

# Understanding the Local Labor Market

## Promising Career Pathways in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County

### Focus: Primary and Secondary School Teachers

*Understanding the Local Labor Market: Promising Career Pathways in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County* is intended as a useful resource for career counselors and other professionals responsible for helping jobseekers make informed decisions about employment and training. Featured occupations are selected on the basis of vacancies, wages and benefits, and opportunities for advancement.

#### What do primary and secondary school teachers do?

- Primary and secondary school teachers help students understand and apply concepts in various subject areas (they may focus on one or more subjects).
- Primary and secondary school teachers: plan lessons and activities; instruct students both individually and in groups; prepare tests; evaluate student performance and grade student work; establish and enforce rules for behavior and discipline within the classroom; and maintain student records.

#### What are primary and secondary school teachers' wages, benefits, and work conditions?

- Most primary and secondary teachers work more than 40 hours/week. In addition to working during school hours, they may work evenings and weekends on lesson plans and grading.
- Primary and secondary school teachers usually work a 10-month school year and have summer months off (unpaid). Tenure, which provides some level of job security, may be available after a probationary period.
- Pay varies by school district but most school districts offer healthcare and retirement benefits. Additional pay may be available for coaching or leading extracurricular activities.

#### What do primary and secondary school teachers like about their jobs?

- While very challenging, teaching can be very rewarding.
- Primary and secondary school teachers enjoy interacting with children and young adults and using their creativity to convey knowledge to them.

#### What are related jobs and advancement opportunities?

- With additional training, primary and secondary school teachers may become: school librarians; reading specialists; guidance counselors; administrators or supervisors; college and university professors; trainers; and consultants.
- Related jobs include: substitute teachers; college and university faculty; education administrators; librarians; preschool teachers; vocational education teachers; special education teachers; public relations specialists; sales representatives; and human services jobs.

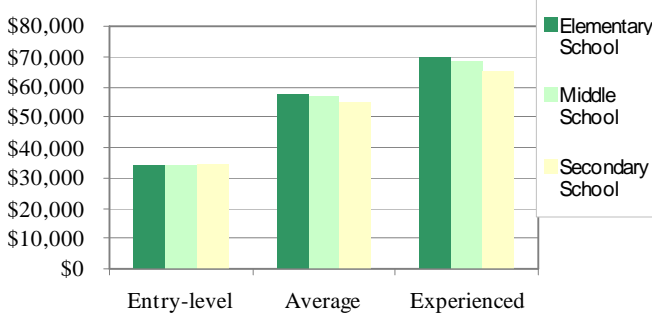
#### How many primary and secondary school teacher openings are there?

- The PA Department of Labor & Industry estimates that there are approximately 21,590 primary and secondary school teachers working in Allegheny County.
- Local demand for primary and secondary school teachers is expected to grow in Allegheny County. Allegheny County is expected to add at least 1,280 primary and secondary schools by 2010. Opportunities may vary by geography, grade level and subject matter taught.

#### Where can I find further information related to this occupation?

- Allegheny Intermediate Unit: [www.aiu3.net](http://www.aiu3.net)
- American Federation of Teachers: [www.aft.org](http://www.aft.org)
- Association of American Educators: [www.aacteacheers.org](http://www.aacteacheers.org)
- Association of Supervision and Curriculum development: [www.ascd.org](http://www.ascd.org)
- Hey Teach: [www.heyteach.org](http://www.heyteach.org)
- National Education Association: [www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org)
- U.S. Department of Education Office of Elementary and Secondary Education: [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)
- PA Department of Education: [www.pde.state.pa.us](http://www.pde.state.pa.us)
- PA State Education Association: [www.pseaa.org](http://www.pseaa.org)

**Annual Wages for Teachers  
Allegheny County**



	Entry-level	Average	Experienced
Elementary School	\$33,590	\$57,682	\$69,728
Middle School	\$33,673	\$56,770	\$68,318
Secondary School	\$34,884	\$54,931	\$64,955

Source: PA Dept. of Labor & Industry, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis ([www.paworkstats.state.pa.us](http://www.paworkstats.state.pa.us))

# FOCUS: Primary and Secondary School Teachers

## How can I become a primary or secondary school teacher?

- Effective primary or secondary school teachers generally are: organized; dependable; patient; creative; good communicators and good motivators.
- In Pennsylvania, certification is required to teach in the public schools. While certification is not required for teachers in private schools, it is highly recommended. Certification requirements include: a bachelor degree and completion of a state-approved teacher training program including a student teacher experience or internship; successful completion of Praxis assessments ([www.ets.org/praxis/prxpa.html](http://www.ets.org/praxis/prxpa.html)); and a portfolio documenting that all certification requirements have been met. Individuals who do not study education at the undergraduate level may obtain the necessary training at the graduate level.
- Pennsylvania has 93 colleges and universities that offer teacher education programs approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (see [www.pde.state.pa.us](http://www.pde.state.pa.us) for the program list).
- In Pennsylvania, all applicants for school employment who have direct contact with students must obtain a criminal background check and a child abuse clearance.
- In Pennsylvania, certified teachers must complete continuing education requirements (under Act 48) in order to maintain their certification (see [www.pde.state.pa.us](http://www.pde.state.pa.us) for details).

## How do I find out about primary or secondary school teacher jobs?

- PA Department of Education maintains a job search website called "TIPS" ([www.pde.state.pa.us](http://www.pde.state.pa.us)).
- Additional job search websites for teaching positions include:
  - [www.educationamerica.net](http://www.educationamerica.net)
  - [www.pa-educator.net](http://www.pa-educator.net)
  - [www.greatteacher.net](http://www.greatteacher.net)
  - [www.pareap.net](http://www.pareap.net)
  - [www.psba.org/Employment/pev.asp](http://www.psba.org/Employment/pev.asp)
  - [www.schoolspring.com/searchresults](http://www.schoolspring.com/searchresults)
- Most teacher preparation colleges and universities assist their graduates through placement and career counseling services.

## Where can I get training locally?

- **Carlow College** — [www.carlow.edu](http://www.carlow.edu), 412-578-6000. Offers undergraduate and graduate programs in elementary and secondary education.
- **Carnegie Mellon University** — [www.cmu.edu](http://www.cmu.edu), 412-268-2000. Offers undergraduate and graduate programs in music education.
- **Chatham College** — [www.chatham.edu](http://www.chatham.edu), 412-365-1819. Offers undergraduate program in elementary and secondary education (for women only) and a graduate program in elementary and secondary education for men and women.
- **Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC)** — [www.ccac.ed.edu](http://www.ccac.ed.edu). Offers a Teacher Education Associate Degree program that prepares students to transfer to a 4-year undergraduate program in elementary or secondary education.
- **Duquesne University** — [www.education.duq.edu](http://www.education.duq.edu), 412-396-6093. Offers undergraduate as well as graduate elementary and secondary education programs.
- **La Roche College** — [www.laroche.edu](http://www.laroche.edu), 412-536-1275. Offers undergraduate programs in elementary and secondary education.
- **Point Park College** — [www.pointpark.edu](http://www.pointpark.edu), 1-800-321-0129. Offers undergraduate programs in elementary and secondary education.
- **Robert Morris University** — [www.rmu.edu](http://www.rmu.edu), 412-262-8228. Offers undergraduate and graduate programs in elementary and secondary education.
- **University of Pittsburgh** — [www.education.pitt.edu](http://www.education.pitt.edu), 412-648-2230. Offers graduate programs in elementary and secondary education.

## Can I get help paying for training?

- Limited training funds may be available through Pittsburgh/Allegheny County CareerLink.
- Colleges and universities may offer financial aid.

## Remember...

Labor markets are affected by economic, social, and institutional factors that are difficult to predict. No one can forecast perfectly how many jobs will be available, or whether there will be too many or too few workers to fill those jobs. The reality is that employment is never a guarantee, even for individuals who pursue training in demand occupations.

The Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board (TRWIB) is charged with promoting a coordinated and accountable employment and training system for Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. Responsibilities include setting and monitoring local performance standards, chartering CareerLink comprehensive and community centers that provide a range of services to jobseekers and employers, and certifying qualified training providers. Board members are appointed by Mayor Bob O'Connor (City of Pittsburgh) and Chief Executive Dan Onorato (Allegheny County).

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