



Recruiting and Retaining Bilingual Teachers—A Resource Brief

This brief is part of [a seven-part series](#) on challenges related to recruiting and retaining teachers from underrepresented backgrounds or with certain certifications. This series was developed as part of the R9CC Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition project with Illinois.

Battling the Bilingual Teacher Shortage

Attracting and retaining excellent educators is one of the most important drivers of a well-functioning education system—a system that must prepare diverse students with complex needs to participate in today’s knowledge-driven economy. However, a recent surge in the demand for teachers, alongside a diminishing supply and a steady rate of teachers leaving the profession, threatens students’ academic and economic welfare.¹ Teacher turnover adversely impacts student achievement, school finances, and school improvement efforts.² Specific, targeted supports can help recruit and retain teachers in your district.

Across the United States, many districts find themselves short on bilingual teachers. More than half of the states face a shortage of such teachers, with shortages most acute in states that provide bilingual education to the greatest numbers of English learners.³ Bilingual and dual-language education have proven to have a positive effect on the achievement of both English learner and non-English learner students.⁴

This brief provides resources that highlight examples of strategies, programs, and initiatives that help states, local education agencies, and school districts address the shortage of certified bilingual and second language teachers. This brief also includes additional resources related to recruiting, retaining, and supporting teachers.

Highlighted Resources

This section highlights examples of strategies, programs, and initiatives that help states, local education agencies, and school districts address the shortage of certified bilingual and second language teachers.

Title	Summary
<u>Addressing the bilingual teacher shortage (2021)</u>	<p>This Region 4 Comprehensive Center brief focuses on bilingual education and addressing the bilingual teacher shortage across the United States. More than half of states nationwide are experiencing bilingual teacher shortages, and the states with the most acute shortages are those that provide such education to the greatest numbers of English learners. This brief includes strategies that can help mitigate bilingual teacher shortages and provides considerations for state and district leaders for addressing these shortages.</p>
<u>Common practices for recruiting, training, and retaining bilingual and diverse teachers (2018)</u>	<p>This Regional Educational Laboratory Northwest research review highlights practices commonly used to recruit, train, and retain bilingual and diverse teachers. It is a tool to facilitate the discussion of existing and potentially new program features among staff members and educators who manage or work with programs intended to diversify the teacher workforce.</p>
<u>Chicago’s bilingual teacher residency: A partnership to strengthen the teacher pipeline (2019)</u>	<p>Chicago Public Schools (CPS) is looking for ways to address teacher shortages and increase the racial and linguistic diversity of the educator workforce. A new bilingual teacher residency program is attempting to help close these gaps and ease current shortages by recruiting from within and tapping paraeducators who show promise and interest in becoming licensed teachers. This resource explores how CPS designed and implemented the program in partnership with National Louis University and the National Center for Teacher Residencies.</p>
<u>Building a bilingual teacher pipeline (2017)</u>	<p>This report by Amaya Garcia, Education Policy senior researcher at New America, features a profile of the Future Bilingual Teacher Fellow Program in Highline, Washington, which is designed to prepare full-time paraprofessionals to earn their teaching certification with the goal of easing their district’s shortage of bilingual teachers.</p>

Additional Resources

Teacher recruitment and retention is a challenge across teacher subgroups. These resources offer a more general overview of strategies to combat the teacher shortage.

Center for English Learners (ELs) at the American Institutes for Research (AIR):

<https://www.air.org/centers/english-learners>

Center on Great Teachers and Leaders at AIR: <https://gtlcenter.org/>

Duncan, E. (2022). *Addressing teacher shortages in the short and long term: What states and districts can do*. Education Trust. <https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Addressing-Teacher-Shortages-in-the-Short-and-Long-Term-May-2022.pdf>

Education Northwest. (2019). *Resources for recruiting, hiring, and retaining teachers of color* [Blog post]. <https://educationnorthwest.org/resources/resources-recruiting-hiring-and-retaining-teachers-color>

Konoske-Graf, A., Partelow, L., & Benner, M. (2016). *To attract great teachers, school districts must improve their human capital systems*. Center for American Progress. <https://americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/HumanCapitalSurvey-report.pdf>

Podolsky, A., Kini, T., Bishop, J., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2016). *Solving the teacher shortage: How to attract and retain excellent educators*. Learning Policy Institute. https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Solving_Teacher_Shortage_Attract_Retain_Educators_REPORT.pdf

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). (n.d.). Ideas that work: Attract, prepare, retain resource database. <https://osepideasthatwork.org/federal-resources-stakeholders/topical-issues/attract-prepare-retain-resource-database>

Other Briefs

This section includes links to other briefs in the series.

[New Teachers](#)

[Rural Teachers](#)

[Special Education Teachers](#)

[STEM Teachers](#)

[Teachers in Low-income and Low-performing Schools](#)

[Teachers of Color](#)

Endnotes

¹ Sutchter, L., Darling-Hammond, L., & Carver-Thomas, D. (2016). *A coming crisis in teaching? Teacher supply, demand, and shortages in the U.S.* Learning Policy Institute.

² Podolsky, A., Kini, T., Bishop, J., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2016). *Solving the teacher shortage: How to attract and retain excellent educators.* Learning Policy Institute.

³ Torre Gibney, D., Kelly, H., Rutherford-Quach, S., Ballen Riccards, J., & Parker, C. (2021). *Addressing the bilingual teacher shortage.* CCNetwork.

⁴ Leong, M., Greenberg Motamedi, J., and Young Yoon, S. (2018). *Common practices for recruiting, training, and retaining bilingual and diverse teachers.* REL Northwest.