Background

National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) appointed an Ad Hoc Committee in November 2023 to review the 2011 InTASC standards and assess what needed updating to align with current—and future—workforce priorities and requirements. The Committee concluded an InTASC standards update would be a major effort and recommended that NASDTEC produce guidelines for jurisdictions that would focus on what novice teachers in the decade ahead will need to know and be able to do.

The Novice Educator Essential Competencies (NEEC) initiative began in October 2025. The Ad Hoc committee started gathering input from the field on a series of questions to support the work of the proposed Task Force. NASDTEC appointed a NEEC Task Force in spring of 2026 to recommend core competencies for novice teachers, with a launch at the June 2026 annual conference.

This paper is the result of an effort engaging stakeholders in a series of questions about the future novice teacher workforce. Before determining the competencies essential for novices in the coming decade, it made sense to first learn more about these new teachers—where they will work, whom and how they will teach, and what will be expected of them.

The details presented in this paper were collected from several sources:

- September 2025 session at CAEP in Virginia.
- Fall meetings with IHE faculty at University of Wyoming and EPP leaders in North Dakota.
- December 2025 and February 2026 NASDTEC webinars attended by over 200 participants.
- An invitational workshop at PESBA in January 2026 (attended by 40 individuals).
- Review of documents from KnowledgeWorks, AASA, and AASPA.
- Scan of data on trends in schooling options; NCES data on teaching profession and students.

This briefing paper summarized the results of those engagement and research sessions. Additionally, NASDTEC has a dedicated website (insert) for individuals to offer insights into the key questions asked about the novice teacher.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This briefing paper examines who our novice teachers are, where they are likely to teach, the roles they are expected to assume, and the evolving competencies they will need as the education landscape transforms during the decade ahead.

Novice teachers are increasingly diverse in age, background, preparation pathways, and lived experiences. While some enter through traditional university-based programs, a growing share comes through alternative routes such as apprenticeships, Grow Your Own programs, virtual online programs and paraprofessional pathways. Despite varied entry points, all novices are expected to meet professional standards for initial licensure and demonstrate readiness for classroom and instructional responsibility.

Likewise, the students they serve are growing in diversity. Learners are digital natives with high expectations for engagement, relevancy, and personalized instruction. Many carry experiences of trauma and disruption, and classrooms across the nation reflect a growing racial, cultural, linguistic and neurodiverse population. Family structures have also evolved, requiring teachers to build strong, culturally responsive partnerships with a wide array of caregivers.

The environments in which novices teach are rapidly changing. Public school enrollment continues to decline as families increasingly choose homeschooling, microschools, hybrid options, and private or virtual schools. Traditional brick-and-mortar schools remain dominant, but instructional delivery is shifting toward hybrid and technology-enhanced models. These changes require novices to teach across multiple modalities and collaborate within new organizational structures.

Teaching roles themselves are transforming. Strategic staffing models and emerging workforce frameworks emphasize educator teams, differentiated roles, flexible scheduling, and career pathways that retain teachers in instructional positions. Technology, especially generative AI, is reshaping planning, assessment, and administrative tasks, potentially enabling teachers to focus more on personalization, coaching, and relationship-building.

To be effective, novices must bring a deep understanding of who they teach, what they teach, and how they teach. They must know students as individuals, use data to guide learning, design relevant instruction, integrate durable and “new basic” skills, and leverage technology and AI to enhance learning. They also need strong professional dispositions grounded in ethics, collaboration, communication, and commitment to continuous growth.

Overall, novice teachers entering the profession in 2032 will navigate more complex classrooms, more varied learning environments, and more collaborative and technologically integrated roles. Preparing them with the right competencies and support is essential to ensuring high-quality teaching and equitable outcomes for all learners.

Who Are Our Novice Teachers?

It is widely accepted that teachers who are just beginning to teach are seen as novices, beginners, or rookies. However, terminology varies across state education agencies and school districts in our country. Numerous states offer temporary credentials that allow individuals to start teaching in classrooms even if they lack formal training or competency assessments, and these individuals are classified as "beginning teachers". These “beginners” are preparing to be teachers while assuming the role as teacher of record. Some states offer induction/mentoring support to beginning teachers and it is used as an umbrella term to cover all individuals with fewer than 3 years of experience while serving as the teacher of record.

This initiative requires a common definition The Novice Educator Essential Competencies (NEEC) Steering committee agreed to use this definition for the Task Force work.

> *A novice teacher is a teacher qualifying for an initial professional license (also referred to as a “clear” or “unencumbered” license). This defines the standards to which all candidates recommended by an education preparation provider (EPP) should be held and the standards by which an accrediting body would set in their review of EPPs.*

This novice has completed a state approved teacher preparation program along with any other licensing requirements. One hope of setting up essential competencies for novices is that districts and programs who allow individuals to teach while preparing will use the competencies as guideposts for their on-the-job preparation experiences.

Today’s novice teachers—and our future novices—are a diverse group. Many people picture a new teacher as a recent college graduate from a conventional university program. The engagement sessions indicate this is no longer the norm. The American Association of School Personnel Administrators (AASPA) produced a summary from their 2024 National Educator Shortage Summit inspired by a series of ten personas to get into the educator pipeline[i]. These inspired a variety of portraits of novice teachers who will enter the profession in the year 2032, created and used by NASDTEC in focus groups and feedback sessions. They are inserted throughout this report—while so much

Meet Lindsay

Linsday is from a multi-generational family of teachers. She attended the state university where her mom received her teaching degree through a nationally accredited and recognized teacher preparation program. She participated in the college of education’s residency program . Lindsay just received her initial teaching license and her first offer of employment. She feels ready to reach each student that will be her responsibility but a little anxious as her mom keeps saying: “Teaching is NOTHING like it was when I retired in 2019.” What will Lindsay face?

Meet Rashida

She immigrated to the US 15 years ago when her husband's engineering firm relocated them. Rashida received a degree in Honduras and is currently a paraprofessional in the public school district. Rashida wants to be a special education/ELL teacher and is in the first cohort of her state's Grow Your Own/Registered Apprenticeship Program. She will be offered a position at once upon completion of her program in her district and earning her initial license. What will her novice teaching year be like?

of what novices will face depends on where they will teach—the portraits are a starting point to consider the essential competencies.

Lindsay is the novice that most people know best. Increasingly, schools are hiring more Rashida's.

Participants identified commonalities they expect to see among novices in 2032. As a cohort, a sense of enthusiasm, purpose and dedication is clear. This is backed up by recent research from the Pew Research Center, citing "newer teachers are most likely to say their job is fulfilling and enjoyable". Many individuals have faced considerable obstacles along their path to becoming teachers. These novice teachers are often more tech savvy than the veterans. They are either digital natives or parents of digital natives, possessing a background in artificial *intelligence and social media.*

Like so many of the students they will meet, these novices have experienced a share of disruptions and trauma in their lives. They have navigated disruptions (pandemic, climate disasters); school threats/shootings; community conflicts along with more common stresses of loss, divorce, domestic violence, and economics. Each year brings an increasing number of novices prepared through non-traditional routes(18% in 2015 and 23% in 2019)[ii] contributing to increased racial, ethnic, gender and age diversity among teachers. [iii]

Lastly, each year ahead we will see fewer novices. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), looking at trend data from 2010 on, projects that by 2030 there will be 18% fewer teachers than in 2010, and 21% fewer in public schools.[iv]

Who and Where Do They Teach?

The Who: Their learners represent more diversity than ever before as body of students.

Regardless of where they live and other demographic descriptions, they share the identity of digital natives. They were raised in a tech-focused, social media-centric era. Gaming platforms, virtual reality, and YouTube instruction create an expectation for the kind of instruction they receive and the attention they will give. They want relevancy, engagement and "pizzaz" in their instruction. Young people connect using gaming platforms and social media chats, but they

Meet Leo

He began his journey into teaching in high school, where he participated in Educators Rising and took dual enrollment courses during his junior and senior years. Leo enrolled in the local community college, obtained an associate's degree in early childhood education, and met all requirements for an initial license. He has been tutoring small groups of first graders in reading through Big Brothers since his high school senior year and worked as a Head Start teaching assistant while in college. Leo has been hired by a public school district. What will this 20-year-old novice teacher face as he starts his first year as a teacher of record?

frequently seek a deeper sense of belonging in both formal and informal youth organizations—ranging from sports teams, arts groups, school or community clubs, to even gangs.

Although the students have diverse backgrounds, they, like the novice teachers, share experiences of trauma and disruption. Although a range of indicators suggests that the overall student population is highly diverse, schooling environments are becoming more homogenous. Groups of students—whether in classrooms or other educational settings—are frequently separated based on socioeconomic status (such as "haves" and "have nots"), race and ethnicity, family religion, or political viewpoints, among other factors[v]. Students might no longer be grouped strictly by age and grade, but instead by broader age ranges and developmental stages.[vi]

The diversity is also changing in terms of the "Multi"—students identifying as multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-lingual. The grouping of learners as neurodivergent and neurotypical is the term of art in 2032, while students with specific disabilities and their IEPs and 504 plans can be found in every learning situation.

By 2032, the idea of what constitutes a "family" has changed. Many learners are raised by more than one caregiver, such as grandparents alongside a primary parent, families with two parents—including those with same-sex parents—or situations involving stepparents, divorced parents, and significant others. In some cases, older siblings, extended family members, or guardians who are not biologically related also play parental roles.

The Where: Imagining that "school" will undergo fundamental transformation in the next ten years calls for creative thinking. After all, we can walk into schools where our grandparents attended and see little physical change. It remains a large building where most young people in the community gather, with separate classrooms and instructors and individual seats/tables or desks for learners. School has resisted the industrial, social and technological advances in its designs for over a century.

Meet Moira

It is 2032 and Moira is a novice teacher in Texas. Born, raised and living in Texas for all her 38 years in the Lone Star State, Moira has been enrolled in an online teacher preparation program called "Talent for Texas". The program included completing modules on various content and instructional strategies and 30 hours observing teaching, fifteen of which were watching accomplished teaching videos. Moira has just been hired to teach math to 12–14-year-old students in a rural community fifty miles from her home. What is Moira about to face in her first teaching role?

While brick and mortar traditional schools are still our primary environment, there are trends that times, they are a "changin'. The nation's 98,577 public schools vary, especially when considering rural institutions or specialized academies for academics, arts, or sports in urban and suburban areas. [vii]

Each year, public schools lose hundreds of thousands of K12 students, a trend that shows no sign of reversing. National Center of Education Statistics (2023) stated that in 2021 there were 49.2M public school students and predicts that in 2031, there will be 46.9M[viii]. Where are these students going as they opt out of public schooling?

Unlike past events that may have catalyzed reform, the 2020 global pandemic required quick innovation and adaptation. The popularity of school choice reforms specifically vouchers, and Education Savings Accounts (ESA) have added fuel to an emerging and multi-faceted school marketplace.

Hybrid classes and virtual schools: The pandemic accelerated an emerging trend of using technology for instructional delivery. At that time, with most public and private schools closed, students learned through online platforms. After the pandemic, during the 2021-22 school year, about 17% of K12 students participated in some type of hybrid learning. Virtual schools made up a smaller portion, with just 726 schools (a third of which were charter schools) offering full-time enrollment, serving only 1.1% of the K12 student population. This sector, while small, is an interesting mix of public, for profit and non-profit providers.

Non-traditional schooling: Homeschooling and microschools are perhaps the largest non-public school segment. Thirty states report data on students being home-schooled, and the latest summary shows that 4.2 million students, or 7.6% of the school population, fall into this category.[ix] [x]Of those states reporting, 80% stated an increase in this sector, averaging a 4.9% annual growth rate.

Homeschooling environments vary, expanding beyond the notion of a stay-at-home mom organizing instruction at the kitchen table. One result of the pandemic is more organization in this sector, including renting community buildings and hiring "teacher pods" to lead instruction.

This segment is savvy about expanding instruction to libraries, museums, community recreation centers and leagues and other resources.

One of these offshoots is the rise of micro-schools.[xi] Sometimes referred to as the "modern one-room schoolhouse", they often are coops and homeschooling hubs and educate an average of 16 students at each site. Microschools seem to cater to more neurodiverse learners as well as those who have not performed at expectations in public schools.

Private school sector: This sector includes faith-based, independent day and boarding schools. In 2022, 11.8% of students between ages 5 and 17 attended these schools, reflecting a gradual but consistent rise each year since 2010. Most of this growth has occurred in faith-based schools, particularly in the Southern region. Many faith-based schools do not require state-licensed teachers, yet some newly licensed educators may find jobs in this expanding sector.

Meet Betty

Betty is in her 40's and has two teenage children. Since their elementary school days, Betty obtained a substitute teacher certification and worked for a decade in her local school district. She also obtained a degree in business administration, but her calling is teaching at the elementary level. Betty has taken all the coursework for an elementary license, and her substitute teaching experience fulfilled the clinical practice requirements in her state. Her first job is with the urban district next to her suburban community where she has worked as a substitute. Betty learned she will be part of a team using a strategic staffing program and she is not sure what that is. What will Betty face in her first role as the "teacher of record"?

What Roles will Novice Teachers Have?

How teaching roles will evolve is still a process of necessity-driven imaginative thinking coupled with 2032 realities. Nonetheless, numerous areas of consensus and innovative staffing models offer valuable direction for these efforts. Over the next decade, these models predict that while traditional school structures will remain the dominant environment, the "how" work of adults in these schools has changed.

The days of teachers being "sage on the stage" are waning. Even in traditional classrooms, teachers have shifted to the "guide on the side" role as they spend more time personalizing learning, coaching and facilitating each student's learning journey, including the adaptations and supports often specified by IEPs and 504 documents. They instruct individual students while managing larger groups, often virtually.

Generative AI and similar technologies are beginning to help teachers manage time-consuming administrative duties, while also gathering data and monitoring each student's progress. By 2032,

AI will probably play a greater role in lesson planning—helping educators choose top-notch instructional materials, and track student progress, mastery, and learning more effectively. Although AI shows great potential, it is important to address and question how it can be balanced with established instructional methods and materials, as well as consider the ethical implications of its use and the evolving responsibilities of teachers.

And every teacher, often required by state law, is a literacy and reading teacher.

Teachers are increasingly collaborating with fellow educators, other professionals, families, and community resources, rather than serving as the sole adult presence in the classroom. They are networkers and communicators with an array of adults, often finding responsibility for managing paraprofessionals and volunteers.

Strategic staffing approaches are now regarded as an initial move toward reshaping teachers' responsibilities within schools. Strategic-based staffing, or reimagined teaching roles, moves away from the familiar one-teacher, one-classroom mode. The approach involves revamping talent deployment by introducing innovative educator positions, establishing career advancement opportunities, and leveraging technology to enhance both student learning and teacher sustainability. Arizona State University's (ASU) Next Education Workforce [xii]finds these key elements:

- **Educator teaming structures** to distribute responsibilities and foster collaboration.
- **Differentiated professional development** tailored to teacher roles and career stages.
- **Flexible scheduling and workload management** to optimize staff deployment.
- **Teacher and leadership roles** allowing career growth without leaving classrooms.

Along with ASU's Next Education Workforce initiative, Public Impact, a nonprofit in North Carolina advocates for a similar model through its Opportunity Culture[xiii] work. KnowledgeWorks embellishes these models by predicting the emergence of eight educator roles in the next decade[xiv] Considering what novices may encounter in 2032, these five newer roles are particularly relevant as they are evolutions of current roles and described in detail in the referenced report *Envisioning Educator Roles for Transformation.*

Learning Spark Facilitator- like the classroom teacher who is physically or digitally present	**Learner Advocate-Advisor-**similar to counselor who deepens relationship with learner	**Family Connection Coordinator-** strong knowledge of community, cross cultural	**Director/Advisor of Artificial Intelligence-** like an IT specialist, guides the use of AI in teaching,	**Educator Development Coach-**similar to instructional coach, works with groups of educators on

alongside learners.	and helps personalize learning	competencies, may not require teaching license.	learning and progress monitoring	specific areas of expertise

What Will Novices Need to Know and Be Able to Do?

Various significant standards initiatives have influenced education policy related to new teachers. This covers both the InTASC model's key teaching standards and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)'s five core principles regarding accomplished teaching. The NEEC project aims to highlight the most essential knowledge that **novice** teachers will need in the coming decade. The design of NEEC defines the primary areas of competencies that align with both InTASC and NBPTS documents.

NEEC/NASDTC	**InTASC/CCSSO**	**NBPTS: 5 Core Propositions**
NEEC: Who Do I Teach?	InTASC Learners and Learning	NBPTS Core Proposition 1
NEEC: What Do I Teach?	InTASC Content	NBPTS Core Proposition 2
NEEC: How Do I Teach?	InTASC Instructional Practices	NBPTS Core Proposition 3
NEEC: What is My Role and Responsibility within the Teaching Profession?	InTASC Professional Responsibilities, Model Code of Educator Ethics(NASDTEC)	NBPTS Core Propositions 4 and 5.

Feedback sessions identified that novice teachers need knowledge, skills, and dispositions not fully addressed by current InTASC and NBPTS standards or new priorities. The NEEC document will detail those in the proposed "buckets" and show alignment to the existing InTASC and NBPTS frameworks.

New teachers should begin their careers with dedication to and effective tools and methods that help them understand their students on a deeper level. This involves collecting and using both qualitative and quantitative data, observing and understanding students with a developmental perspective and understanding of learning variation. Most importantly, they need to know them as individuals. Novices will need to incorporate the knowledge of home and community life, strengths, weaknesses, and aspirations; language and literacy facility; interests; tech savviness; cultural affiliation and the like into instructional design and personalized learning.

Examining various "portraits of a graduate" from states and districts shows a change in teaching priorities. Detailed subject matter is becoming less of a priority, making way for what many are now referring to as "the new basics". Core academic knowledge mastery is no longer the end, but a foundation and essential strategy for applying durable skills, critical and creative thinking,

Meet Dennis

Dennis was a successful business owner with a background in entrepreneurship and finance. Ready for the next phase of his career, he enrolled in an accelerated licensure program through a national, online university. Dennis has been hired by the board of new Career and Technical Education Center to prepare high school students for small business ownership This is a new program for the community and Dennis is excited to help design and deliver instruction in this area to teenagers. What will Dennis face as he starts his new career and first teaching role?

and informed decisions. Battelle for Kids website offers a state by state "portrait of a graduate gallery" which illuminates the new expectations for secondary school graduates.[xv] Looking across these portraits, common themes emerge. Literacy is broadened from reading, writing, and listening to include civic, digital, financial literacy, collaboration, teamwork, and communication skills. There is a focus on wellness and lifelong learning strategies along with dispositions of respect, integrity, and responsibility.[xvi]

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) in the *Public Education Promise* report, details the new basic skills grounded in cutting-edge brain science and executive function research as what is essential to learn traditional academics.[xvii]

Classroom management encompasses so much more than organizational skills and behavior management techniques. Students come to schools and classrooms with increasing mental health issues, stress and social emotional needs. There is also concern from students, families and communities about school being a safe environment. Novice teachers will need to know how to develop a game plan for the well-being of all students and to work with others on specific strategies for individuals.

Two-thirds of novice teachers will work in the K-8 sector. The secondary teacher is the smaller group of novices, yet the most dramatic changes in both expectations, priorities and instructional strategies will be at the high school level. In *Navigating Future of High School Education: Top Trends in 2025*[xviii], authors predict these shifts:

- Core skills over content.
- Central goal of closing opportunity gaps
- Evolution of student assessments
- Digital literacy and cybersecurity as key skills
- AI and automation know how.
- Gamification
- Global education and cross-cultural experiences

- Virtual classrooms and hybrid learning
- Personalized learning, project-based, real-word applicable
- Social emotional learning
- Sustainability (climate, environment, etc.)

Insights from the field show that while these shifts may be more dramatic at the secondary level, they shape how all novices need to teach. The use of technology and AI is a major change, improving lesson design, assessments, simulations, virtual reality, and gaming in education. The attention to building relationships and other social emotional needs was another priority. The need for relevance of instruction—from the materials selected to the project-based assignments and community centered curriculums were all identified as essential priorities. All this needs to be navigated against what is likely to remain key features of teaching: school and district selected curriculums, legislated learning in literacy, numeracy, and state academic standards that are largely very specific, and content driven.

To be continued:

As the education landscape continues to evolve, the role of the novice teacher is becoming both more complex and more essential. The emerging profiles of new educators, the changing needs of students and families, and the diversification of learning environments all point to a future in which teaching requires heightened adaptability, collaboration, and technological fluency. By establishing clear, forward-looking competencies for novice educators, we ensure that every beginning teacher enters the profession prepared not only to navigate these shifts, but to thrive within them. Supporting novices with strong preparation, coherent standards, and purposeful professional learning is an investment in the future of our schools—and, ultimately, in the success and well-being of every learner they will serve.

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[iii] Alternative Teacher Certification Sector Outside Higher Education, King, J and Yin, J (June 2022) American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

[iv] National Center of Education Statistics *Projection of Education Statistics through 2030*

[v] Public School Demographic and Inclusion Trends 2025; Chen, Grace (December 2025) Public School Review, FL

[vi] Beyond the Roster: Rethinking How We Dynamically Group Students and Assign Teachers; Audrain, L. and Maddin, B. (May 2025), Arizona State University Next Education Workforce, Phoenix. AXZ

[vii] Insert the NCES data
[viii] National Center of Education Statistics (August 2023) https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe
[ix] Homeschool Growth: 2024-25, Angela Watson, (November 2025), Johns Hopkins School of Education, Policy and Research Indicators, Homeschool Hub
[x] Data from other sources tempers this analysis. The 2026 EdChoice Share from https://www.edchoice.org, has the estimate at 4.8% Both sources agree on this being a growth sector, with indicators from AZ and FL seeing a 10% growth with the introduction of education savings accounts (ESA)
[xi] American Microschools: Sector Analysis (April 2024), Soifer, Dan and Ashley. www.microschoolingcenter.org
[xii] Arizona State University Next Education Workforce https://workforce.education.asu.org
[xiii] www.opportunityculture.org
[xiv] Envisioning Educator Roles for Transformation (August 30, 2024), www.knowledgeworks.org

[xvi] Portrait of a Graduate Gallery. www.battelleforkids.org/portrait-of-graduate
[xvii] The Public Education Promise (2025), American Association of School Administrators, www.aasa.org
[xviii] Navigating the Future of High school Education: top Trends in 2025 (February 2025) www.smartschools-international.org