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Teaching—A Declining Profession?: With Julie and her Aunt

An eight-page infographic. This description starts at the top and moves down.

Page 1

Title is displayed in yellow text on a green background: “Teaching—A Declining Profession?: With Julie and her Aunt.” The green background covers the entire page.

Three rows of two comic panels each:

Panel 1: Black text on a yellow background: “Its Career Day at High School. Julie—an aspiring teacher here is eager to meet with professionals who can guide her.” A cartoon of “Julie” waves.

Panel 2: Julie looks confused; behind Julie, silhouettes of students line up. Black text in a white thought bubble: “All I see are engineers, doctors, lawyers, and entrepreneurs?! Does no one want to become a teacher?”

Panel 3: Julie talks with her aunt. Black text on a yellow background: “Back at home in the front yard with her aunt.” Julie says: “I feel lost, I could not find anyone with whom I could talk to about my career plans at the fair today.” Julie’s aunt says: “What’s the matter dear?”

Panel 4: The panel “zooms” in on Julie and her aunt. Julie says: “You’re a teacher, is being a teacher all that bad?” Julie’s aunt replies: “Obviously not, teaching is inspiring.”

Panel 5: Julie says: “Then why is it that none of my friends want to become one?”

Panel 6: Julie's aunt says: "Now that's a long story to cover in the little time we have, but let me give you a gist.

Blue heading: "4 Reasons Why teaching is a declining profession"

Julie's aunt points to 4 yellow boxes.

Box 1: An icon of a scale with \$ on one side. "Salary gap: As it is, other professions earn twice as much and some even get paid overtime. Despite putting in more hours, teachers don't get paid enough. (US Bureau of Labor Statistics). There is no standard irrespective of qualifications.

Discrepancies in salaries intensify burnout."

Box 2: An icon of a person with a red "X" over them. "Lack of self-confidence in future teachers: Schools in today's world hardly design their curriculum to include confidence-boosting activities"

Box 3: An icon of a skull and crossbones. "Toxic work environment: Teachers lack autonomy and are hardly taken into consideration while the administration takes decisions. (Reshawna Chapple, TalkSpace Blog)"

Box 4: An icon of a stressed person. "Teachers are not being valued enough: Exhaustive daily routines, next to no holidays, bad student behavior, and dealing with difficult parents all lead to BURNOUT. (Reshawna Chapple, TalkSpace Blog)"

Page 2

This page's background is shades of blue. At the top left is Julie's aunt with hands raised in a shrug-like action. To the right: "The teacher shortage stems from a long-standing disrespect for teachers and their profession, as evidenced by decades of low pay, constant scrutiny, and poor working conditions. This is what is driving existing and prospective teachers away."

A line graph titled “A Supply and Demand Graph of teachers,” displaying the years 2005-2025, shows that supply is decreasing while demand is rising. A graph caption reads: “Sutcher, Leib et al. “A Coming Crisis in Teaching? Teacher Supply, Demand, and Shortages in the U.S.” (2016).” “Why Does This Matter?”

An icon of a document with an award ribbon is next to: “Employing Inadequately Qualified Teachers endangers students’ learning process, the money invested is a waste of resources and could be better deployed elsewhere.”

“Diminishing Respect—The teacher shortage makes it more difficult to establish a solid reputation for teaching and to professionalize it, which contributes to the shortage.” This text is next to an icon of two people shaking hands with a down arrow next to them.

“Remember!” And, written on a chalkboard icon where a person icon is pointing to it: “Teaching is the MOTHER of all professions.”

“Do we really want to live in a world without other occupations?”

Page 3

This page has a light green background.

“Let’s Look at the Stats”

An icon of someone inserting a ballot into a ballot box. Text on the right reads: “Voters in the age group 18-29 are the most pessimistic about the teaching profession. Only 24% are “very likely” to encourage a friend or family member to become a K-12 teacher today.[4]”

Julie’s aunt shrugs. Text to the right reads: “\$61, 820. Median Annual Pay for High School Teachers in 2021 [2]. Scientists/doctors/engineers earn almost twice this amount per annum. 82% of respondents currently or previously worked multiple jobs to make ends meet as a teacher.[5]”

A bar chart titled “Teacher Salary Vs Other Professions [2].” Teachers earn the least while airline pilots/flight engineers, physicians, computer research scientists/engineers, and business analysts make more.

“Effects of Covid” Ten people icons with seven a darker color and three a lighter color. “7 in 10 teachers have experiences stress or burnout from spending more time with students to regain lost ground after quarantine [3]”

An icon of two elderly people. Text nearby reads: “5,644 teacher retirements in the last six months of 2020 a 26% increase from the same period of the previous year. [1]”

“Works Cited:

1. California State Teacher’s Retirement System
2. US Bureau of Labor Statistics
3. Reshawna Chapple, Talkspace Blog
4. Valerie Strauss- The Washington Post
5. Salaries Shortages Report–Teacher Salary Project”

Page 4

Page has white text boxes on a dark blue background.

“What should be done?”

“1. Governments should allocate specific funds to improve pay. By providing stipends, scholarships, financial aid, and a competitive and livable wage, including increasing starting salaries and salary caps for teachers.” An icon of a dollar sign with an arrow pointing up.

“2. Unions and concerned administrations and departments in universities should bridge the gap between teaching and other programs and establish respect for teacher education programs.” An icon of two hands holding a heart.

“3. Starting from a high school level, curriculums should include mandatory leadership and teaching classes that focus on preparing children for the real world while also boosting confidence alongside.” An icon of a person standing confidently.

“4. Actively spreading awareness will help people realize what teachers really go through and they may advocate for better pay by voting for leaders who make new or redesign existing policies to reverse this crisis.” Icons of someone submitting a ballot leading to a crowd of people leading to legislation.

Page 5

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“Flipped Classroom Approach is a collection of several effective methods to boost confidence amongst students. One of its methods involves role reversal”

Julie stands in front of a chalkboard.

“The student teaches”

Julie’s aunt sits at a table.

“The teacher listens, evaluates progress, and provides feedback. This allows students to think from a different viewpoint, actively participate in activities, and develop more comprehensive ideas about specific subjects.” An icon of a person with their hand raised and people behind them.

Page 6

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“It is a common perspective that the teaching profession is not attracting new teachers as it is not on par with other “high-status” lucrative professions. What is so special about Singapore's and Finland's education system?” Icons of Singapore and Finland.

Julie's aunt holds up a hand. Text nearby reads: "These countries have boasted about their student-friendly education system, but did you know? Annual national opinion polls in Finland consistently show that teaching is the most admired profession in the country."

"The competitive selection process contributes significantly to the profession's attractiveness. It was harder to gain entry to the University of Helsinki's teacher education program compared to the law program or the medical school in 2016. Teaching is a highly desirable profession in Singapore, thanks to starting salaries nearly equivalent to those of accountants and engineers."

Icons to the left are people climbing up a mountain with a flag on top and someone pointing to a board with a heart and up arrow on it.

"Similar strategies must be implemented worldwide for positive results."

Icons of eight people and a crowd with a sign reading: "Equal Pay for Equal Work"

"Singapore admits to teacher education programs"

"Works Cited: NCEE - National Center on Education and the Economy"

Page 7

This page has dark blue text boxes on a light blue background.

"What is USA doing? The country is using effective strategies, but these are fairly new for collecting data and analyzing results." Graphics to the right are an icon of a USA map with the American flag in it and Julie's aunt looking toward the text.

"1. President Biden encouraged leaders to use pandemic relief and recovery funds from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP) and other federal funds to address teacher shortages—including the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER), Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER), and Higher Education Emergency Relief (HEERF) funds to help with these efforts." An icon of a money bag.

“2. Establishing teaching as a Registered Apprenticeship Dallas College in Texas launched the state's first paid teacher residency apprenticeship in the fall of 2022. Dallas College students will serve as residents 3 days per week and will then either tutor or act as a substitute 1 day per week. Students will be strategically placed in underserved schools with mentors.” Icons of two people.

“3. At University at Buffalo, State University of New York, teaching residents receive stipends and serve as co-teachers in partner school classrooms 4 days per week for the duration of the school year.” Icon of coins in a hand.

“4. Establishing or expanding loan forgiveness or service scholarship programs. California signed into law a 2021-2022 state budget that includes a total of \$350 million in state funding for the Teacher Residency Grant Program to help address areas of shortage by funding efforts in the state to recruit, support, and retain a diverse teacher workforce.”

“5. The Detroit district Public schools boosted starting salaries by 33 percent, from \$38,000 in 2017 to more than \$51,000 in the fall. It offered \$3,000 in hazard pay to work during the pandemic and is now offering \$15,000 annual recurring bonuses for teachers in hard-to-fill areas such as special education.”

“Works Cited: US Department of Education

<https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus/factsheets/teacher-shortage>”

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“Does Julie still want to pursue her dreams?”

Two panels. In the first panel, Julie’s aunt asks: “Do you still want to become a teacher Julie?” In the second panel, Julie says: “Of course, it’s the only way I can hope for some change.” Julie’s aunt replies: “Thank God! I was hoping you’d say that.”

“Their message to you”

Two panels. In the first panel, Julie’s aunt says: “To all prospective teachers, I hope this did not dissuade you from pursuing teaching.” In the second panel, Julie says: “I urge you to discover the bright side of teaching. Moreover, having a voice and encouraging peers to have one too can help us move forward and put an end to this seemingly endless cycle.”

Four icons: A head with a gear; a head with a lightbulb; a head with a heart; and a finger knocking down vertical objects. Text nearby reads: “Teaching is inspiring, it gives you an opportunity to share passion and knowledge. You get to make an impact on young minds.”

Two panels: In the first panel, Julie says: “To my peers, next time you find yourself giving your teacher a tough time, pause, reflect, and be considerate.” In the second panel, text on a yellow background reads: “Julie and her Aunt signing off!” and Julie and her aunt wave goodbye.