

BRIEFING

Tackling Critical Teacher Shortages: Insights on Federal Policies & Programs

#TeacherShortages
@LPI_Learning



Opening Remarks

Michael DiNapoli, Jr., Deputy Director of Federal Policy,
Learning Policy Institute

Sponsors and Co-Sponsors

Sponsored by the Offices of Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA) and Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ)





Welcoming Remarks

Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA)

Presentation

Susan Kemper Patrick, Senior Researcher, Learning Policy Institute

Michael DiNapoli, Jr., Deputy Director of Federal Policy,
Learning Policy Institute

PRESENTATION

The State of the Teacher Workforce Current Data and Policy Implications

Teacher shortages occur when teaching positions are left vacant or filled with teachers who are not fully certified for their position

Shortages disrupt students' opportunities to learn as schools:

- Cancel classes
- Rely on virtual teachers or long-term substitutes
- Increase class size

In October 2023, 36% of schools reported they increased class size due to teacher and staff vacancies.

Source: School Pulse Panel (2024)

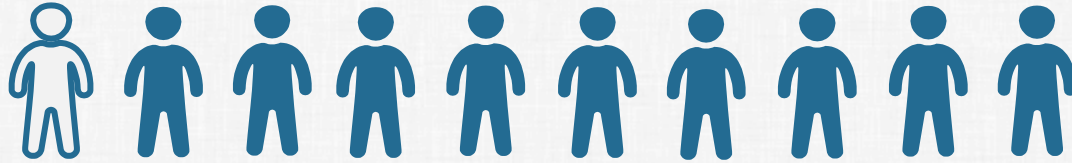
Teachers who are not fully certified:

- Lack teacher training or content-specific expertise
- Are more likely to leave the profession

Across 16 studies, the odds of turnover were 47% lower for teachers with standard certification compared to those not fully certified.

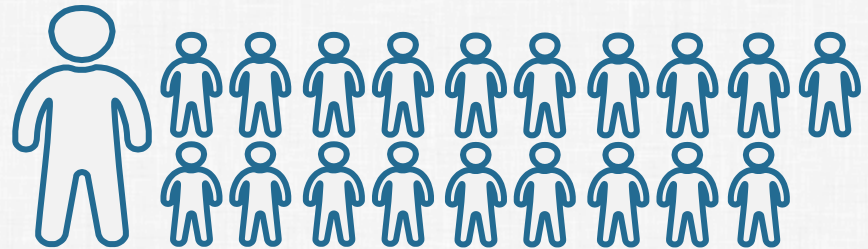
Source: Nguyen et al (2020)

Teacher shortages affect millions of children



In a [recent scan](#) of state-reported teacher data, LPI found that **314,134 positions were either unfilled or filled by teachers not fully certified for their assignments**, representing **about 1 in 10** of all teaching positions nationally.

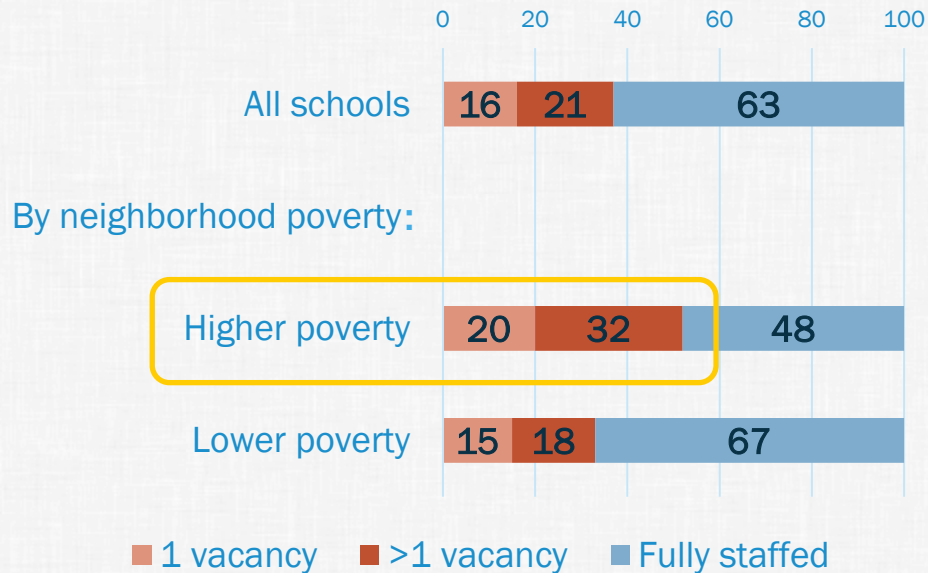
At least
6 million children
affected by shortages



Teacher shortages contribute to inequity

In October 2023, 37% of schools in [nationally representative survey](#) reported having at least one teaching vacancy, while 52% of schools serving higher poverty communities reported at least one teaching vacancy.

Teaching vacancies in October 2023



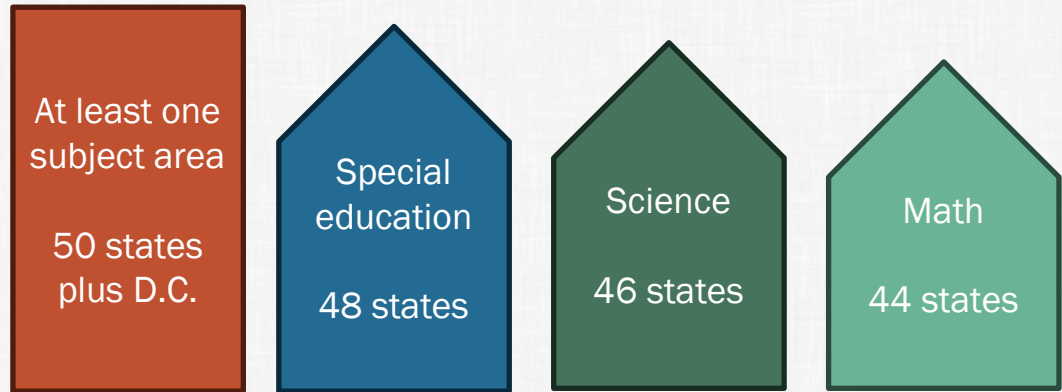
Teacher shortages vary by subject and state

2-3x
higher


National data from October 2023 indicates that [vacancy rates](#) are two times higher for math and biology positions and three times higher for special education positions compared to English or social studies.

Source: School Pulse Panel (2024)

Teacher shortage areas
by subject and state
(2022-23):



Source: Darling-Hammond, L., DiNapoli, M., Jr., & Kini, T. (2023). [The federal role in ending teacher shortages](#). Learning Policy Institute.



**How can we measure the
state of the teacher
workforce?**

State of the teacher workforce

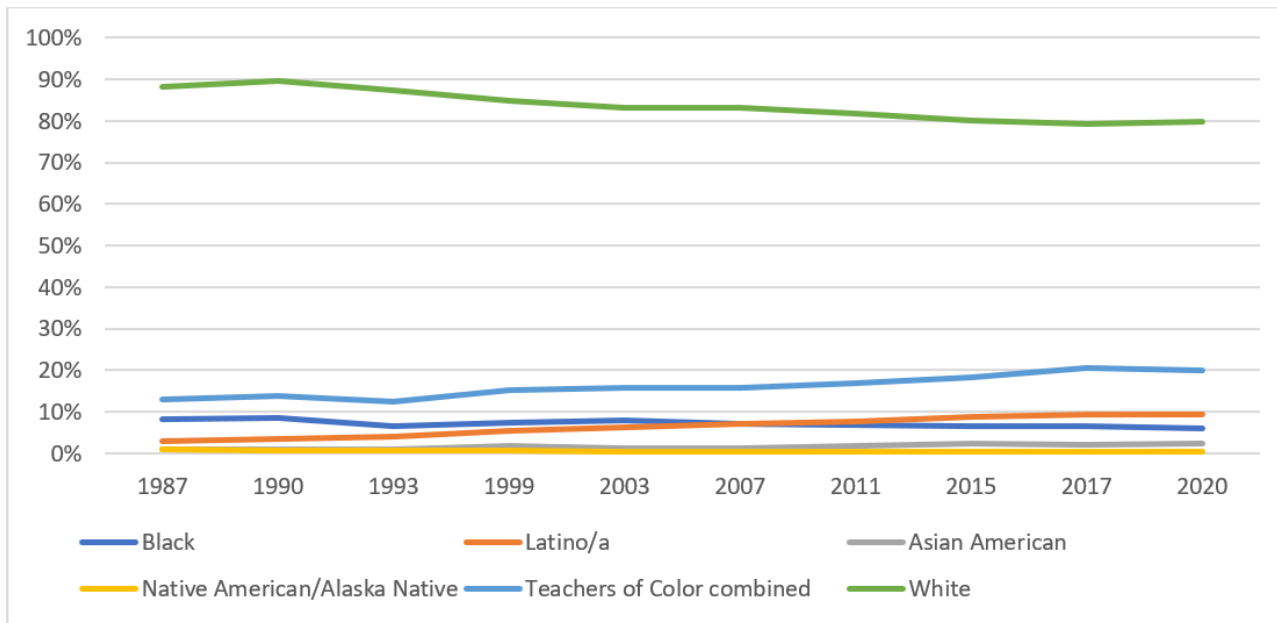
- Focuses on important factors influencing teacher recruitment and retention
- Uses most recent national data to capture 40+ indicators across 3 categories:
 - Teaching attractiveness
 - Teacher equity
 - Supply and demand
- Download each state's data points



[learningpolicyinstitute.org/
state-of-teacher-workforce](https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/state-of-teacher-workforce)

Racial diversity of the teaching workforce

Figure 1. The Share of Teachers of Color in the Teacher Workforce: 1987-2020

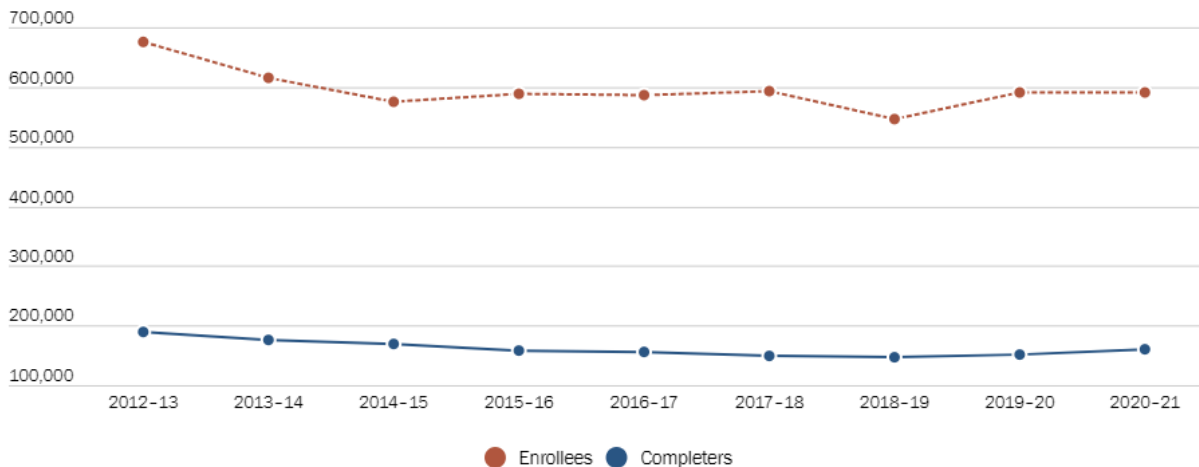


Note: Analysis by Learning Policy Institute. “Teachers of Color” combined includes all non-white teachers, including Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander teachers and teachers reporting two or more races.

Sources: National Center for Education Statistics reports (see endnotes for complete list of sources).⁵

A smaller and stalled teacher pipeline

Teacher Preparation Enrollment and Completion Over Time in the United States



Source: LPI analysis of [Title II Data](#)

Note: This analysis includes all 50 states plus the District of Columbia. Due to a reporting change in 2018-19, Title II published enrollment numbers from the academic years 2018-19 to 2020-21 that included completers (prior years did not). To create a consistent enrollment measure over time (including completers), we updated the enrollment values for these earlier years by adding the reported completer numbers to the reported enrollment numbers.



Over the past 5 years, there are diverging trends across states:



17 states had enrollment **increases** of more than +5%



7 states had relatively flat enrollment



27 states had enrollment **declines** of more than -5%

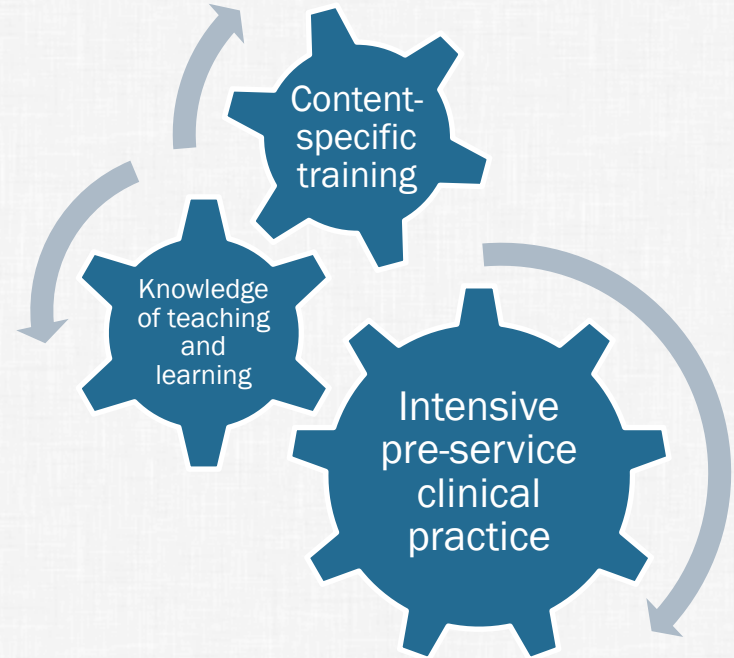
The quality of teacher preparation matters

Teachers who participate in comprehensive preparation:

- Tend to be more effective, as measured by classroom observations and student learning in certain subjects
- Are more likely to stay in the profession

Comprehensive preparation that is accessible and affordable can create **high-retention pathways** into teaching.

Elements of comprehensive preparation:

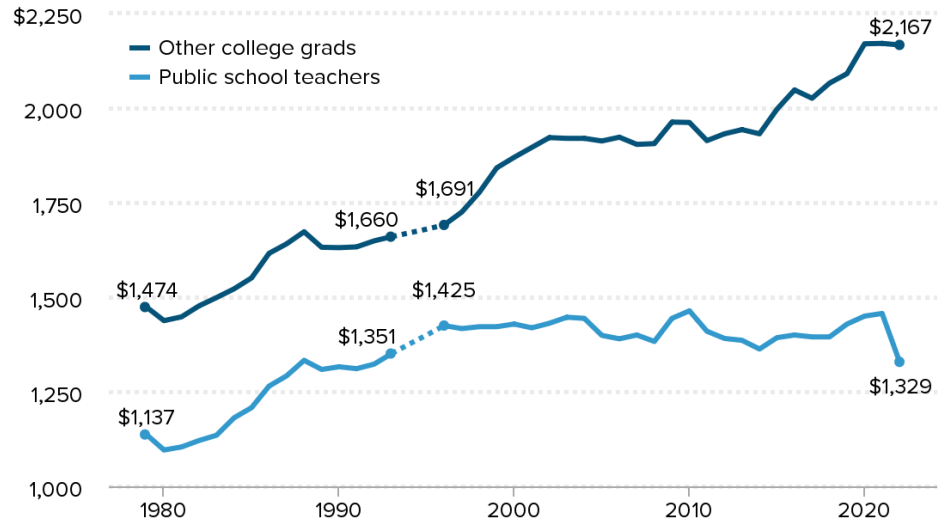


Teacher compensation lags behind

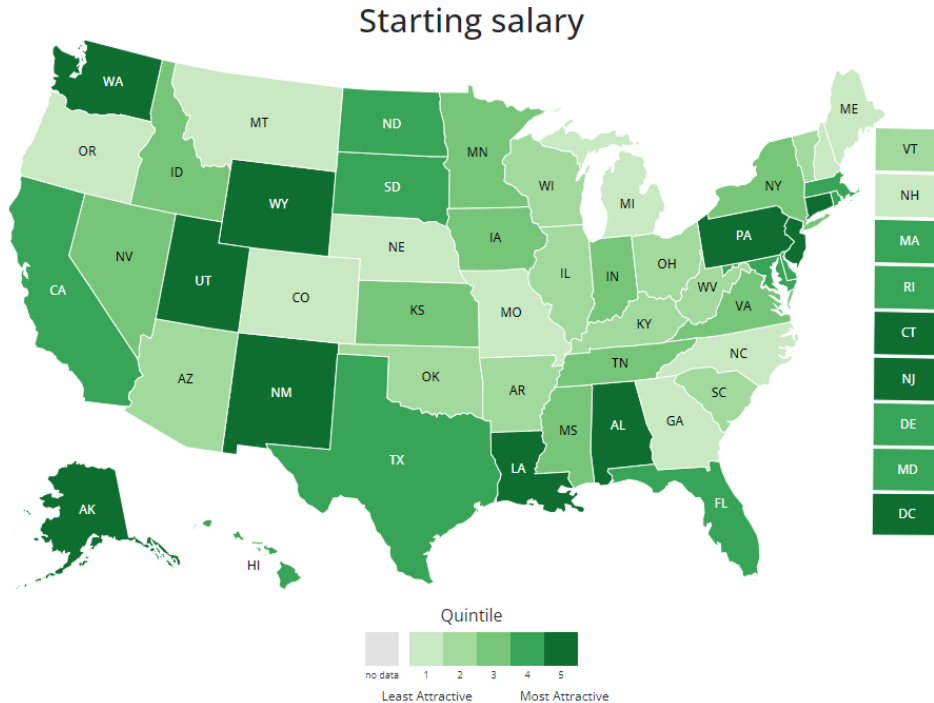
- Raising salaries may influence the quantity and quality of applicant pool for open teaching positions
- Higher salaries are associated with lower teacher turnover
- Increasing salaries was identified as a top strategy to recruit and retain more teachers of color

Average weekly wage of public school teachers plummets in 2022

Average weekly wages of public school teachers and other college graduates (2022\$), 1979–2022



Starting salaries across the U.S.



Starting salary

The average starting teacher salary per state, adjusted for cost-of-living differences.

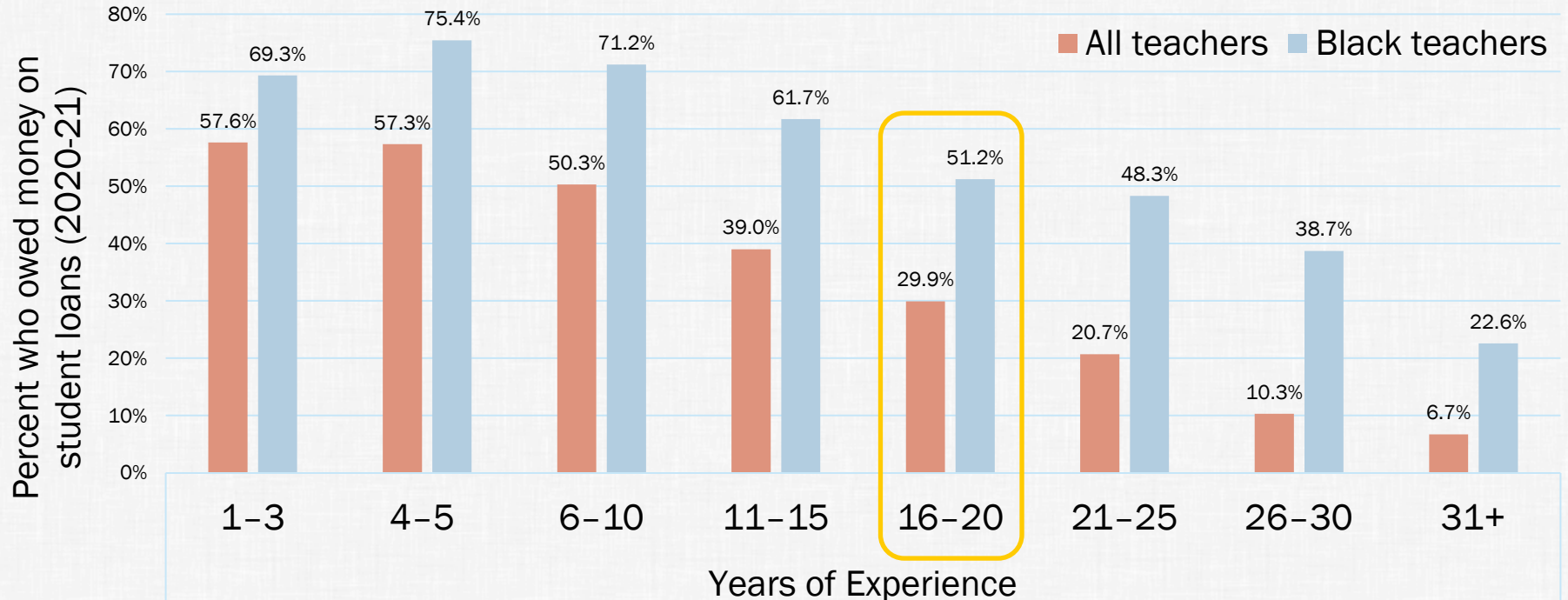
Source: National Education Association
Year of Data Collection: 2021-22

U.S. Average: \$42,850

Lowest: 5 states below \$40,000
(CO, MO, MT, NH, OR)

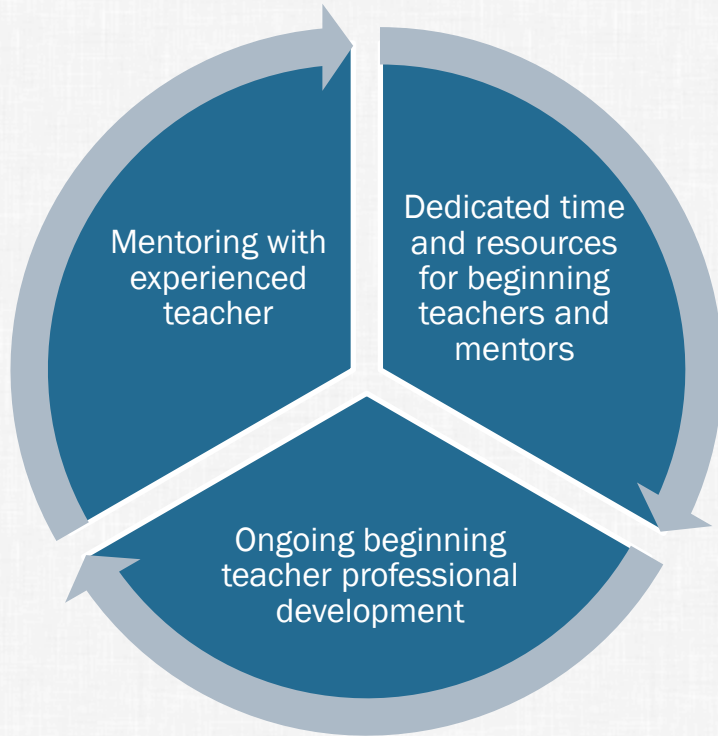
Highest: 3 states plus D.C. above \$50,000
(DC, NJ, NY, WY)

Student loan debt among teachers



Source: García, E., Wei, W., Patrick, S. K., Leung-Gagné, M., & DiNapoli, M. A., Jr. (2023). [In debt: Student loan burdens among teachers](#). Learning Policy Institute

Support for beginning teachers is critical



- Across many studies, beginning teachers receiving quality mentoring and induction support tend to stay in the profession longer than those receiving no supports or lower quality supports
- One study found that participation in a two-year induction program resulted in 2-4.5 additional months of learning in reading or math for students of teachers receiving intensive induction supports



Policy recommendations

Policy recommendations & actions

- Expand **loan forgiveness and service scholarships**
- Expand the affordability and availability of **high-retention preparation pathways**
- Provide **high-quality mentoring** for all beginning teachers
- Increase teachers' **salaries** and **net compensation**



Over 93%

of all loans are held by the Department of Education



1.3 million

teachers are still in repayment (37%)

Source: García, E., Wei, W., Patrick, S. K., Leung-Gagné, M., & DiNapoli, M. A., Jr. (2023).

In debt: Student loan burdens among teachers. Learning Policy Institute

Loan forgiveness and service scholarships

Federal Programs

- TEACH Grant
- Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program
- Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program

Federal Proposals

- DIVERSIFY Act
- Educators for America Act
- Loan Forgiveness for Educators Act



High-retention pathways into teaching

Federal Programs

- Teacher Quality Partnership, Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence, and IDEA-D Personnel Preparation Programs
 - \$200 million FY23
- Title II-A ESEA: Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants
 - \$2.2 billion FY23
- U.S. ED FY25 = \$2.4 billion for these four programs

Federal Proposals

- Preparing and Retaining Education Professionals Act (PREP) Act
- Educators for America Act

Support for beginning teachers and teacher leadership

- Title II-A ESEA, TQP, Hawkins, and IDEA-D-PP programs
- AL, IA, KS, and TX have funded mentoring and induction programs
- 16 states with dedicated funding
- Matching grants for teacher induction and mentoring programs
- Opportunities for teacher leadership



Federal strategies to ensure competitive compensation

- Refundable tax credits
- Housing subsidies
- Salary incentives
- Loan forgiveness and service scholarships



TEACHER
SALARY

Resources



The Federal Role in Ending Teacher Shortages

Linda Darling-Hammond, Michael DiNapoli Jr., and Tara Kini



AUGUST 2023



Diversifying the Teaching Profession: How to Recruit and Retain Teachers of Color

Desiree Carver-Thomas



APRIL 2018



In Debt: Student Loan Burdens Among Teachers

Emma Garcia, Wesley Wei, Susan Kemper Patrick,
Melanie Leung-Gagné, and Michael A. DiNapoli Jr.



DECEMBER 2023

learningpolicyinstitute.org/briefing

Contact us

Michael DiNapoli

mdinapoli@learningpolicyinstitute.org

Susan Kemper Patrick

spatrick@learningpolicyinstitute.org

LPI Research

learningpolicyinstitute.org



Panel Discussion

- **Jacqueline Rodriguez (moderator)**, Chief Executive Officer, National Center for Learning Disabilities
- **Ternesha Burroughs**, Secondary Math Teacher, Osseo School District; President, Education Minnesota–OSSEO
- **Clifton Tanabe**, Dean, College of Education, University of Texas–El Paso
- **Reggie White**, 2022–2023 Alabama Teacher of the Year; District Mentor Teacher, Birmingham City Schools

Q & A

Please write your questions on the index cards provided, raise your hand, and someone will come by to collect the card.



Panel Discussion

BRIEFING

Tackling Critical Teacher Shortages: Insights on Federal Policies & Programs

#TeacherShortages
@LPI_Learning