

Cross-Regional CoP

Educator Shortage Planning During the COVID-19 Pandemic

ED# 2020-R1-I-0008



High-Leverage Problem

The **COVID-19 pandemic** has impacted schools across the country and has exacerbated education shortages in localities that were already struggling. Stakeholders at both state and local education agencies reflected the need to connect and learn from their peers about emerging policies or practices to address educator shortages. Participating states wanted to collaborate with and serve as thought partners to their peers to develop solutions.

● — ○ — ○ → Key Milestones

- Identified and invited stakeholders to participate in the CoP.
- Planned and facilitated five CoP sessions.
- Developed five 2-page resources on key educator shortage topics.
- Created a summary document outlining key takeaways, resources, and information shared during each session.



R1CC Approach

Region 1 Comprehensive Center (R1CC), in collaboration with the R3CC, R9CC, R12CC, and the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center), supported five state teams through a community of practice (CoP). The collaborative included five 60-minute virtual meetings that were focused on the following topics:

1. Leveraging educator preparation programs and engaging teacher candidates to fill learning gaps
2. Understanding how addressing substitute teacher shortages may exacerbate equitable access to quality teaching
3. Innovative teacher staffing models
4. Preventing teacher attrition and early retirement
5. Investing in teachers using funds from the American Rescue Plan Act

For three meetings, a state education agency representative engaged in a consultancy model in which they shared their challenges and solutions on the discussion topic and responded to feedback and questions from the other participants, regional comprehensive center staff, and experts from the GTL Center. The other two meetings included collective problem-solving and sharing across all the state participants, regional comprehensive center staff, and experts. Each session concluded with a review of best practices and available resources.

Key Partner(s): Region 3 Comprehensive Center, Region 9 Comprehensive Center, Region 12 Comprehensive Center, Center on Great Teachers and Leaders, Vermont Agency of Education, Illinois State Board of Education, Colorado Department of Education, Virgin Islands Department of Education

→ Outputs

- A CoP participant list and facilitation agendas
- A two-pager, *Leveraging Educator Preparation Programs and Engaging Teacher Candidates to Fill Learning Gaps*
- A two-pager, *Addressing Substitute Teacher Shortages*
- A two-pager, *Preventing Attrition/Retirements* (the resource was adapted post-session to include session takeaways)
- A two-pager, *Innovative Staffing Structures*
- A two-pager, *Developing Policies and Guidance on Educator Layoffs*
- Summary report highlight key lessons learned from the five CoP sessions

Outcomes

“I think hearing experiences from other states is helpful, including a central place (e.g., documentation) of what is shared and resources during the sessions.”

“This series is the only during COVID in which I have participated that met the networking value of conferences. I feel there are folks in Illinois and Colorado to whom I could reach out to help think through similar issues. Thanks for the opportunity.”