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## The Long View: How States Can Solve Teacher Shortages and Improve Teaching

*New report identifies state policies aimed at generating long-term solutions to teacher shortages.*

[\*Taking the Long View: State Efforts to Solve Teacher Shortages by Strengthening the Profession\*](#)

Most states have been struggling to address teacher shortages for several years now, often filling the vacuum with underprepared teachers who aren't able to give children the high-quality learning they need and who leave at two to three times the rate of well-prepared teachers. Most often, these teachers are hired in schools serving students of color and those from low-income families. Governors and legislators in many of these states are now working to turn the tide, according to a new report from the Learning Policy Institute (LPI).

The report, *Taking the Long View: State Efforts to Solve Teacher Shortages by Strengthening the Profession* focuses on six evidence-based policies that states are pursuing to address their teacher shortages by strengthening, rather than weakening, their educator workforce. The policies were selected based on research on teacher preparation, recruitment, and retention strategies that have been found to support greater teacher effectiveness and retention. These strategies can help states build long-term sustainable systems to attract, develop, and retain a strong and stable teacher workforce.

The policy strategies are:

- Offering service scholarships and student loan forgiveness to encourage people to earn degrees in education and work as teachers
- Creating high-retention pathways into teaching, through which students are fully prepared to become teachers, including residencies and Grow Your Own programs that recruit and prepare community members to teach in local school districts
- Providing mentoring and induction for new teachers
- Developing high-quality school principals who know how to attract and retain teachers
- Offering competitive compensation

- Implementing recruitment strategies to expand the pool of qualified educators, such as recruiting recently retired teachers back into the classroom and strengthening licensure reciprocity so that it is easier for teachers to move to and work in a new state.

“For too long, too many districts have been forced to use emergency permits and long-term substitutes for hard-to-fill teaching vacancies,” said LPI President and CEO Linda Darling-Hammond. “This is like putting a band-aid on a gaping wound. Fortunately, there are research-based approaches that provide short- and long-term solutions and strengthen teaching quality at the same time. Research and successful practices across the country point the way forward to ensuring that every child is given the opportunity not just to attend school but to learn well.”

The report identifies policies in 40 states aimed at recruiting and retaining a stable, well-prepared teaching force. Those states are: Alaska, Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Information on states’ approaches are based on reviews of states’ Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plans (all of which have been approved, except for Florida’s, which is still under review), and recent, relevant state legislation; publicly available program documents; and administrative data. The report includes several examples of promising state policies and a detailed description of the comprehensive approach taken by Washington state that leverages a number of evidence-based policies in tandem to address teacher shortages while also improving its educator workforce.

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### **About the Learning Policy Institute**

The Learning Policy Institute conducts and communicates independent, high-quality research to improve education policy and practice. Working with policymakers, researchers, educators, community groups, and others, the Institute seeks to advance evidence-based policies that support empowering and equitable learning for each and every child. Nonprofit and nonpartisan, the Institute connects policymakers and stakeholders at the local, state, and federal levels with the evidence, ideas, and actions needed to strengthen the education system from preschool through college and career readiness.

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