs for professional and support staff will increase at a higher rate in the future than in the past 10 years, putting additional strain on school district budgets.

We are also witnessing a significant decrease in our public school leadership positions. Just as there are fewer people considering a teaching career, there are fewer teachers considering becoming a building principal. Likewise, fewer building principals are considering a move to the central office, and far fewer individuals are considering applying to be a superintendent. While school district leadership has always been a challenging position filled with emotional and tense situations, today's school landscape has become the focus of national attention, creating unprecedented episodes of upheaval in our schools and communities. If we don't get back to some semblance of normalcy and truly focus on educating students, we will continue to see the slow degradation of education continue in both our public and non-public schools to the detriment of the next generation of our children.