



LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE

Research. Action. Impact.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JANUARY 19, 2016

Contact: [Wynn Hausser](#), 650-619-1032 (Palo Alto, CA)

[Sue Dorfman](#), 617-513-6179 (Washington, DC)

CALIFORNIA TEACHER SHORTAGES LIKELY TO GROW WORSE IF UNADDRESSED, NEW REPORT CONCLUDES

Sacramento, CA—If current trends persist, emerging teacher shortages in California will continue to increase—unless policymakers address both sides of the supply and demand equation. This is according to a [report](#) released today by the [Learning Policy Institute](#), a new national education research and policy organization based in Palo Alto, California and Washington, DC.

The report, *Addressing California's Emerging Teacher Shortage: An Analysis of Sources and Solutions*, reviews the origins of the current situation, evaluates the factors that will determine future trends, and offers policy recommendations. The report is being released at the "[California's Emerging Teacher Shortage: New Evidence and Policy Responses Conference](#)," co-sponsored by Policy Analysis for California Education ([PACE](#)), the Education Policy Center at the American Institutes for Research ([AIR](#)) and the Learning Policy Institute ([LPI](#)).

Linda Darling-Hammond, LPI President and the report's lead author notes that, "Our analysis shows California on a trajectory that, if left unchecked, will likely result in increased teacher shortages and greater inequities among students in different communities. This will seriously hamper the state's effort to implement more challenging new learning standards. Teacher recruitment and retention strategies will be critical to stem the shortages and keep current state reforms on track." Institute colleagues Patrick M. Shields, Roberta Furger and Leib Sutcher are co-authors.

While shortages occur across a range of subject areas, the report finds the problem most acute in mathematics, science, and special education. For example, in the 2014-15 school year, districts projected a need for 4,500 special education teachers. But only 2,200 new special education credentials were issued. Across these subjects, there was a significant increase in the number of temporary permits, waivers, and intern credentials issued, meaning more students taught by under-prepared teachers.

In addition, low-income students of color and students with special needs are also disproportionately affected. According to California's educator equity plan, in 2013-14 twice as many students in high-minority as in low-minority schools were being taught by a teacher who had not completed or even enrolled in a preparation program. Similar disparities existed in high-poverty schools.

"The students most affected by teacher shortages are the same ones the state has prioritized for increased funding through California's new state funding formula," points out Learning Policy Institute Senior Writer Roberta Furger.

The report cites a number of factors driving the shortages. District hiring needs have more than doubled in the past four years alone, fueled largely by teacher attrition and schools' efforts to reinstate staff positions eliminated during recent budget cuts. California has the highest student-teacher ratio in the nation.

Leib Sucher, Learning Policy Institute Research Assistant observes, "Just to return to pre-Great Recession levels, school districts in the state would need to hire 60,000 new teachers. Reducing the student-teacher ratios to the national average would require hiring a total of 135,000 additional teachers beyond the current teaching force of around 300,000."

At the same time, the supply of new teachers is at a 12-year low. Enrollment in educator preparation programs dropped more than 70 percent over the last decade and has fallen below the number of estimated hires by school districts around the state. Meanwhile, all of the state's earlier programs to recruit teachers have disappeared in earlier budget cuts. Also, the desirability of teaching as a profession strongly influences whether young people or career switchers decide to enter the field. Only 5 percent of college-bound students in a recent survey were interested in pursuing a career in education, a decrease of 16 percent between 2010 and 2014.

The report concludes with recommendations for California policymakers to address the emerging teacher shortages. [see below] Learning Policy Institute Executive Director Patrick M. Shields states, "Our research suggests that restoring programs that worked, investing in teacher recruitment and training, and improving working conditions for school staff can increase the number and diversity of fully prepared teachers, increase retention and improve outcomes for all of California's students."

###

The Learning Policy Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that conducts and communicates independent high-quality research to improve education. 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. For more information on the Institute, visit www.learningpolicyinstitute.org and for more information on the report and educator quality, visit learningpolicyinstitute.org/addressing-ca-teacher-shortage.

To arrange an interview with one of the authors or for more information, please contact [Wynn Hausser](mailto:Wynn.Hausser@learningpolicyinstitute.org), Chief Communication Officer, 650-619-1032.

Download the [full report](#) and the [executive summary](#) of *Addressing California's Emerging Teacher Shortage: An Analysis of Sources and Solutions* by Linda Darling-Hammond, Roberta Furger, Patrick M. Shields, and Leib Sutcher.

Investigate [teacher shortage indicators](#) in each California county using our interactive map

Review the policy recommendations of the *Addressing California's Emerging Teacher Shortage* report:

- 1. Reinstate the CalTeach program**, which helped recruit teachers from colleges, other careers, and other states; provided them information about how to become credentialed; and directed them to preparation programs and districts so that entry into the profession was made simpler and more supported.
- 2. Create incentives to attract diverse, talented individuals to teach in high-need locations and fields** by funding candidates who prepare and teach in such schools and subject areas, as did two highly successful California programs: the Governor's Teaching Fellowship and the Assumption Program of Loans for Education (APLE).

3. Create innovative pipelines into teaching, such as high school career pathways and Grow-Your-Own teacher preparation models, which encourage and support young people and others to go into teaching in their own communities. These strategies are aligned with the research findings that many young people can be attracted to teaching early in life, and teachers prefer to teach near where they grew up and attended high school.

4. Increase access to high-quality preparation programs that support teacher success in high-need districts and fields. California needs new approaches to training and recruitment to solve shortages in communities and fields that have longstanding challenges. In particular, innovative programs like teacher residencies are needed for training urban and rural teachers. New model programs that begin in the undergraduate years are also needed for preparing special educators.

5. Ensure that all beginning teachers have access to a high-quality support and mentoring program that can reduce early attrition and enhance competence, such as is available through well-designed Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) programs.

6. Provide incentives that support teachers' ability to stay in or re-enter the profession through strategies like mortgage guarantees for housing, ease of credential renewal, streamlined reciprocity with other states, and opportunities to continue teaching and mentoring after retirement.

7. Improve teaching conditions by supporting administrator training that enables principals to create productive teaching and learning environments.

- END -