



Wednesday, November 13, 2024

Teacher Vacancy Grant Summit

Wednesday, November 13, 2024



General Information

Registration Time: 8:00 a.m.

Start Time: 9:00 a.m.

Address: 200 N. University St., Normal, IL 61761

Parking Bone Student Center Parking Lot: 397 W. Locust St., Normal, IL 61761

Objective

The Teacher Vacancy Grant Summit is intended to support the 170 district recipients of Teacher Vacancy Grants through opportunities to strengthen their strategies for addressing local teacher vacancies. Specifically, the meeting sessions will support grantees through opportunities to:

- Collaborate and problem-solve with other grantees focused on similar strategies.
- Review data from the grant's Year 1 evaluation report.
- Understand how the teacher vacancy grant connects to a broader array of teacher shortage supports offered by ISBE.
- Showcase the positive impact of their teacher vacancy strategies.
- Develop a 1-pager and strategies for districts to effectively communicate the impact of their grant.
- Consider long-term approaches for districts to sustain their teacher vacancy strategies.

Agenda

8:00- 9:00 a.m.	Registration
9:00- 9:15 a.m.	Welcome Remarks
9:15- 9:50 a.m.	Teacher Vacancy Grant Research Summary
9:50- 10:00 a.m.	Unconference: Setting the Stage
10:00- 10:45 a.m.	Framing the Teacher Vacancy Grant within ISBE's Larger Teacher Shortage Strategy
10:45- 11:00 a.m.	Break
11:00- 12:00 p.m.	Communicating the Impact of Your Teacher Vacancy Grant
12:00- 12:45 p.m.	Working Lunch
12:45- 1:30 p.m.	Gallery Walk
1:30- 2:30 p.m.	Unconference: Topic-Focused Tabletop Conversations
2:30- 2:45 p.m.	Break
2:45- 3:30 p.m.	Sustaining Teacher Vacancy Grant Strategies
3:30- 4:30 p.m.	ISBE Office Hours and Optional Work Time
4:30 p.m.	Summit Concludes

All Teacher Vacancy Grant Resources may be found at:

<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Teacher-Vacancy-Grant-Pilot-Program.aspx>



Additional Notes:

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Strategies focused for Districts to **Recognize**

Practices in place to support **retention**:

Practices to consider to support **retention**:

Data points **to use** for evidence-based decision-making:

Strategies focused for Leaders to **Recruit**

Practices **in place** to support **recruitment** efforts:

Practices **to consider** to support **recruitment** efforts:

Data points **to use** for evidence-based decision-making:

Strategies focused to help Educators to **Rise**

Practices **in place** to support educator **pathway** efforts:

Practices **to consider** to support educator **pathway** efforts:

Data points **to use** for evidence-based decision-making:

Climate & Culture

Practices ***in place*** to support ***climate and culture*** efforts:

Practices ***to consider*** to support ***climate and culture*** efforts:

Data points ***to use*** for evidence-based decision-making:

Challenges

Barriers ***to consider***:

Supports needed to overcome barriers:

Considerations for Year 3

Additional strategies to consider:

Connections | District Information for Summit Attendees

District Name	Notes	Contact Information
A-C Central CUSD 262		
Alton CUSD 11		
Amboy CUSD 272		
Aurora East USD 131		
Ball Chatham CUSD 5		
Beach Park CCSD 3		
Berwyn North SD 98		
Bloomington SD 87		
Canton Union SD 66		
Carlinville CUSD 1		

District Name	Notes	Contact Information
Cary CCSD 26		
CCSD 168		
Champaign CUSD 4		
Charleston CUSD 1		
Cicero SD 99		
City of Chicago SD 299		
Clay City CUSD 10		
CUSD 308		
Dakota CUSD 201		
Danville CCSD 118		
Decatur SD 61		

District Name	Notes	Contact Information
DeKalb CUSD 428		
Dolton SD 149		
Dunlap CUSD 323		
Durand CUSD 322		
East St Louis SD 189		
Fairfield PSD 112		
Farmington Central CUSD 265		
Freeport SD 145		
Galesburg CUSD 205		
Gallatin CUSD 7		
Hardin County CUSD 1		

District Name	Notes	Contact Information
Harlem UD 122		
Harvard CUSD 50		
Harvey SD 152		
Hoover-Schrum Memorial SD 157		
Joliet PSD 86		
Kankakee SD 111		
La Salle ESD 122		
Lena Winslow CUSD 202		
Lincoln ESD 156		
Lyons SD 103		
Marshall CUSD 2C		

District Name	Notes	Contact Information
Maywood-Melrose Park-Broadview 89		
McLean County USD 5		
Mendota CCSD 289		
North Greene CUSD 3		
O Fallon CCSD 90		
Oakwood CUSD 76		
Odin PSD 722		
Ottawa ESD 141		
Pana CUSD 8		
Park Forest SD 163		
Paxton-Buckley-Loda CUD 10		

District Name	Notes	Contact Information
Peoria SD 150		
Plainfield SD 202		
Posen-Robbins ESD 143-5		
Prairie Central CUSD 8		
Prairie-Hills ESD 144		
Rantoul City SD 137		
Rantoul Township HSD 193		
Ridgeview CUSD 19		
Round Lake CUSD 116		
SD U-46		
Springfield SD 186		

District Name	Notes	Contact Information
Sunnybrook SD 171		
Thomasboro CCSD 130		
Thornton Twp HSD 205		
Tolono CUSD 7		
United CUSD 304		
Urbana SD 116		
West Prairie CUSD 103		
Westville CUSD 2		

Additional Notes:

Type the name of your school here

Add annual grant
amount here!

The Challenge

Describe your district's teacher recruitment and retention challenges.

Consider incorporating unfilled positions data and/or retention data.

Pull from your root cause analysis.

Strategic Local Investments

Strategy 1: Add Name of Strategy Here (e.g., Pathways/Pipeline)

Provide brief description of how your district utilized TVG funds to address your local challenges (e.g., created a residency program for current district staff to become teachers, gave retention bonuses, etc).

Outcomes

- List the specific outcomes of your strategy (e.g., number of program participants, current teacher impacted, new teachers hired as a result of the strategy).
- List additional outcome(s).

Strategy 2: Add Name of Strategy Here (e.g., Compensation)

Provide brief description of how your district utilized TVG funds to address your local challenges.

Outcomes

- List the specific outcomes of your strategy.
- List additional outcome(s).

Strategy 3: Add Name of Strategy Here (e.g., Culture & Climate)

Provide brief description of how your district utilized TVG funds to address your local challenges.

Outcomes

- List the specific outcomes of your strategy.
- List additional outcome(s).

“Add an optional quote from a teacher who was recruited or retained as a result of programs funded by the Teacher Vacancy Grant.”

- Attribution

Alleviating Teacher Shortages in Illinois: ISBE's Targeted Approach



Historically, strategies for enhancing teacher quality, particularly programs addressing teacher shortages in Illinois, were generalized and applied across all districts and institutions of higher education (IHEs) in the state. However, research reveals that shortages are often localized and may stem from various root causes, such as difficulties in recruiting teachers for remote districts or challenges in retaining educators in specific urban schools that face more struggles than others.

Recognizing the need for a more nuanced approach, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) undertook a data-driven analysis to pinpoint distinct components of teacher shortages. Developing a perspective of shortage “components” allowed the creation of targeted plans for each one, encompassing a combination of new and adjusted strategies for the agency. Each strategy is assessed individually against its respective teacher shortage component, ensuring a more effective, tailored solution to the problem.

The research is clear that teacher recruitment and retention are impacted by a number of factors, only some of which are addressed by the strategies in this brief. The list of strategies is not exhaustive; ISBE continues to support schools and districts with issues of school leadership, culture, workload, salaries, career advancement, student behavior, flexibility, elevating the teaching profession, and more. ISBE also collaborates with other agencies and organizations to support their ongoing efforts to alleviate teacher shortages. The strategies highlighted in this document represent ISBE's latest and most strategic initiatives, which align with the most pressing components of Illinois' teacher shortage by addressing critical gaps across the teacher pipeline and in schools and subject areas with the highest needs.

ALLEVIATING SHORTAGES IN ILLINOIS

Data-Informed Teacher Shortage Challenges and Targeted Solutions

Candidates enrolled in Illinois' educator preparation programs are less racially/ethnically diverse than undergraduate students enrolled at Illinois institutions of higher education.

Strategic Teaching Pathways

Innovative Preparation Pilots

Educator Preparation Continuous Improvement

Diverse Education Recruitment and Retention Planning with IHEs

CTE Career Pathway Grant

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading

Teacher vacancies are especially high in 39 entities that had a vacancy rate greater than 10% (and at least 5 vacancies) in both 2023 and 2024

Strategic Teaching Pathways

Innovative Preparation Pilots

The Teacher Vacancy Grant

Expansion of Short-Term Approvals

Elevating Educators: Special Education Retention Grant

Illinois experienced 3,532 unfilled teaching positions in fall 2023, with special education, STEM, elementary education, physical education, and bilingual education accounting for more than 75% of them.

Strategic Teaching Pathways

Innovative Preparation Pilots

The Teacher Vacancy Grant

Expansion of Short-Term Approvals

Elevating Educators: Special Education Retention Grant

Elevating Educators: Bilingual Grant

Teacher attrition in Illinois is highest for early career teachers, particularly early career teachers who are Black.

Innovative Preparation Pilots

The Teacher Vacancy Grant

Mentoring and Induction Systems that Provide Tailored Support to New Teachers

Teacher attrition in Illinois is highest for Black teachers across all experience levels.

Innovative Preparation Pilots

Mentoring and Induction Systems that Provide Tailored Support to New Teachers

Affinity Groups

Overview of Targeted Solutions

Affinity Groups | Illinois' affinity groups support teacher retention through partnerships that provide teachers with coaching, mentoring, and teacher leadership opportunities and create a supportive community where they can examine current issues they face and can make recommendations that address those issues.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Career Pathway Grant | The CTE Career Pathway Grants provide funding to schools to support planning and implementation of a CTE Career Pathway or program of study for high school students and to reduce the reporting burden for districts. Pathway programs include coursework designed to prepare students for matriculation into and success in a postsecondary teacher preparation program and afford students opportunities to participate in field experiences and/or work-based learning to begin to hone their craft and gain experience in different educational settings and content areas.

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading | ISBE partnered with WestEd to provide support to education preparation programs as they redesign their preparation programs to align with the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.

Diverse Educator Recruitment and Retention Planning with Institutions for Higher Education | ISBE works with IHEs to develop plans to diversify the educator workforce. These plans require educator preparation programs to review disaggregated enrollment data and to implement an approach to increase the enrollment of candidates of color.

Educator Preparation Continuous Improvement | ISBE is committed to improving the quality of educator preparation programs so teachers feel better prepared and equipped to teach all students on day one in the classroom. Among other continuous improvement strategies, each year, ISBE releases an Illinois Educator Preparation Profile (IEPP) that measures each teacher preparation program's ability to prepare teachers to be learner-ready and informs program reauthorization.

Elevating Educators: Bilingual Grant | ISBE provides a formula grant to school districts to sustain and grow the bilingual educator workforce by providing funding for (1) individuals working on a non-renewable provisional bilingual educator license to earn a full, renewable professional educator license so that they can remain in the workforce, and (2) fully licensed teachers to add a subsequent bilingual or English as a second language (ESL) endorsement to their license if they work in a district that does not have sufficient staffing to meet the needs of their students who are English Learners.

Elevating Educators: Special Education Retention Grant | ISBE provides a formula grant to the 40 public educational entities (districts, ROEs, special education cooperatives) with the lowest special education teacher retention rates and the greatest gap between general education and special education teacher retention rates. These funds support grantees in completing a root cause analysis to better understand the context and drivers of their low retention rates and to design and implement aligned solutions.

Expansion of Short-Term Approvals | Short-term approvals allow educators to temporarily work in a content area/grade level for which they are in the process of earning full credentials. In most cases, short-term approvals are added to the credentials of educators who are already fully licensed and endorsed in at least one other teaching field, which expands the classes/courses to which that educator can be assigned.

Innovative Preparation Pilots | ISBE encourages and incentivizes educator preparation programs to incorporate innovative preparation pilots, namely residencies and apprenticeships or professional development sequences, that target new teachers in low-income and low-performing schools and new teachers of color. These pilots are coherent, sequenced, and scaffolded, and help teacher candidates automatize their knowledge and develop skill fluency and decision-making abilities prior to entering classroom settings.

Mentoring and Induction Systems that Provide Tailored Support to New Teachers | ISBE partners with the Illinois Education Association and the Illinois Federation of Teachers to pair first-, second-, and third-year teachers and clinicians with mentors in their building and virtual instructional coaches to help guide them through these critical years of teaching.

Strategic Teaching Pathways | ISBE convenes a collaborative of residencies, apprenticeships, and 2+2 and other programs that strategically recruit and train teachers in Illinois with the goal of addressing teacher shortages in the highest need subjects and schools. Programs are rooted in communities and are able to attract and support candidates (e.g., students, parents, career changers, and paraprofessionals) who represent the demographic identities of the student bodies in each community and who are more likely to persist in the profession. ISBE assists these strategic pathways programs in understanding and aligning with school needs across the state, planning for sustainability and scale-up in accordance with state needs, and facilitating collaboration and coordination efforts at the state level.

The Teacher Vacancy Grant | ISBE administers a \$45 million state-funded teacher vacancy grant pilot program that directs funds to districts with the greatest need to staff unfilled teaching positions.

Targeted Strategies to Address the Distinct Components of Illinois' Teacher Shortage

Strategic Teaching Pathways

If strategic teaching pathways programs more intentionally attract and provide enrollment support to diverse candidates, then more students of color will enroll in and complete Illinois educator preparation programs and teacher vacancies will decrease.

Innovative Preparation Pilots

If more innovative preparation pilots are made available to support candidates of color, then more people of color will consider embarking on an educator preparation pathway and teacher vacancies will decrease.

Educator Preparation Continuous Improvement

If educator preparation programs are able to use data to continuously improve their programs to prepare candidates of color, then more aspiring educators of color will enroll in and complete those programs and teacher vacancies will decrease.

Diverse Education Recruitment and Retention Planning with IHEs

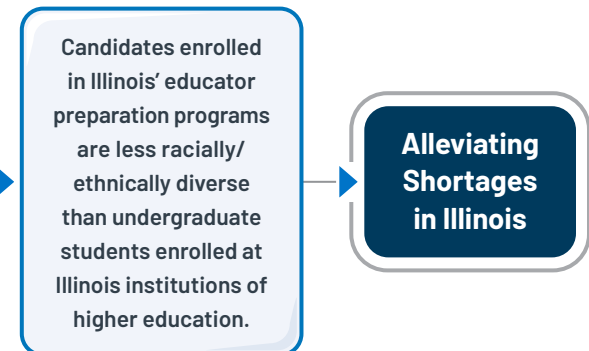
If ISBE requires each IHE with approved educator preparation programs to review disaggregated enrollment data and to draft and implement a plan to increase enrollment of candidates of color, then more students of color will enroll in and complete Illinois educator preparation programs and teacher vacancies will decrease.

CTE Career Pathway Grant

If the CTE Career Pathway Grant programs serve students of color and effectively prepare participants for and connect them with Illinois educator preparation programs, then more students of color will enroll in and complete Illinois educator preparation programs and teacher vacancies will decrease.

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading

If more culturally responsive teaching and leading takes place in educator preparation programs, then aspiring teachers of color will be more likely to enroll in and complete these programs and teacher vacancies will decrease.



Targeted Strategies to Address the Distinct Components of Illinois' Teacher Shortage

Strategic Teaching Pathways

If strategic teaching pathways programs more intentionally attract and provide aligned support to candidates from and wishing to teach in high-vacancy communities in Illinois, then more candidates will access and complete educator preparation programs and teach in the communities with chronically high rates of teacher vacancies.

Innovative Preparation Pilots

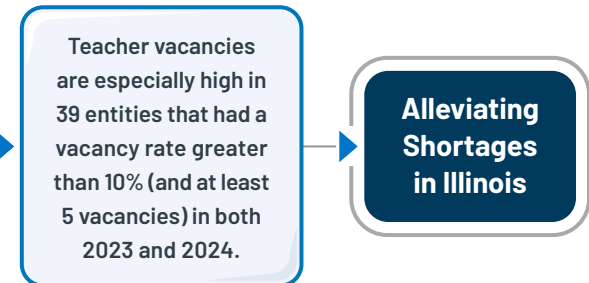
If more innovative preparation pilots are made available during educator preparation programs that serve high-vacancy districts in Illinois, then more candidates will access and complete educator preparation programs and teach in districts with chronically high rates of teacher vacancies.

The Teacher Vacancy Grant

If ISBE supports this grant that is intentionally awarded to help high-vacancy districts implement targeted strategies that address the root causes of their teacher shortages, then teacher vacancy rates will improve in schools in these high-vacancy districts.

Elevating Educators: Special Education Retention Grant

If this grant funding is used to help special education educators remain in their positions, as intended, then fewer new vacancies will be created and the teacher vacancy rate in high-vacancy districts will decline.



Targeted Strategies to Address the Distinct Components of Illinois' Teacher Shortage

Strategic Teaching Pathways

If strategic teaching pathways programs more intentionally attract and provide aligned support to candidates for licensure in the highest need content areas, then the number of teacher vacancies in those content areas will decline.

Innovative Preparation Pilots

If more innovative preparation pilots are made available during educator preparation, then more candidates will access and complete educator preparation programs and teach in the communities with chronically high teacher vacancy rates.

The Teacher Vacancy Grant

If recipients of this grant use the funds to recruit, prepare, and train teachers in the highest need content areas, then the number of teacher vacancies in those content areas will decline.

Elevating Educators: Special Education Retention Grant

If this grant funding is used to help special education educators remain in their positions, as intended, then fewer new vacancies will be created and the number of special education teacher vacancies will decline.

Elevating Educators: Bilingual Grant

If this grant funding is used to support licensure of bilingual or ESL educators, as intended, then the number of bilingual or ESL teacher vacancies will decline.

Illinois experienced 3,532 unfilled teaching positions in fall 2023, with special education, STEM, elementary education, physical education, and bilingual education accounting for more than 75% of them.

Alleviating Shortages in Illinois

Targeted Strategies to Address the Distinct Components of Illinois' Teacher Shortage

Innovative Preparation Pilots

If more innovative preparation pilots are made available during educator preparation programs, then more aspiring teachers will understand the realities of the profession sooner, leading to a smoother and more sustainable transition from preparation to teaching and to higher retention outcomes, and the number of teacher vacancies will decline.

The Teacher Vacancy Grant

If recipients of this grant implement targeted strategies that address the root causes of teachers leaving, then early career teachers will be more likely to remain in the profession and the number of teacher vacancies will decline.

Mentoring and Induction Systems that Provide Tailored Support to New Teachers

If new teachers in low-income and low-performing schools are given access to comprehensive and effective supports at the start of their careers, then more teachers will remain in the profession for the long term and the number of teacher vacancies will decline.

Teacher attrition in Illinois is highest for early career teachers, particularly early career teachers who are Black.

Alleviating Shortages in Illinois

Targeted Strategies to Address the Distinct Components of Illinois' Teacher Shortage

Innovative Preparation Pilots

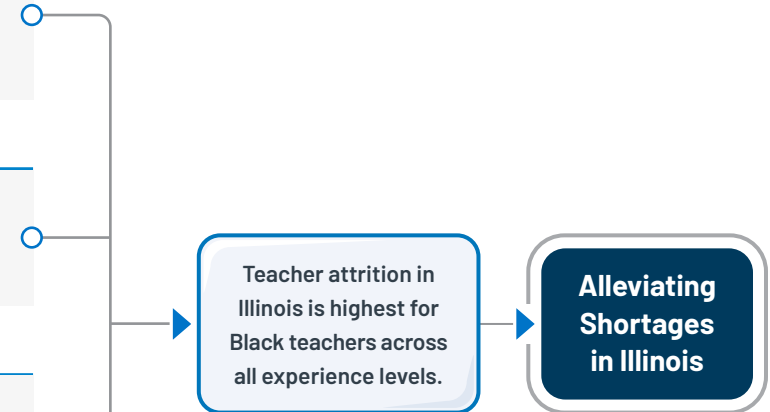
If more innovative preparation pilots are made available during educator preparation programs, then more aspiring teachers of color will understand the realities of the profession sooner, leading to a smoother and more sustainable transition from preparation to teaching and to higher retention outcomes, and the number of teacher vacancies will decline.

Mentoring and Induction Systems that Provide Tailored Support to New Teachers

If new teachers of color are given access to comprehensive and effective supports at the start of their careers, then more teachers of color will remain in the profession for the long term and the number of teacher vacancies will decline.

Affinity Groups

If affinity groups provide teachers of color with a supportive community of coaching, mentoring, and opportunities to address challenges they face at work, then these teachers will be more likely.



1+2+2 Programs (College Credit Articulation Maps)



Problem Overview

Community colleges appeal to many students seeking a four-year degree path because of accessibility and cost-savings; however, among the nearly one million students nationwide who started at a community college in 2016, just one in seven earned a bachelor's degree within six years. ([Binkley, 2023](#)) One of the biggest obstacles is known as credit loss: when students take classes that never end up counting toward a degree. Sometimes it's a result of inadequate advising. Without clear guidance, students take courses they don't need. Additional barriers arise from differentiated university requirements, which have varying rules for evaluating transfer credits.

([Binkley, 2023](#))

Illinois is no stranger to these problems, with seven of ten community college transfer degree or certificate completers indicating they even intended to attempt to transfer to universities in 2022. ([ICCB, 2022](#)) Regardless of the cause, the result is often the same. Students take longer to finish their degrees, costing more in tuition. For many, the extra work becomes too much to bear, and they ultimately drop out. While statewide efforts like the Articulation Initiative, Illinois Board of Higher Education's Transfer Data Portal, and the longitudinal data system are making strides to gain accountability and transparency of these problems, local and regional partnerships offer a solution.

Strategy Summary

"2+2" programs combine two years of community college with two years of university for the completion of a traditional bachelor's degree. Many students will attempt to create their own 2+2 program independently, often without regard for their university selection upon starting community college. The best 2+2 programs are those wherein a community college and university partner to articulate a four-year plan for degree seeking students, addressing the problem of credit loss and unclear student guidance. This articulation is commonly outlined in a "degree map" complete with course selections, sequencing, and course crosswalks.

"1+2+2" programs would add an earlier start to these programs through select dual credit/enrollment, getting students started as a grade 11 or 12 student on courses that ultimately will count toward their initial degree at the community college and transfer on to the partnering university. Depending on the amount of college credit achieved in high school, a student may be able to spend one or two fewer semesters at the community college.

Evidence of Success

Some institutions are partnering to specifically align teacher-licensure programs which prove effective in increasing the pool of licensed teacher candidates. Elmhurst College (a four-year University in Elmhurst, Illinois) is partnering with the College of DuPage (a community college in DuPage County) for two programs targeting aspiring educators. COD has several 2+2 programs, as shown on their [website](#).



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One 2+2 program at the COD is for Elementary Teacher Education specifically. The [degree map](#) shows how students will complete most of the general education requirements at COD and some education-specific courses, namely Introduction to Education, Educational Psychology, and Education for Exceptional Children. In two years at COD, students will complete nearly all general education requirements and have nine completed credit hours in the field of their choosing. COD also has a degree map outlined for an [English major with a Secondary Education](#) (grades 9-12) licensure.

Many other community colleges and universities have partnerships in place, but often not for education degree pathways specifically. Even if there are partnerships in place for education, it may only be for specific licenses like physical education or elementary.

Some institutions are taking 2+2 programming one step further, by partnering to use community colleges as institutional extensions of university accreditation. NIU's and ECC's Elementary Education with Bilingual/ESL partnership, called the [PLEDGE program](#), is a great example. Their PLEDGE (Partnering to Lead and Empower District-Grown Educators) initiative combines innovative strategies, impactful programs, and purposeful collaboration with our partners to expand and diversify the educator workforce to match the diversity of students in Illinois' K-12 schools.

Parkland College and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign are also partnering to make 2+2 a shared responsibility. The [Parkland Pathways](#) program offers transfer opportunities with alignment to all majors offered at UIUC. Students receive personalized academic counseling and access to coursework exclusive to UIUC students as they work toward guaranteed admission to the university.

Other examples of attempts to inform and support transfer students include institution-wide course crosswalks, as is done by Illinois State University with several community colleges. [These documents](#) showcase the exact transferability by course number at each community college. Southern Illinois University Carbondale takes this concept one step further through their interactive transfer portal—a student facing online dashboard wherein a student can confirm transferability and build their own plan.

Other Considerations

Eliminating real and perceived barriers is the dual purpose of establishing and marketing 2+2 programs for educational licensure. When students know there is a clear pathway to a career, they are more likely to start and finish that path. Here are some things to consider if implementing this strategy:



Apprenticeship



Problem Overview

The Teacher Vacancy Grant Pilot Program provides a significant opportunity for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to address their current staffing challenges while strengthening their long-term teacher pipeline (Darling-Hammond et al. 2005). With the available funds, LEAs can create high-retention pathways to address staffing challenges at the district level or develop equitable access strategies aimed at specific district schools.

To effectively achieve these objectives, evidence-based strategies have been provided in this document surrounding residency programs for teachers (Ingersoll et al. 2014). Research shows that the strategy of providing programs such as residencies or apprenticeships can address some staffing challenges facing LEAs in recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers. The strategies are based on best practices, research, and experiences from successful programs nationwide. By implementing these strategies, LEAs can create sustainable solutions that not only tackle their immediate staffing challenges but also support their long-term teacher pipeline.

Strategy Summary

Teacher residency programs offer a promising approach to addressing staffing challenges in education and building a robust teacher pipeline. This strategy involves pairing novice teachers with experienced mentors in a supportive and structured learning environment (Jerald and Van Hook 2011).

The residency model provides:

Hands-on classroom experience

Ongoing guidance and feedback

Opportunities for professional development

By investing in teacher residencies, LEAs can attract and retain high-quality educators while simultaneously fostering their growth and development.

Residency programs may have the opportunity to be turned into a registered apprenticeship. ISBE will support districts that are interested in developing a registered apprenticeship program with funds from the teacher vacancy grant. Research has shown that teacher residencies or apprenticeships can have several positive outcomes.

- Apprenticeships provide an effective way to recruit talented individuals into the teaching profession (Ingersoll et al. 2014). The hands-on experience and mentorship aspect of apprenticeships can attract candidates who may not have considered teaching as a career option otherwise.



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- Apprenticeships also help address the retention challenge by offering support and guidance to new teachers during their critical early years (Jerald and Van Hook 2011). This support increases job satisfaction and decreases attrition rates, ultimately improving teacher retention.
- Apprenticeships promote continuous professional growth by providing ongoing learning opportunities and feedback (Parise and Spillane 2010).

This investment in professional development contributes to the overall quality of the teaching workforce.

Examples

Several successful teacher residency programs have been implemented across the country, demonstrating the effectiveness of this strategy. One notable example is the [Boston Teacher Residency](#) program, which combines a year-long apprenticeship with a master's degree program. This program has resulted in increased teacher retention rates and improved student outcomes.



During the Residency Year, Residents:

- ✓ Co-teach with collaborating teachers and experienced teacher educators
- ✓ Earn a M.Ed. awarded by UMass Boston (<\$8,000 tuition)
- ✓ Earn MA Initial Teacher Licensure and SEI endorsement
- ✓ Receive a living stipend (\$20,000 paid bi-weekly) and health benefits
- ✓ A three-year commitment to the BPS earns graduates:
 - ✓ BTR program cost waived
 - ✓ Continuing professional development and new teacher support
 - ✓ Membership in a growing alumni network comprised of principals teacher leaders and thought leaders

BTR prepares teachers for:

- ✓ Elementary (grades 1-5)
- ✓ English – Secondary
- ✓ Math – Secondary
- ✓ Computer Science – Secondary
- ✓ Science – Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and MS General Science

The [South Cook Teacher Residency Program](#) is a successful residency program in Illinois, in partnership with Roosevelt University. The goal of the program is to provide full-time substitutes, paraprofessionals and teaching assistants working in south suburban Cook County with an affordable and high-quality pathway to an MA degree and teacher licensure in Elementary Education.



The [Saluki Residency Partnership](#) program, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, features an initial Professional Educator License for both undergraduate Early Childhood and Special Education programs, and post baccalaureate MAT programs, and coursework is offered online to allow students to be placed in a school district for one year while they complete required coursework towards the PEL. School districts included within the grant partnership with SIU are Cairo SD 1, Meridian CUSD 101, Murphysboro CUSD 186, Carbondale ES 95, and Carbondale HS 165.



Other Considerations and Next Steps

While teacher residency or apprenticeships have shown promise, there are important considerations to keep in mind when implementing such programs.

These considerations include:

- sufficient funding to provide stipends or salaries for apprentices,
- support for mentor teachers, and
- resources for professional development (Ingersoll et al. 2014).

Adequate resources ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of the residency program.

Additionally, a strong mentoring component is crucial for the success of teacher residencies. Careful selection and training of mentor teachers, along with ongoing support and supervision, are necessary to create a supportive learning environment for teachers (Jerald and Van Hook 2011).

It is important to ensure that teacher residencies are equitable and accessible to individuals from diverse backgrounds. Efforts should be made to recruit candidates who reflect the diversity of the student population, as this has been shown to have positive impacts on student outcomes.

Sources

Darling-Hammond, L., Hammerness, K., Grossman, P., Rust, F., & Shulman, L. (2005). The design of teacher education programs. In L. Darling-Hammond & J. Bransford (Eds.), *Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should learn and be able to do* (pp. 390-441). Jossey-Bass.

Ingersoll, R. M., Merrill, L., & Stuckey, D. (2014). Seven trends: The transformation of the teaching force. CPRE Research Reports.

Jerald, C. D., & Van Hook, K. (2011). Teacher apprenticeships: A practical pathway to teacher effectiveness. Center for American Progress.

Parise, L. M., & Spillane, J. P. (2010). Teacher learning and instructional change: How formal and on-the-job learning opportunities predict change in elementary school teachers' practice. *The Elementary School Journal*, 110(3), 323-346.

Recruiting and Supporting Bilingual Educators



Problem Overview

The Teacher Vacancy Grant Pilot Program provides a significant opportunity for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to address their current staffing challenges while strengthening their long-term teacher pipeline. LEAs can use the available funds to create high-retention pathways to address staffing challenges at the district level or develop equitable access strategies aimed at specific district schools.

Growing linguistically diverse educators is one way that LEAs effectively achieve these objectives. The strategies are based on best practices, research, and experiences from successful programs nationwide. Implementing these strategies can enable LEAs to create sustainable solutions that not only tackle their immediate staffing challenges but also support their long-term teacher pipeline.

Strategy Summary

There are specific target populations to consider when looking to grow linguistically diverse educators:

- High schoolers who are pursuing or have earned the Illinois State Seal of Biliteracy in a language other than English.
- Linguistically diverse paraprofessionals.
- Community members and career changers who speak the same language as students and have a bachelor’s degree in an area outside of teaching.

Ideas from ISBE Strategy Briefs to Benefit Future Bilingual Educators

Potential Bilingual Candidates	ISBE Guidance
<p>High schoolers who are pursuing or have earned the Illinois State Seal of Biliteracy in a language other than English.</p> <p>This group of students has demonstrated college readiness in English and advanced abilities in a foreign language. The State Seal can be applied toward college credit (varies by university) and can be used in lieu of the target language exam as part of the ISBE Bilingual endorsement.</p>	<p>2x2: A “2x2” program ensures course articulation through preexisting relationships between two- and four-year institutions. Explore which credits were provided for the State Seal of Biliteracy at various institutions of higher education.</p> <p>Grow Your Own CTE Programs: Education-related work-based learning is a concept that applies to this population. Explore the possibilities of students earning dual credit, making them eligible to become paraprofessionals upon graduation. This enables students to earn a living while they are in a residency program gaining hands-on experiences developing linguistically responsive curricula and pedagogical practices.</p>

	<p>Apprenticeships: High school courses that give students exposure to teaching experiences can be very beneficial to them.</p> <p>Incentives: Consider offering hiring bonuses for students who come from the community.</p>
Linguistically diverse paraprofessionals	<p>2x2: Explore partnerships with institutions of higher education that have experience with foreign transcripts for credit recovery. There should also be strong articulation between two- and four-year institutions. This aligns with creating smoother career pathways.</p> <p>Diverse Teacher Pipeline: Students who have been awarded a State Seal of Biliteracy could be targeted for a paraprofessional role that is tied with a residency option.</p> <p>Incentives: Provide financial support to currently uncertified paraprofessionals who are interested in becoming certified teachers to help eliminate the financial barriers they may face.</p>
<p>Community members and career changers who speak the same language as students and have a bachelor's degree in an area outside of teaching</p> <p>This group can be recruited to earn a Transitional Bilingual Educator Provisional License (formerly known as the Type 29). These candidates can be matched to a two-year master's degree program in education that leads to teacher licensure.</p>	<p>Grow Your Own: Bilingual community members who currently have a degree in a field outside of education would need to be matched with an institution of higher education offering a master's program that provides the Professional Educator License (PEL), along with the Bilingual endorsement. Partner with teacher preparation programs that historically serve institutions serving minority candidates or two-year master's programs serving Type 29 candidates.</p> <p>Apprenticeships: Members of this group can be hired as a provisional transitional bilingual educator after passing the target language exam. They would benefit greatly from being mentored by a master teacher.</p> <p>Incentives: Provide financial support to currently uncertified bilingual staff or staff of color (paraprofessionals, tutors, teacher assistants, etc.) who are interested in being certified teachers to help eliminate the financial barriers they may face. Such supports include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid master's program to achieve the PEL with Bilingual endorsement • Paid student dues and balances owed to institutions • Repayment of student loan

Bilingual Educator Recruitment Strategies

- Districts should know that candidates who are undocumented citizens are eligible for a PEL but may need special outreach due to the sensitivity of the topic. This group could be a very important resource for districts that are receiving high numbers of newly arrived immigrant students. A temporary Social Security number can be obtained so that such individuals can create an ELIS account. There are special considerations for individuals in bilingual early childhood education:
- Teachers with an ISBE PEL with an Early Childhood Education endorsement should be advised on the approval pathway for Special Education and Bilingual/English as a Second Language endorsements.
- Students can receive a paraprofessional license from ISBE at the age of 18 through Grow your Own Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs that offer early childhood credentials (Early Childhood Level One) through the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. Furthermore, students can take additional coursework and pursue professional development opportunities that are focused on language and literacy development for multilingual learners.

- Financial wrap-around supports can help diversify teacher pipeline opportunities. These wrap-around supports often include close attention to the varied types of financial incentives candidates need beyond just tuition.
 - Assistance sometimes can go directly to the candidate for books, fees, housing assistance, day care, transportation, etc.
 - Districts should make this population aware of the [Minority Teachers of Illinois Scholarship Program](#).
 - Undocumented candidates should know they are eligible for [Monetary Award Program](#) (MAP) grants.
- Districts should hire a staff member within the Human Resources Department to oversee strategies listed in ISBE briefs.
- Districts should train members of hiring committees, so they understand the nuances of hiring a candidate of color.
- Districts should consider an adjusted teaching schedule for paraprofessionals and/or residency candidates to provide ample time for college coursework.
- Districts should consider working with institutes of higher education that have demonstrated success in working with non-traditional students and providing effective cohort model training. Historically Black-serving colleges and Hispanic-serving institutions are likely to be leaders in this area and would be the source of effective strategies for addressing the needs of these students.

Bilingual Educator Retention Strategies

- Mentoring and Induction – To the degree possible, it is important to match bilingual educators with a teacher who has the Bilingual endorsement and the knowledge and skills to teach English learners effectively. Districts in remote areas may want to consider partnering with neighboring districts and pooling resources so as to support bilingual teachers in each location. (Regional Offices of Education might be a great resource for this type of programming and support.) Certain check-ins and guidance can be provided remotely.
- Positive working conditions – Once bilingual educators are hired into a district, it is important that they receive ongoing support from school leaders. School leaders need to understand the unique characteristics of a diverse teaching population and must be sensitive to the increased workload that comes with teaching in more than one language. Training for school leaders on topics such as interviewing diverse candidates, mentoring bilingual teachers, bilingual education methods, and evaluation will go a long way toward providing a positive work environment.
- Teacher planning and collaboration – Districts must be sensitive regarding the workload of bilingual educators and the types of requests made of them that could jeopardize their ability to deliver high-quality instruction. Bilingual educators are often pulled from class to translate/interpret for parents; they lack materials in the home language that they are left to translate; they are seen as a go-to resource by families for immigration and other issues; and they are often asked to make phone calls to non-English speaking parents, which can take time.

Creating Career Advancement Opportunities for Teachers



Problem Overview

The Teacher Vacancy Grant Pilot Program provides a significant opportunity for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to address their current staffing challenges while strengthening their long-term teacher pipeline. LEAs can use the available funds to create high-retention pathways to address staffing challenges at the district level or develop equitable access strategies aimed at specific district schools.

Evidence-based strategies pertaining to **creating career advancement opportunities for teachers** can help LEAs effectively achieve these objectives. The strategies are based on best practices, research, and experiences from successful programs nationwide. Implementing these strategies can enable LEAs to create sustainable solutions that not only tackle their immediate staffing challenges but also support their long-term teacher pipeline.

Strategy Summary

Expert teachers often feel limited in their career advancement opportunities, and aside from becoming a principal, there are few opportunities to progress within the teaching profession. Models such as [Opportunity Culture](#) offer a potential solution by creating teacher leadership opportunities, expanding the reach of effective teachers, and providing them with additional pay.

One of the key features of this model is the multi-classroom leadership approach, where highly effective teachers lead a team of other teachers. By taking on additional responsibilities, such as coaching and collaborating with colleagues, teacher leaders can improve the effectiveness of other teachers while reaching a larger group of students. This approach helps to build a culture of continuous improvement within schools, which can positively impact student achievement and lead to increased teacher retention (Backes & Hansen, 2018; Hassel et al., 2014; Natale et al., 2016).

In addition, research shows that when teachers have voice, input, and control over their instructional roles, they stay in their jobs. A [report](#) from Teach Plus offers useful ideas on ways to leverage leading teachers by providing them with additional responsibilities and pathways for growth.

Leaders might be able to create leadership roles that do not require teachers to leave classrooms behind. Teachers who positively contribute to the school community by taking on extra responsibilities must receive a stipend when they mentor new teachers or play a leadership role. There is a teacher leader endorsement in Illinois, which may help prepare teachers for success and impact in leadership roles in schools.



Examples

- **Career Pathways**

Teachers in the Baltimore City Public Schools, along with their administrators, developed a career pathway model. This model enables teachers to move up the payscale and seize leadership responsibilities by earning what are called “achievement units.” This model allows a teacher to mentor and coach colleagues, provide professional development sessions at the district level, and supervise student teachers. For example, a lead teacher works directly with the principals to improve the school’s academic performance.

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- **Instructional Coaching**

Revere Public Schools in Massachusetts implemented a new model called Colleague 2 Colleague. In this model, veteran teachers can apply to be relieved of their regular academic responsibilities to become consulting teachers for two years. Veteran teachers partner with other teachers in the district during that time to provide support and guidance. Those instructional coaches return to their classrooms when the two-year period ends to use new teaching skills and practices.



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Grow Your Own/ Career and Technical Education Programs



Problem Overview

A 2022 study conducted by researchers at Brown and Albany found that perceptions of teacher prestige had fallen between 20 and 47 percent in the last decade and are at or near the lowest levels recorded over the last half century. Interest in the teaching profession among high school seniors and college freshmen has fallen 50 percent since the 1990s and the number of new entrants into the profession has fallen by roughly one third over the last decade. ([Kraft & Lyon, 2022](#)) School administrators across Illinois are seeing this phenomenon. The number of applicants to teacher job postings has significantly declined, especially in rural and urban school districts. Students are simply not entering the profession and pursuing careers in education. This strategy specifically focuses on this problem.

Strategy Summary

Through partnerships between school districts, community-based organizations, and colleges, Grow Your Own (GYO) programs recruit community members to teach in local schools. While some programs help individuals already in the profession gain teaching licensure, like paraeducators or substitute teachers, most are geared toward introducing high school students to the field. GYO programs offering varying supports and components based on local needs, but most provide wraparound support services to participants like mentoring, culturally relevant pedagogy training and, in some cases, financial support to cover the costs associated with teacher preparation.

For introducing current high school students to the profession, schools will often implement an education career pathway in the career and technical education curriculum. Education career pathways as GYO programs should be built to meet the needs of each unique student, school, or community. Common components are outlined below.

Education- Related Courses

More than 19,000 students were enrolled in these types of courses in the 2019-2020 school year with courses like Child Development, Early Childhood Education, and Foundations to Teaching being the most popular. Any professionally licensed educator who has taught for at least two years is qualified to offer these CTE courses, adding flexibility for schools implementing the programs who do not have the schedule-time or funding to support a full-time equivalent education careers teaching position.

Education- Related Work-based Learning

Students considering a career in education will benefit from gaining hands-on experience working with other students, planning curriculum, and stepping in to the “teacher’s shoes” in some way. These work-based learning experiences come in many forms. Internship or apprenticeship style experiences wherein a high school student works with a practicing educator can foster teaching skills and instill a passion for helping others.



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It can also come in the form of observation and assisting with non-teaching related tasks like planning, after school programming, or even coaching.

Many schools have these programs in place, but they are often not used intentionally for students aspiring to teach. “Teacher assistants” or “exploratory teachers”, as they are often called at the local level, can be structured to recruit and develop future teachers. If only used as a placeholder in a student’s schedule, in the case of a study hall or free-work period, the opportunity to spark future teaching aspirations can be missed.

Education-Related College Credit

Most programs implement some form of dual credit or dual enrollment that will be transferable to and required by university teacher preparation programs. Common offerings include [communication courses](#) (writing, composition, English literature, etc.) and [general psychology](#) courses. These courses should not be used as a stand-alone strategy because, while commonly required for aspiring teachers, they do not provide explicit exploration of education careers. College courses more tailored to aspiring teachers are also offered such as [child psychology](#) and [child growth and development](#). Many times, high school teachers with graduate degrees in education-related fields meet the community college’s requirements to teach this course. All options should be explored.

Education-Related Early Career Credentials

Student achievement of credentials is greatly emphasized in CTE programs. Credentials can provide real advantages to aspiring teachers as they pursue a career. The common perception is that education-related credentials are out-of-reach for high school students. However, students can receive a [paraprofessional license](#) from ISBE at 18 years of age. The Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies offer many [credentials of interest](#) in a GYO program, specifically the [Early Childhood Education Level 1](#) credential which can be achieved for free through completion of 16 online modules. These modules also provide a curriculum guide for an education related CTE course. Achievement of these credentials opens the door to working in schools or childcare prior to teaching.

Evidence of Success

Starting in the 2019-2020 school year, ISBE CTE & Innovation department began administering grants to start GYO programs. The grant program, called the Education Career Pathway grant, provided funding to plan and implement GYO components like those previously described. Across three cohorts in 2020, 2021, and 2022, more than 10,000 students were served across 177 schools. This year (2023) the grant program expanded to include postsecondary support for those students previously served by high school Education Career Pathway grants. More than six million dollars has been allotted for these programs since 2020. In light of early success, funding and support is expected to continue in future years.

Other Considerations

The Washington State Vibrant Teaching Force Alliance conducted a [review of GYO programs](#) in 2017, outlining many considerations for implementation.

When designing GYO programs, consider:



The review also includes considerations for program implementation, specifically the need to provide wraparound supports academically, financially, and socially-emotionally. When conducting ongoing review and evaluation of GYO, consider:



Improving Hiring Practices



Problem Overview

The Teacher Vacancy Grant Pilot Program provides a significant opportunity for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to address their current staffing challenges while strengthening their long-term teacher pipeline. LEAs can use the available funds to create high-retention pathways to address staffing challenges at the district level or develop equitable access strategies aimed at specific district schools.

Improving hiring practices as they pertain to teachers is one way that LEAs effectively achieve these objectives. Research shows that the strategy of providing incentives can address some staffing challenges facing LEAs in recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers (Smith et al., 2019). The strategies are based on best practices, research, and experiences from successful programs nationwide. Implementing these strategies can enable LEAs to create sustainable solutions that not only tackle their immediate staffing challenges but also support their long-term teacher pipeline.

Strategy Summary

Improving hiring practices for teachers is a critical component of addressing staffing challenges and building a strong teacher pipeline. Effective hiring and screening practices are essential for schools and districts to attract top candidates. Outdated and ineffective hiring processes can lead to losing good candidates to competing schools and districts.

Districts can improve the quality of their hiring process by adopting new screening processes that include a standardized analysis of multiple components, including:

Professional references	Undergraduate GPA	Subject matter licensure scores	Professional background (Johnson and Brown, 2020)
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This strategy involves adopting evidence-based approaches to attract and select high-quality teachers while ensuring fairness and equity in the hiring process (Johnson and Brown, 2020).

However, it is important to use multiple measures, as noted in by [IES Regional Educational Laboratory Program, Northwest](#) – including performance-based tasks – to evaluate the qualifications of applicants. Teachers’ test scores, education, and experience are not always the best predictors of their performance in the classroom and may function as barriers for teachers of color.



Research has identified several key elements of effective hiring practices:

- Establishing clear job requirements and selection criteria helps to attract candidates who possess the necessary qualifications and skills (Smith et al., 2019).
- Implementing a rigorous and comprehensive selection process, including multiple rounds of interviews and performance assessments, can help identify candidates who demonstrate instructional expertise and a strong commitment to student success (Johnson and Brown, 2020).
- Involving multiple stakeholders, such as teachers, administrators, and community members, in the hiring process can enhance the alignment between the selected candidate and the school's values and culture.

Implementation of effective hiring practices can enable LEAs to identify and hire teachers who are well-suited to their school communities, leading to increased job satisfaction and improved student outcomes.

Examples

One notable example is the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) in Washington, D.C. The district implemented a rigorous and evidence-based selection process to enhance its hiring process and attract high-quality teachers. It incorporated multiple rounds of interviews, including demonstration lessons and performance tasks, to assess candidates' instructional abilities and their alignment with the district's goals and values.

DCPS observed positive outcomes as a result of these revamped hiring practices. The district reported an increase in the quality of newly hired teachers, as evidenced by improved evaluation ratings and student achievement outcomes (Jacob et al., 2017). It also experienced a decrease in teacher turnover rates, indicating increased job satisfaction and retention among its teaching staff.

The Los Angeles Unified School District developed a new screening process that produced scores for all candidates, which were shared with principals to enhance their hiring options (Bruno & Strunk, 2018). This new process is highly predictive of teacher outcomes, including student achievement.

Early hiring practices can also impact outcomes. For example, Shelby County Schools in Tennessee reformed its budget process to provide earlier notice to principals regarding personnel needs and capacity. The district offered financial incentives to teachers to submit their retirement notices earlier. This allowed schools to hire replacements sooner, streamlining the process of notifying principals of teacher intent to leave and ensuring immediate backfilling (Tomes, 2014).

Other Considerations and Next Steps

Improving hiring practices can be beneficial, but there are additional considerations to keep in mind:

- Ensuring that the hiring process is fair and equitable is essential. Implementing strategies such as blind resume screening and standardized interview protocols can help mitigate bias and promote equal opportunities for all candidates (Johnson and Brown, 2020).
- Ongoing evaluation and refinement of hiring practices based on feedback and data analysis are crucial to continuously improve the effectiveness of the process.
- LEAs should invest in professional development and training for hiring personnel to ensure they have the necessary knowledge and skills to implement evidence-based practices (Smith et al., 2019).
- Establishing partnerships with universities and alternative certification programs can help attract a diverse pool of candidates and provide additional support for new teachers during their early years in the profession.

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Financial Incentives



Problem Overview

The Teacher Vacancy Grant Pilot Program provides a significant opportunity for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to address their current staffing challenges while strengthening their long-term teacher pipeline. LEAs can use the available funds to create high-retention pathways to address staffing challenges at the district level or develop equitable access strategies aimed at specific district schools.

Evidence-based strategies pertaining to the provision of incentives for teachers may help LEAs effectively achieve these objectives. Research shows that the strategy of providing incentives can address some staffing challenges facing LEAs in recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers ([Goldhaber et al., 2015](#)). The strategies are based on best practices, research, and experiences from successful programs nationwide. Implementing these strategies can enable LEAs to create sustainable solutions that not only tackle their immediate staffing challenges but also support their long-term teacher pipeline.

Strategy Summary

Providing financial incentives to potential hires is one way to attract candidates. These incentives can include financial rewards for individuals to become teachers, teach in certain locations, or specialize in particular subjects. Programs focusing on incentives typically aim to attract individuals to the teaching profession; support teacher retention; and provide supplements to increase completion, placement, and retention rates. Additionally, pay-for-performance programs are another way to provide incentives to teachers whose positive impact is indicated by increased student performance.

The National Council on Teacher Quality identified three options for teacher financial incentives:

Differentiated pay

Performance pay

Pay for prior work

([Saenz-Armstrong, 2022](#))

Differentiated pay aims to attract teachers to traditionally hard-to-staff subjects or schools. Offering differential economic incentives to teachers in high-demand areas can help retain existing teachers and increase the future pool of teachers trained in these critical areas ([Goldhaber et al., 2015](#)). Other incentives, such as extra leave or preparation time, can be provided to teachers with heightened responsibilities or individualized duties ([Goldhaber et al., 2015](#)).

Performance pay systems compensate teachers based on student performance and/or teacher evaluations. Performance pay can be offered to individual teachers based on student performance or to all professional



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staff in a school if the students in that school meet specific goals. These programs – designed and implemented well – could potentially attract strong teachers to hard-to-staff schools. However, the evidence regarding effectiveness of performance pay is mixed.

Pay for prior work compensates teacher candidates for relevant prior experience and can help attract individuals who may consider changing careers or districts. Teacher salaries are not often an equal match for comparable professional salaries; however, studies have demonstrated that individuals with specific industry backgrounds or degrees exhibit a deeper understanding of the practical standards within their field of expertise. Consequently, they are better equipped to assess students’ strengths and weaknesses in the subject matter ([Saenz-Armstrong, 2022](#)). To attract candidates, districts that have not previously recognized a candidate’s years of service in their previous district(s) may now consider acknowledging and valuing that experience.

Other financial incentives may include:

Student loan repayment	Retention bonuses	Hiring bonuses	Relocation bonuses
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Student loan repayment is a valuable financial incentive for LEAs that are aiming to attract and retain high-quality teachers. LEAs can offer assistance with student loan debt to entice potential candidates to teaching careers, especially those considering a career change or transitioning from other professions. This incentive also serves as a retention strategy, fostering loyalty among experienced teachers and reducing turnover rates.

Retention bonuses especially when paired with supportive working conditions like access to high-quality instructional materials, professional learning, and teacher leadership opportunities, may be one piece of a multifaceted strategy to improve retention outcomes and prevent new unfilled positions from occurring.

Hiring and relocation bonuses might help attract candidates to hard-to-staff districts or schools.

Considerations for Financial Incentive Programs: Differentiated Pay and Performance Pay

Research pertaining to teacher financial incentive programs has shown mixed results, raising student test scores in some cases but not in others.

Researchers think the discrepancy has to do with how programs are designed. For example, “Programs that reward teachers as a group encourage free-riding and do not improve student achievement. Programs that compensate teachers individually also have little to no effect on student achievement” ([Ober, 2019](#)) and “Researchers have found that programs that incorporate professional development and focus on more than just standardized test scores have shown a greater impact ([Stone, M. & Peetz, C. 2023](#)).

Incentive programs may be a more useful tool for recruitment and retention, particularly in hard-to-staff schools or subject areas. “I’d say there’s not much evidence that performance pay makes individual teachers more effective, meaning teachers don’t seem to work harder or work better when given performance pay or additional pay,” said Heather Peske, president of the National Council on Teacher Quality.

need them the most, particularly when we want to attract the most effective teachers to the students who need them the most. So, performance pay or differentiated pay is one mechanism to be able to do that.”

A district that is considering using performance pay to address vacancies must carefully structure the program by focusing on the provision of support and incentives to teachers who adjust their practices to positively impact student performance – not just on standardized test outcomes.

A team of education specialists from the World Bank suggests following a three-step consideration process for the implementation of **pay-for-performance (PFP) programs** ([Beteille et al. 2021](#)):

STEP 1: Are the right preconditions in place?

Technical requirements, resources, and political will are three necessary (but not sufficient) pre-conditions for teacher PFP programs to be successful. Technical requirements include having a capable bureaucracy and reliable data systems that help identify effective and ineffective teachers. Without that capacity, PFP programs are doomed from the start. Teacher PFP programs are also expensive, with costs including not just the incentives, but the setting up and maintenance of the entire accountability framework for monitoring and evaluating. Finally, the importance of political will and teacher buy-in cannot be overemphasized.

– [Beteille et al. 2021](#)

STEP 2: What design and implementation features are important?

Four key issues are important to consider here:

- 1. Who gets rewarded?**
- 2. What gets rewarded?**
- 3. How do rewards get distributed?**
- 4. What form to give rewards in and how much?**

Although there is limited work here, [one study](#) suggests that in a loss-aversion model, whereby a bonus is given to all teachers upfront, but taken away from ineffective teachers at the end of the year, student performance improved.

– [Beteille et al. 2021](#)

STEP 3: What could derail performance pay interventions?

Common implementation challenges for compensation related to student performance include:

- Cheating
- Teaching to the test
- Test manipulation by excluding poorly performing students

For group-based incentives, free-riding could create problems. To help reduce these risks, it is crucial to have multiple checks to ensure tests are implemented with fidelity, and accountability systems that routinely observe teacher classroom behavior and practice.

– [Beteille et al. 2021](#)

Examples

Performance Pay Program

The Dallas Independent School District utilized a performance pay program beginning in 2016 that combined evaluation and instructional accountability with performance-based compensation. The district developed a performance pay program to attract and retain highly effective teachers in the district’s lowest-achieving schools. This effort produced the Accelerating Campus Excellence (ACE) program, which provided salary supplements to educators with a proven track record of high performance, encouraging them to work in the most educationally disadvantaged schools.

The results of this program were significant. ACE targeted educators willing to work in the most educationally disadvantaged schools and resulted in immediate and sustained increases in student achievement. ACE schools showed dramatic improvements, bringing average achievement in previously lowest-performing schools closer to the district average. When ACE stipends were largely eliminated, a substantial number of highly effective teachers

left, leading to a decline in test scores. The study emphasized the central importance of performance-based incentives in attracting and retaining effective educators in previously low-achievement schools ([Morgan, A. J., et al. 2023](#)).

Performance Pay Program

In 2012, the Tennessee Department of Education designated \$2.1 million to a one-year pilot program, offering the highest-rated teachers at schools that had the lowest test scores in the state a retention bonus to decrease turnover rates and elevate student performance. Of the 473 teachers who were eligible for the bonus, 321 were retained and paid the \$5,000 bonus ([University of Georgia, 2019](#)). Additionally, the following was noted:

- Priority schools that participated in the bonus program saw a significant improvement in reading test scores among students compared to similar non-participant schools in subsequent years, even after the retention bonus was removed.
- While impacts on math scores were only marginally significant, students still scored higher in this subject area in the years following the incentive distribution.

Differentiated Pay Recruitment Incentive

In Illinois, [Rockford Public Schools \(RPS\) 205](#) first approved recruitment incentives in [December 2018](#). They included the following:

- Relocation bonus \$3,000
- Housing assistance of \$3,000
- A sign-on bonus of \$3,000

The intended audience for these incentives were current teachers and new graduates that held a license in bilingual, secondary math, secondary science, or special education and who did not teach in RPS 205 at that time.

In [January 2022](#), the RPS 205 board approved an increase for the previously approved recruitment incentives, increasing them to the following:

- \$5,000 for bilingual, secondary math, and secondary science;
- \$7,000 for approved special education positions.

In [February 2023](#), the district continued to increase recruitment incentives to entice candidates to join RPS 205 in hard-to-fill positions:

- \$5,000 for bilingual, secondary math, and secondary science;
- \$7,000 for special education positions, including special education teachers, speech language pathologists, procedural coaches, social workers, and school psychologists.

The implementation of recruitment incentives has enabled Rockford Public Schools to provide incentives to 150 new employees, who are in hard-to-fill positions, over the last four years. Results are not yet available, but the district will report back to its board this winter.

Other Considerations and Next Steps

Providing incentives can be an effective strategy, but there are additional considerations to keep in mind:

- It is important to ensure that the incentives align with the district's overall goals and values and promote equity among teachers.

- Ongoing evaluation and refinement of incentive programs based on feedback and data analysis are crucial to ensure their effectiveness and impact.
- Teachers' unions must be full partners in any endeavor related to financial incentives. Districts and unions may consider adding requirements in bargaining agreements for continued employment if individuals take part in incentive payment.

Next steps for LEAs include:

- **Design and Implement the Incentive Program:** LEAs should carefully design, and structure their financial incentive programs based on:
 - Who will be rewarded?
 - What criteria will be used for rewarding teachers?
 - How will rewards be distributed?
 - What will the form and dollar amount of incentives be?
- **Implement Safeguards and Monitoring:** LEAs should put in place multiple checks and accountability systems to prevent potential issues such as cheating, teaching to the test, or test manipulation. Frequent classroom observations and evaluations can ensure that the incentives are being implemented effectively and fairly. This will help maintain the integrity of the program and ensure that incentives are truly benefiting students and teachers.
- **Align Incentives with District Goals and Values:** LEAs should ensure that the financial incentives align with the district's overall goals and values. The incentives should promote equity among teachers, ensuring that all teachers have equal opportunities to benefit from the program. This alignment will help in gaining support from teachers, administrators, and the community.
- **Evaluate and Refine the Program:** Ongoing evaluation and data analysis are crucial to determine the effectiveness and impact of the incentive program. LEAs should regularly assess whether the program is achieving its intended goals and making a positive impact on student outcomes and teacher retention. The program should be refined and adjusted, as necessary, based on feedback and data.
- **Invest in Professional Development:** LEAs should invest in professional development and training so that personnel who hire teachers effectively implement evidence-based practices related to financial incentives. This will ensure that personnel understand the program's objectives, eligibility criteria, and evaluation methods. Additionally, it will equip them with the skills to attract and retain high-quality teachers through the incentive program.
- **Collaborate with Teachers Unions:** Teachers unions must be involved as full partners in the design and implementation of any financial incentive program. Districts and unions can work together to negotiate and include requirements in bargaining agreements to ensure that teachers are engaged and committed to the program's success. This collaboration will help in overcoming potential challenges and building support for the incentive initiatives.
- **Regular and Systematic Reporting:** LEAs should regularly report back to their boards and the community on the progress and results of the financial incentive program. Transparent reporting will help build trust and demonstrate the program's impact and accountability.

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Invest in Diverse Teacher Recruitment



Problem Overview

Having a diverse teacher workforce sets high expectations and reduces implicit bias. A diverse teacher workforce supports students' academic, social, and emotional outcomes as students of color see themselves represented and identify with them as role models.

While the diversity of students of color continues to grow, the diversity of teachers of color continues to shrink. An estimated 7 percent of the teacher workforce is estimated to be Black. Nine percent are Hispanic and less than 3 percent are Asian American and Pacific Islander (American Federation of Teachers, July 2022).

A diverse teaching workforce has far-reaching implications for students' academic well-being and success, particularly for minority students. Research indicates that teachers of color can positively impact the academic performance of students of color; reduce discriminatory assignment to gifted and talented programs; decrease chronic absenteeism, suspensions, and expulsions; and foster a more welcoming learning environment for students of color (Carver-Thomas, 2018; Grissom & Redding, 2016).

Research shows that teachers of color improve reading and math performance, graduation rate, and readiness to attend college for students of color. In fact, research also shows that recruiting diverse teachers in schools may prevent individual diverse teachers from feeling isolated or lonely (Carver-Thomas, D., 2018).

Shortages of teachers of color has been a challenge for many states and districts nationwide. There is a significant focus on diversity in urban districts; however, a lack of diversification in rural districts means that many students, being smaller minorities in their schools and classrooms, remain vulnerable to the bias associated with a lack of diversity in the workforce (Kebede et al., 2021).

Factors contributing to the shortage include obstacles to entering and completing college, discriminatory hiring practices, and high rates of attrition among teachers of color. The latter can be attributed to inadequate teacher preparation, lack of mentoring and induction programs, and accountability pressures, among other factors. These typically are more prevalent in low-performing urban schools, where many teachers of color are employed (Carver-Thomas, 2018).

Strategy Summary

Research suggests that to achieve the goal of attracting diverse educators to the profession, we must remove some barriers, such as student debt, and improve the hiring and retention process for teachers of color.



- Partner with teacher preparation programs at institutions that serve Black and other minority students to build a more diverse teacher workforce. Such collaboration will help produce diverse student teacher candidates with whom school leaders could build a positive relationship that leads to early access to excellent teachers of color
- Provide financial support to currently uncertified staff of color (tutors, paraprofessionals, etc.) who are interested in being certified teachers to help eliminate the financial barriers.
- Make sure there are diverse members on hiring committees in schools to move toward a more equitable hiring process and encourage teacher candidates of color to join the school district workforce. Share your goal of implementing inclusive hiring practices with that committee to make a difference. [Research](#) shows that both White and students of color benefit from teachers of color.
- Offer leadership opportunities to diverse teachers to help ensure diverse teacher recruitment and retention. Research shows that compared to White principals, Black principals are more likely to hire candidate teachers of color (Rice-Boothe, Mary, July 5, 2022).
- School leaders who acknowledge and reflect the significant work done by teachers of color during their teaching evaluation process can help retain those high-achieving teachers
- Avoid disproportionately asking highly effective teachers of color (who spend extra time working behind the scenes) to complete all the extra duties like committees, after-school programs, awards assemblies, class sponsors, etc.

Examples

Thirty-seven percent of Boston Public Schools are teachers of color. The [Boston Public School High School to Teacher Program](#) has effectively increased the diversity of teacher workforce.

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Leveraging School Climate & Creating Positive Working Conditions



Problem Overview

The work of the American Federation of Teachers Teacher and School Staff Shortage Task Force found that the shortage of teachers has resulted from the lack of quality and professional working conditions and shortage of respecting and paying teachers.

A recent [study](#) conducted by Rand Corp. found that, “teachers and principals reported worse well-being than other working adults.” Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, research indicated that enrollment in teacher preparation programs had dropped 35 percent between 2009-14 and that 30 percent of teachers leave the profession within the first five years of their employment (American Federation of Teachers, July 2022).

School climate reflects how teachers, students, and parents currently feel about a certain school. Research suggests that teachers tend to stay longer at schools with positive climates and that a positive climate can improve a school’s ability to hire and retain quality educators (Wagner, A., March 2022). One research paper shows that some educators describe school climate as having four dimensions – academic, social, physical, and affective. The academic dimension refers to the academic expectations, instructional norms, and school beliefs and practices. The social dimension refers to the type of communication and interactions among students and teachers. The physical dimension refers to the quality of the physical building and access to materials. The final dimension refers to feelings and attitudes, such as high morale, and academic and social growth (Gonder, P.O; Hymes, D., 1994). Another research paper suggests that to overcome the teacher shortage, there must be a focus on four Cs and four Ts. The four Cs are climate, culture, conditions, and compensation. The four Ts are tools, time, trust, and training (American Federation of teachers, 2022).

Strategy Summary

The following suggested research-based strategies are proven to leverage positive school climate and work conditions:

- Implement effective schoolwide policies and practices related to student behavior. Training and equipping teachers with tools and skills to support students will reduce student negative behavior. Teachers struggling with classroom management need [extra support](#).
- Fund mental health programs to provide support for students and teachers.

It is important that schools provide students and staff with access to mental health resources and support on school grounds.

- Provide staff with affordable health care options. Raising premiums, copays, and deductibles and shifting costs of health care to employees have become evident in both public and private sectors. Data show that the total cost of public-school workers and their family’s health care coverage



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increased by 45% between 2010 and 2021 (American Federation of Teachers, 2022).

- Leverage school climate survey to identify areas on which to focus.

Teacher and student surveys are effective tools for assessing working conditions and school climate and identifying trends in the retention of high-performing teachers. The [5Essentials Survey](#), which is administered across the state, can help leaders identify the primary causes of teacher attrition. Surveys can provide valuable information on important factors that drive teacher attrition in high-need schools, including instructional culture, staff collaboration, and leadership quality. Identifying these drivers can enable schools to develop targeted strategies to address them and improve teacher retention rates.

Illinois 5Essentials Survey

Examples

Washington, D.C., administered the [DC Staffing Collaborative Project](#), a voluntary effort in which districts were invited to participate in a state-funded analysis and to voluntarily submit teacher-level data on preparation, development, evaluation, retention, and compensation. Additionally, districts administer a working conditions survey to each teacher; the data are reported to a third-party research partner instead of the state.

In exchange for their participation, districts receive regular and timely reports on relevant topics, such as school culture, staffing, and differential retention. These reports provide valuable insights that can help districts address gaps in equity planning, such as root-cause planning and research-based strategies to close gaps.

Sources

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Residency Programs



Problem Overview

Illinois public schools retained 87.6% of classroom teachers in 2022 (Illinois Report Card). While this is trending positively, this still means that schools had to replace nearly one in every eight teachers leading into the 2023 school year. Costs to entry and support for new teachers are among the top five reasons cited by teachers leaving the profession (Podolsky, 2016). This strategy addresses those two conditions.

Strategy Summary

Teacher residencies differ from other alternatives that require teachers to train while teaching to maintain a source of income. Teacher residencies underwrite the cost of preparation for candidates while still allowing for full preparation prior to employment. Since 2006, leveraged primarily by federal funding, teacher residencies have grown in number in response to hiring needs in hard-to-staff regional areas (both urban and rural) and subject areas (e.g., special education, mathematics, science, bilingual/English language development). School districts partner with local teacher preparation programs to recruit the teachers that districts know they will need, and to prepare the teacher candidates to excel and remain in these hard-to-staff areas. When used in this deliberate manner, teacher residencies address a crucial recruitment need while also building the capacity of the districts to offer high-quality instruction to the students they serve.

Designed based on medical residencies, this model provides teacher-residents with a yearlong apprenticeship teaching alongside an expert mentor teacher. Residents simultaneously complete credential coursework that is tightly integrated with their clinical placement. Residents are paid a stipend and/or receive tuition remission to enable them to devote the full year to their preparation, and in exchange commit to teach for three to five years in the districts' schools. Because teacher candidates are supported both financially and professionally, the pool of applicants includes "career-changers" who are looking to transition to education from another industry.

Evidence of Success

Initial studies on residencies also suggest that they have attracted greater diversity into the teaching workforce and supplied more teachers in hard-to-staff subjects, while retaining them in the sponsoring districts at much higher rates than other new teachers (Guha, Hyler, & Kini, 2016). Across teacher residency programs nationally, nearly half of residents (45%) in 2015–16 were people of color, more than double the national rate of teachers of color entering the field (19%)(NCTR, 2015).¹ Typically, these teachers are prepared to teach in shortage fields. Moreover, studies of the longest-standing teacher residency programs have found higher retention rates of residency graduates. This is particularly important since hard-to-staff urban and rural schools can frequently experience very high turnover rates and often lose 50% or more of their beginning teachers within the first few



years on the job (Allensworth, Ponsiciak, & Mazzeo, 2024). A recent study of graduates of the 12 oldest and largest residency programs found that 82% of graduates were still teaching in their same district in their third and fourth year, compared to 72% of nonresidency graduates (Silva et. al., 2014). A longitudinal study of the Boston Teacher Residency found that by the fifth year, 75% of residents remained in the Boston Public Schools, as compared to only 51% of all novice teachers in the district (see Figure 6)(Papay et. al., 2012). Recent data from the San Francisco Teacher Residency indicate that 80% of residents are still teaching in the city after five years, as compared to only 38% of other new hires over that time (LPI, 2016). The research, when taken as a whole, suggests that the residency model holds promise for both recruiting diverse individuals and retaining effective teachers.

Examples

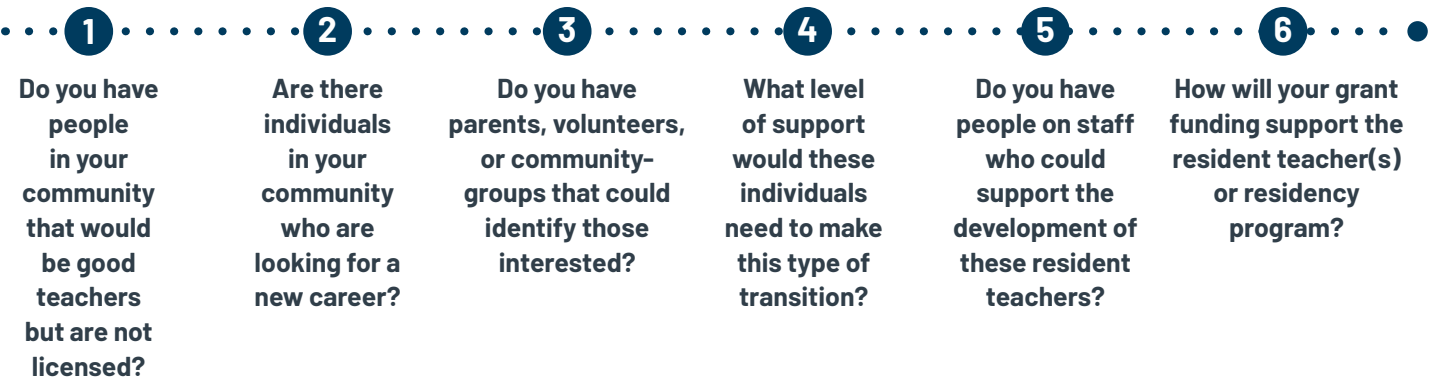
Typically, teacher residency programs include at least one year of graduate level coursework, completed online or in-person with an additional one-year of active teaching. Illinois does have an alternative license that fits this type of program. The [Educator License with Stipulations-Alternative Licensure Program](#) (ELS-ALP) requires that candidates have at least a bachelor’s degree, passing score on the applicable content test, and have at least 9 credit hours (undergraduate accepted) in the content area to be endorsed. The program is currently offered at nine Illinois colleges: Aurora University, Dominican University, Eastern Illinois University, National Louis University, Relay Graduate School of Education, Roosevelt University, Saint Xavier University, University of Illinois Chicago, and Western Illinois University.

The [Boston Teacher Residency](#), an AmeriCorps program, is a national recognized clinical teacher preparation program whose graduates support student achievement from day one and who stay in teaching, continuing to refine and improve their practice. The program takes 12 months, including an intensive two-month summer term of graduate coursework followed by one school year of residency teaching. Participants commit to at least three additional years of teaching following the program.

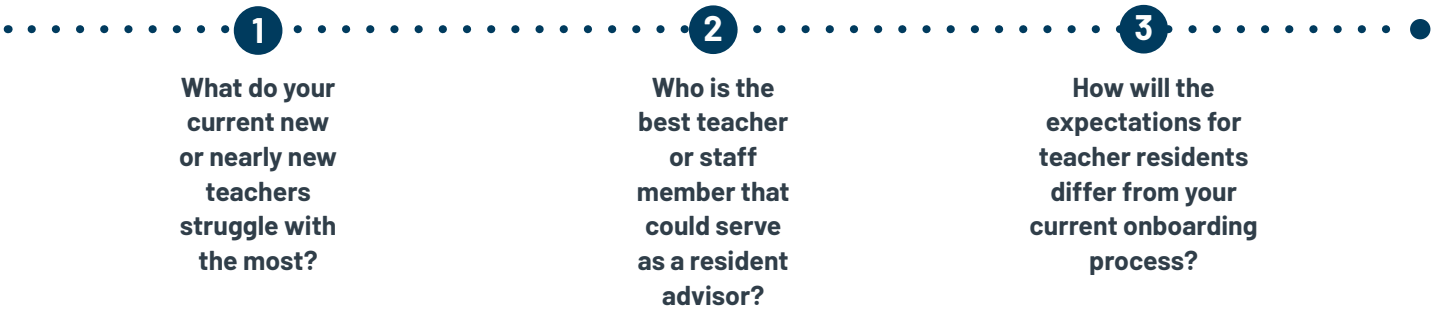
Other Considerations

If considering teacher residency as a strategy, make sure to distinguish between the two uses of teacher residencies—one being attracting working professionals from industries outside of education to seek teacher licensure and the other being a model to onboard and develop new teachers as a means of increasing retention and early career support.

If considering recruiting new teacher candidates not yet licensed, note these questions:



If considering the development of new, licensed teachers, note these questions:



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Strengthening Teacher Mentoring & Induction



Problem Overview

The Teacher Vacancy Grant Pilot Program provides a significant opportunity for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to address their current staffing challenges while strengthening their long-term teacher pipeline. LEAs can use the funds that are available to create high-retention pathways to address staffing challenges at the district level or develop equitable access strategies aimed at specific district schools.

Evidence-based strategies pertaining to strengthening teacher mentoring and induction for teachers are provided in this document as part of the effort to achieve these objectives. Research shows that the strategy of strengthening teacher mentoring and induction programs in LEAs assists in recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers. The strategies are based on best practices, research, and experiences from successful programs nationwide.

Strategy Summary

Mentoring and induction programs are common strategies for addressing equity gaps in teaching, as they can potentially improve both teacher effectiveness and retention rates. These programs offer new teachers individual guidance, support, and mentorship as they transition from preservice preparation to in-service practice, typically pairing them with more experienced teachers.

Along with orientation to the school and community, mentoring and induction may include:

Ongoing professional development	Administrative support	Reduced workloads	Other supports
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The New Teacher Center (2016) identifies several key practices that can support teacher retention, development, and performance in these programs, including:

Rigorous mentor selection	Ongoing professional development support for mentors	Multi-year mentoring
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Mentoring programs should last at least one year (Vittekk, 2015). It should be noted that multi-year programs are more effective. (Barron & Albers, 2022; Billingsley, 2004; Brownell et al, 2004; Hirsch et al., 2009).



Consideration should be given regarding the **selection and matching of mentors/mentees**:

- Mentors should be matched to mentees based on fit and shared background (Billingsley et al., 2009; Gehrke & McCoy, 2007; Madigan & Scroth-Cavataio, 2012).
- When possible, it is best for mentors and mentees to work in the same building and to work with students of the same type and grade level (White & Mason, 2006).

Mentor training is key to the success of a strong mentoring and induction program:

- Mentors should be trained to identify and address work-related stress (Barron-Albers, 2022; White & Mason, 2006).
- Mentors also should have training in classroom observation (Barron-Albers, 2002) and be granted adequate leave time to observe their mentees in the classroom (Billingsley et al., 2009).
- Mentees should be granted release time (Billingsley et al., 2009) to observe other teachers in their classrooms (Barron-Albers, 2002; Bay & Parker-Katz, 2009).
- At a minimum, mentors and mentees should have weekly check-ins (Barron-Albers 2002; Bay & Parker-Katz; Billingsley et al., 2009; Madigan, & Scroth-Cavataio, 2012), and these check-ins should happen by thoughtful design that best meets the needs of mentoring team.
- To foster trust, it is imperative that the mentor/mentee relationship be non-evaluative (Billingsley et al., 2009; Madigan, & Scroth-Cavataio, 2012).

Stanulis & Floden (2009) found that new teachers who received intensive mentoring remained in the profession, resulting in a retention rate that far exceeded the national average. Mathur et al. (2012) learned that 39 of the 41 novice teachers who received mentoring remained in the teaching profession.

Examples

The National Institute for Excellence in Teaching shared findings from Louisiana and Texas Mentor Programs in a report from 2021: [Why New Teacher Mentoring Falls Short, and How to Fix It](#).

Strategies and Action Steps to Support New Teachers

Strategy 1:

Focus mentoring on instructional improvement

- The Teacher Mentor Program has a series of research-based requirements to be completed by the mentor and mentee that strive to enhance professional practice.
 - Observations of professional practice
 - Reflective, learning-focused conversations
 - Teacher Appraisal Plan and portfolio support
- The Teacher Mentor Program utilizes quarterly meetings to provide differentiated support connected to [Danielson's Framework for Teaching](#).

Strategy 2:

Support mentors to be more effective by providing training, tools, and protocols for the role.

- Mentor teachers are selected through peer, self-nomination, or administrator nominations.
- Mentors enroll in a Canvas Course called "New Mentor Training"; complete the application process, including letters of recommendation; and complete a one-hour, virtual training.
- Mentors are matched through request or a matching process, which identifies mentors who are in the same building, at the same grade level, and/or in the same department.
- Protocols are included for matching mentors with experienced teachers who are new to the district or teachers who are new to the profession. The mentoring timeline is longer for supporting brand-new teachers.

Strategy 3:

Align the mentoring program with district and school systems and goals.

- The program's [mission and vision](#) and [values and beliefs](#) are identified and align with the [U-46 mission and vision](#).

School District U-46 in Elgin has incorporated these strategies into its established [Teacher Mentor Program](#). The program includes the incorporation of these strategies to form a cohesive mentoring program for teachers.

Other Considerations and Next Steps

The [Illinois Virtual Instructional Coach and Building Mentor Program](#) offers the following comprehensive supports:

- A virtual instructional coach, certified in the same area of instruction, who is trained to provide support for beginning teachers in instructional practices (including virtual instruction), social-emotional learning, and trauma-informed practices;
- A trained and certified building mentor whose sole responsibility is to make the new teacher feel welcomed, supported, and connected in their new school;
- Access to a robust virtual coaching platform with an online library of resources and a way to connect to other first year teachers; and
- Support and feedback via one-on-one and small group virtual coaching sessions.

The Center on Great Teachers and Leaders provides a [toolkit](#) for the equitable implementation of mentoring strategy that districts may consider utilizing as they implement this strategy.

The [toolkit](#) includes the following training modules:

- ✓ Introduction to the Toolkit
- ✓ Mentor: Recruitment, Selection, & Assignment
- ✓ Mentor: Professional Learning, Development, & Assessment
- ✓ Beginning Teacher: Professional Learning & Development
- ✓ The Principal's Role in Mentoring & Induction
- ✓ Mentoring & Induction Supports for Educators of Students with Disabilities
- ✓ Collecting Evidence of Program Success
- ✓ Data-Driven Conversations for Equitable Access

Each module includes:

- ✓ An anchor presentation that summarizes research and best practices,
- ✓ Handouts that provide supplemental information, and
- ✓ Team tools to facilitate discussion.

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Teacher Home Loan Assistance



Problem Overview

Given relatively low wages and ever-increasing housing prices, many educators cannot afford to live in the communities in which they teach and work (Mongeau, 2015). Housing costs often prove prohibitive to remaining in the education profession or even considering a career in education. One policy solution is for communities to provide housing incentives that attract educators to their district, including relocation reimbursement, reduced rent, down payment assistance, reduced mortgage rates, and tax incentives for living in the community in which they work. Survey data have shown that for nearly a quarter of teachers who have left the profession, housing incentives would be extremely or very important in deciding whether to return (Podolsky et al., 2019).

Strategy Summary

Based on a comprehensive review of other public and private teacher home loan assistance programs, there are three primary structures to consider:

- forgivable loans (contingent on years of service) to teachers for down payments or closing costs
- loans to teachers for down payments or closing costs (non-interest bearing by repaid over time)
- reducing the primary home loan basis points (interest rate)

Each of the first two listed options provide teachers with the immediate incentive to avoid a large lump sum payment typically required for any real estate transaction. The first also avoiding the costs entirely, contingent on completed years of service. However, the rise in interest rates since the pandemic makes the third option enticing. Attached to this brief are two examples of how these strategies or combinations thereof would play out. One is based on Chicago housing prices, and the other is based on Springfield housing prices.

Examples

Two cities, eight states, and two private programs either previously or currently offer versions of teacher home loan assistance. A summary of these programs and web links are listed below.

City-based Program Examples

The [San Francisco Teacher Next Door](#) program provides up to \$40,000 for market rate housing units or \$20,000 for a below market rate unit. Loans are forgiven after 10-years. Participation requires income under 200% of area median income (AMI), assets less than \$60,000 in value, and a down payment of at least three percent, 1.5% of which can be from gifts.

New Orleans' [Teacher Homeownership Program](#) provides up to \$65,000 in down payment costs and \$5,000 in closing costs for teachers that have been in the district for at least three years. Teachers must commit to teaching for an additional three years and living in the home for an additional ten years. There are claw-back provisions. The program also has strict income limits, restricting



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participation to those with no more than 80% AMI. For a family of four in New Orleans, this is the equivalent of \$62,700.

Private Entities Examples

[Landed](#) is a private program. Teachers put down at least five percent of the housing costs, and Landed covers the remaining fifteen percent to reach a twenty percent down payment. The teacher pays back the program when they sell or refinance. Once the teacher sells, they pay back 25% of the profits to the program. If the home is sold at a loss, Landed shares 25% of the loss. There are penalties for teachers who do not teach for at least two years—full repayment of the loan in less than one-year. The repayments are used for more loans to other teachers.

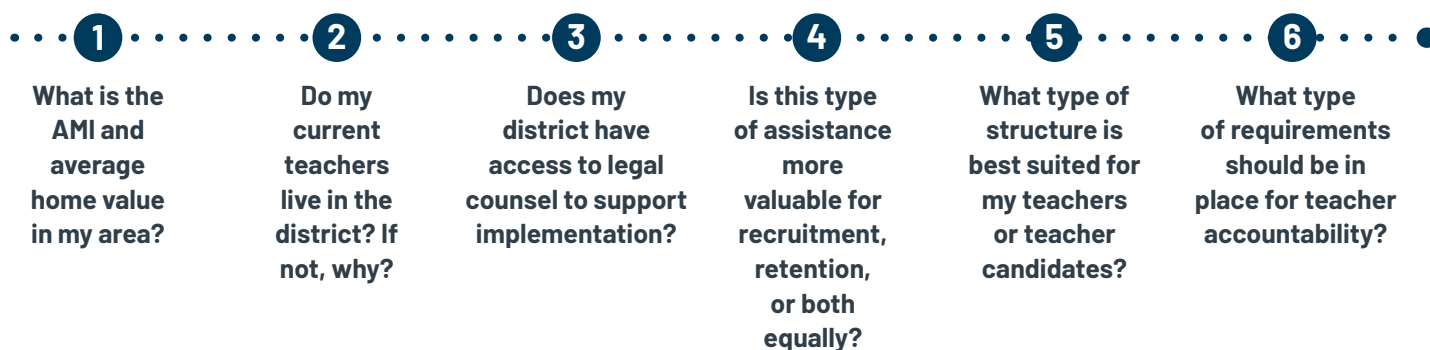
[Teacher Next Door](#) is a private, national program for preK-12th grade teachers and college faculty. The program streamlines the buying process and helps with funding, specifically providing up to \$10,681 in down payment costs and up to \$6,000 for closing costs.

State-based Program Examples

- Connecticut's [Teachers Mortgage Assistance Program](#)
- Florida's [Hometown Heroes Housing Program](#)
- Mississippi's [Assisted Housing Teacher Program](#)
- Nevada's [Housing Division's Home is Possible Program](#)
- Oklahoma's [Housing Finance Authority's Special Interest Rate for Teachers](#)
- South Carolina's Housing Finance and Development Authority's [Palmetto Heroes Program](#)
- Texas's [Homes for Texas Heroes Program](#)

Other Considerations

School leaders considering offering home loan assistance as an incentive should consider the following questions prior to starting this program:



Assuming 6.5% Interest Rate and 3.5% Down Payment	Chicago-Metro Example Average Cost of Home: \$285,000			Springfield Example Average Cost of Home: \$138,000		
	Without Help	With Help	Monthly Savings	Without Help	With Help	Monthly Savings
Baseline	\$2,257			\$1,098		
Provide \$10,000 for the initial down payment	\$2,257	\$2,175	\$82 (-3.6%)	\$1,098	\$1,056	\$42 (-3.8%)
Reduce interest rates up to 0.5%	\$2,257	\$2,167	\$90 (-4.0%)	\$1,098	\$1,054	\$44 (-4.0%)
Stack existing \$6,000 grant from IDHA and provides additional \$10,000 grant for DP	\$2,257	\$2,133	\$124 (-5.5%)	\$1,098	\$1,013	\$85 (-7.7%)
Provide \$10,000 grant for DP and reduces interest rate by 0.5%	\$2,257	\$2,088	\$169 (-7.5%)	\$1,098	\$1,014	\$84 (-7.7%)
Stack \$6,000 from IDHA with additional \$10,000 grant and reduces interest rate up to 0.5%	\$2,257	\$2,048	\$209 (-9.3%)	\$1,098	\$973	\$125 (-11.4%)

Teacher Planning and Collaboration



Problem Overview

To do their job well, and to plan for differentiated and effective instruction, teachers need time to collaborate with their teams. This can help meet the various needs of learners with various learning styles, a growing number of non-native English speakers, students with special needs, and students coming from low socio-economic backgrounds. Increasing teacher planning and collaboration time helps to alleviate teacher burnout. A 2021 survey shows that 81% of teachers who participated expressed concerns about time for work, family, and personal responses. Research shows that compared to teachers in higher-performing countries, teachers in the United States spend more time engaging in active instruction. Teachers in the United States teach for 27 hours per week, but teachers in Singapore teach for only 17 hours per week ([Benner & Partlow, 2017](#)).

Strategy Summary

Not only will teachers benefit from being given extra time for planning, but also from having [Common Planning Time](#). Beginning teachers need to learn new skills and receive feedback from experienced teachers. Only 6% of school districts provide beginning teachers with a reduced teaching load (Center for American Progress, December 2016).

Collaborative culture is crucial in retaining teachers, particularly in high-need schools. Teachers who work in isolation without support can experience burnout and lack job satisfaction, leading to high turnover rates. As a result, schools and districts have determined that they must create an environment that fosters collaboration among teachers. Innovative solutions that allow teachers additional time to plan, collaborate, and improve their practice are essential to achieving this goal (Hargreaves, 2019).

High-performing schools have implemented various strategies to promote teacher collaboration, with one of the most effective ways being to reform and redesign schedules to provide regular and dedicated time for teacher collaboration. This collaboration time enables teachers to work together on planning lessons, analyzing data, developing common expectations for student work, discussing mutual challenges, and receiving feedback from instructional leaders. Engaging in collaborative practices allows teachers to learn from each other and build a strong professional community, increasing job satisfaction and a sense of support. This [guide](#) from the National Center on Time and Learning offers additional useful ideas on strengthening teacher collaboration.

Providing teachers with more time to plan and collaborate will support new teachers who need to be coached and supported. This will contribute to teacher retention and also will open opportunities for experienced teachers to pursue leadership roles in their schools.



Examples

Corbes and Marinsky (2004, as cited in McLaurin, et al., 2009) reported that in 2002 the state of Virginia passed a regulation that specifies that all first-year teachers must have mentors. Schools in Fairfax County launched a program called “The Great Beginning.” Veteran teachers meet and collaborate with new teachers in this program. They start the summer before the new teachers begin teaching and continue through their third year in the field. Guilmette Elementary School in Lawrence, Massachusetts, implemented a new schedule in 2013 by adding more than 260 hours of instructional time to the school year and built in common planning time among grade-level teams by extending the school day. This reimagining of the school day resulted in students’ English language arts and math proficiency scores improving. They now outperform students in other elementary schools in the district/

Research shows that teacher collaboration improves student academic outcomes. Students taught by collaborative teachers perform better than students taught by isolated teachers.

Sources

[To Attract Great Teachers, School Districts Must Improve their Human Capital Systems](#)

Teacher Retention: Problems and Solutions (Sidney E. McLaurin, Willis Smith and Amanda Smillie, November 2009)

[Reimagining the School Day](#)

[Teacher Collaboration Guide](#)