

Teacher Assistance

Teacher assistants work under a teacher's supervision to give students additional attention and instruction.

Work Environment

Teacher assistants work in public and private schools, childcare centers, and for religious organizations. About 37 percent work part time. Most do not work during the summer.

Teacher assistants may spend some time outside, when students are at recess or getting on and off the bus. Those who work with special education students may need to lift them.

Many teacher assistants are employed by elementary and secondary schools and by child day care services.

Many do not work during the summer, but some work in year-round schools or help teachers in summer school.

How to get Qualified

Educational requirements, which vary by school and position, range from a high school diploma to teaching diplomas to associate's degree and Bachelors (Bsc).

Job Outlook

Employment of teacher assistants is expected to grow by 15 percent from 2010 to 2020, about as fast as the average for all occupations. Growth is expected to result from increases in student enrollment and increases in childcare and preschool enrollment.

Student enrollment in public and private elementary and secondary schools is expected to increase from 2010 to 2020. Because teacher assistants work directly with students, the increase in the number of students will spur demand for teacher assistants. In addition, there will be continued demand for special education services and, in turn, demand for teacher assistants who work with these students.

Furthermore, enrollment is expected to increase in childcare services and preschool programs, both of which employ teacher assistants. Increases in enrollment will increase demand for teacher assistants in these settings.

In addition to job openings from employment growth, numerous openings will arise as assistants leave the job and must be replaced. Because this occupation requires limited formal education and has low pay, many workers transfer to other occupations or leave the labor force because of family responsibilities, to return to school, or for other reasons.

