

**TEACH  
+PLUS**

**DEVELOPING &  
STRENGTHENING**

THE EDUCATOR

WORKFORCE

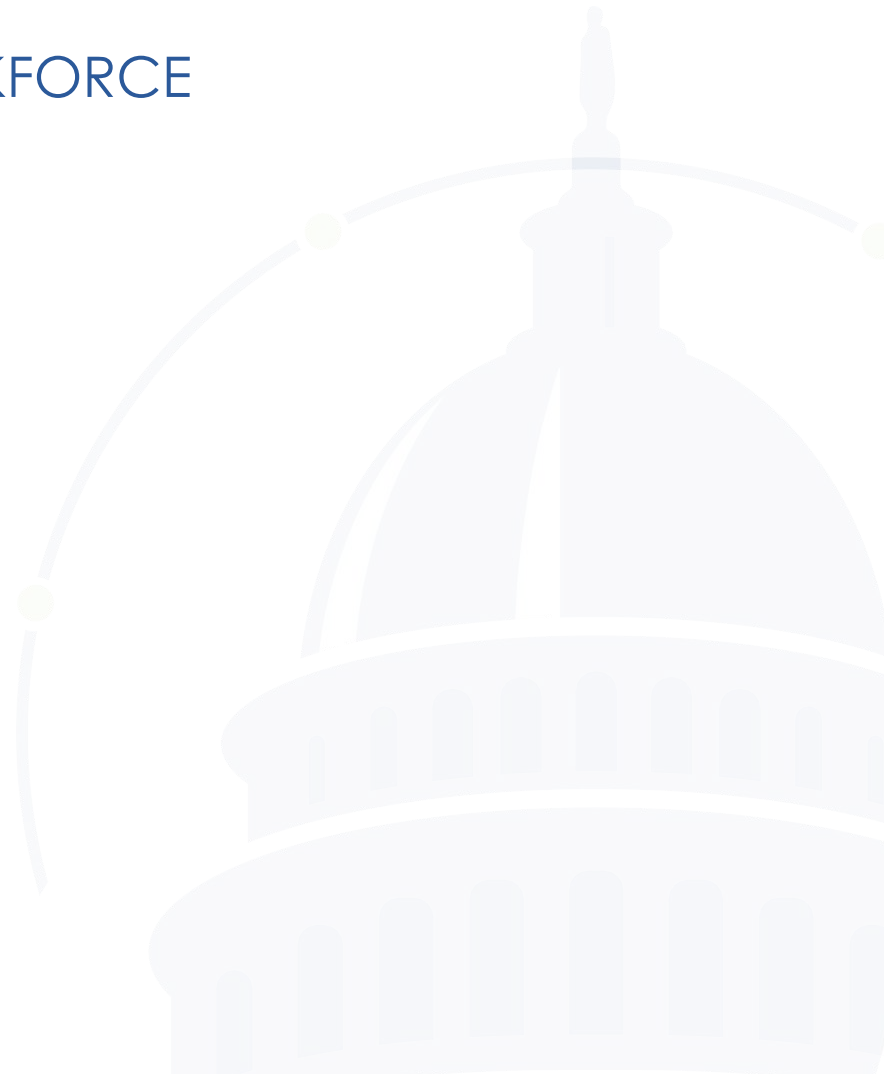
118th Congress





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# 1 | THE NATIONAL POLICY ADVISORY BOARD

The **Teach Plus National Policy Advisory Board (NPAB)** is a highly selective program for **current classroom teachers** to inform Teach Plus on federal policy decisions and build a teacher leadership movement for educational equity. Over the course of a year, NPAB members deepen their knowledge on federal policy, build their advocacy skills, and create strong relationships with their congressional representatives and staff. Members also act as visible spokespeople for policy changes selected by the National Policy Advisory Board to improve the teaching profession.

Our current cohort is made up of **17 teachers** representing **17 states**, which include:

## 2024 | Executive and Senior Leaders



**Alisa Cooper de Uribe**  
New Mexico



**Frances Lazette**  
Michigan



**Juan Renteria, Jr.**  
Oklahoma



**Laura Sosik**  
Pennsylvania

## 2024 | Teacher Leaders



**Linda Amici**  
Ohio



**Lennon Audrain**  
Arizona



**Tess Carlson**  
California



**Chris Dier**  
Louisiana



**Steve Dull**  
Indiana



**Lorelei Jackson**  
Colorado



**Melinda Martinez-Epperson**  
Illinois



**Charlie E. McAdoo II, Ed.D**  
Georgia



**Emma Muth**  
Nevada



**Anawya Quashie**  
South Carolina



**Melina Recio**  
Texas



**Ralph Saint-Louis**  
Massachusetts



**Barquita Stanton**  
Mississippi

## 2 | LEGISLATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR TEACHER RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

As current teachers, we know that the most pressing issue facing students, families, and educators today is the **national teacher shortage**. The NPAB believes we need to address this shortage through a three-pronged approach:

- + **Data** - Developing data systems to successfully understand how to retain, recruit, and support the teaching workforce.
- + **Retention** - Creating effective retention programs that will help educators feel supported, valued, and optimistic about their careers.
- + **Recruitment** - Investing in creative recruitment strategies to promote a highly qualified and sustainable teaching workforce.

As a nonpartisan board of teachers, we are committed to working with Congress to advocate for and co-create legislation to build a sustainable workforce of educators for generations to come.

Over the past year, we have met with over 40 congressional representatives and their staff to brainstorm solutions to promote the recruitment and retention of teachers across the country. As a collective, the NPAB has worked on developing, providing technical assistance, and advocating for legislation that we believe will lead to a stronger teaching workforce and boost student achievement.



## CURRENT LEGISLATION

We are continuously engaged in dialogue amongst ourselves, our peers, and Members of Congress to create real and sustainable change. Through these conversations, the NPAB has identified and endorsed the following pieces of legislation as a step towards ensuring that children across the nation have access to high quality educators:

- + **S.3736/H.R. 7250:** Strengthening Educator Workforce Data Act
- + **S.1502/H.R.3143:** The Teachers LEAD Act
- + **S.1567/H.R. 3264:** RETAIN Act
- + **H.R.744:** The Supporting the Mental Health of Educators and Staff Act

### S.3736/H.R. 7250: The Strengthening Educator Workforce Data Act

**Sponsored by:** Senator Dick Durbin, Representative Matthew Cartwright, Representative Zach Nunn

**Cosponsors (Senate):** Senator Cory Booker

**Cosponsors (House):** Representatives Gwen Moore, Joseph Morelle, Kevin Mullin, David Trone, Jill Tokuda, Michael Lawler, Donald Davis, Eric Sorenson

**Overview:** The *Strengthening Educator Workforce Data Act* would direct the Department of Education to collect and centralize educator data to help policymakers and stakeholders produce data-informed policies to address nationwide teacher shortages, and strengthen the educator workforce, to better serve our nation's students.

#### Legislative Contacts:

- + **Senator Durbin:** Kaylee Mulgrew, Legislative Assistant
- + **Representative Cartwright:** Karina Hull, Legislative Assistant



*"As a dedicated teacher, the Strengthening Workforce Data Act will provide legislators with the knowledge and data needed to create meaningful change within our classrooms and communities. We are seeing a desperate need to increase the educator workforce in Pennsylvania and this bill ensures the needs of teachers are heard and respected in shaping the future of education."*

**-Laura Sosik, Pennsylvania**

## S.1502/H.R.3143: The Teachers LEAD Act

**Sponsored by:** Senator Ben Ray Luján, Representative Ruben Gallego

**Cosponsors (Senate):** Senator Martin Heinrich

**Cosponsors (House):** Representatives Jahana Hayes, Raúl Grijalva, Rashida Tlaib, Dina Titus, Henry Cuellar, Jill Tokuda, Sean Casten

**Overview:** The *Teachers Leading, Educating, Advancing, and Designing (LEAD) Act of 2023* establishes a competitive grant program at the Department of Education to provide professional leadership opportunities for educators. Local education agencies, educational service agencies, and Bureau of Indian Education-funded schools would be eligible to apply to the grant program to create teacher leadership programs tailored to their local needs.

### Legislative Contacts:

- + **Senator Luján:** Katie Mertens, Legislative Assistant
- + **Representative Gallego:** Ryan McGuire, Legislative Director

*"Structuring sustainable and remunerative opportunities for educators to add to their on-the-ground insight to the change-making tables is a recognition of educators' immeasurable worth, and can help revitalize the profession through meaningful participation in the decisions that affect our students, our unique school communities, and our nation's future."*

-Alisa Cooper de Uribe, New Mexico



## S.1567/H.R. 3265: RETAIN Act

**Sponsored by:** Senator Dick Durbin, Representative Bradley Schneider

**Cosponsors (Senate):** Senators Tammy Baldwin, Tina Smith

**Cosponsors (House):** Representative Haley Stevens

**Overview:** The *Retaining Educators Takes Added Investment Now (RETAIN) Act* creates a fully refundable tax credit for teachers, paraprofessionals, school-based mental health providers, and school leaders in Title I schools. Educators, program providers, and program directors in early childhood education programs would also be eligible for the tax credit.

### Legislative Contacts:

- + **Senator Durbin:** Kaylee Mulgrew, Legislative Assistant
- + **Representative Schneider:** Thomas Brown, Legislative Director

## H.R.744: The Supporting the Mental Health of Educators and Staff Act

**Sponsored by:** Senator Bob Casey (pending introduction), Representative Suzanne Bonamici

**Cosponsors (Senate):** Open to original cosponsors in the Senate.

**Cosponsors (House):** Representatives Brian Fitzpatrick, Susan Wild, Marcus Molinaro, Jill Tokuda, Don Bacon, David Trone, Thomas Kean, Robert Menendez, Lori Chavez-DeRemer, and Seth Magaziner.

**Overview:** The *Supporting the Mental Health of Educators and Staff Act* will increase access to critical resources and support by designing and scaling up evidence-based approaches to addressing the mental health needs of the educator workforce.

### Legislative Contacts:

- + **Senator Casey:** Julia Cinquegrani, Policy Advisor
- + **Representative Bonamici:** Allie Pearce, Legislative Assistant



# 3 | APPROPRIATIONS: BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE TEACHING WORKFORCE

The NPAB has engaged in policy conversations with staff at both the Congressional level and the Department of Education to identify funding priorities to help elevate the teaching profession across the country and improve student outcomes. Bolstering grant programs that support the recruitment and retention of dedicated professionals is necessary to achieve our goals of building a sustainable teaching workforce.

## RETENTION FUNDING

Teachers are the single most important school-based factor influencing student achievement, but high levels of teacher turnover negatively impact our nation's students, particularly those from low-income families and students of color. Studies show a positive link between professional leadership opportunities, job satisfaction, and retention of classroom teachers, and that compensation for teachers' added leadership responsibilities has the potential to increase teacher retention.

**To ensure we are keeping dedicated professionals in the classroom, we recommend:**

### The Teacher and School Leader Incentive Grant

**The Teacher and School Leader Incentive Grant** provides states and districts funding to support teacher recruitment and retention in high-need schools. This includes distributive leadership models where teachers lead alongside their principal to facilitate positive school-wide policy and practice change; teacher-led instructional improvement efforts; focus and training on specific areas of academic content; opportunities to shape school-wide policies and climate; participation in a master teacher program; and teacher mentorship programs.

- + **FY23 Funding:** \$173 million for Teacher and School Leader Incentive Grant
- + **Proposed FY24 Funding:** \$200 million for Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program

## Teacher Leadership Funding within the Education and Innovation Research (EIR) Program

**Teacher Leadership Funding within the Education and Innovation Research (EIR) Program** to support competitive grants for the creation, development, implementation, replication, and scaling up of evidence-based effective teacher leadership programs.

- + **FY23 Funding:** \$284 million for the Education and Innovation Research (EIR) Program
- + **Proposed FY24 Funding:** \$405 million for the Education and Innovation Research (EIR) Program

*"The significance of retaining teachers post-COVID cannot be minimized. Right now, students are experiencing learning losses and inherent deficits unlike any other time in our nation's recent educational history. Without trained, qualified, and well-vetted teachers in place who can provide direct, differentiated, and individualized instruction to service these students, student outcomes, and the resultant economy thereafter, will suffer mountainous losses."*

- Dillon Booker, Nevada



## The Native American Teacher Retention Initiative (NATRI)

**The Native American Teacher Retention Initiative (NATRI)** under the Office of Indian Education (OIE) addresses the shortage of Native American educators and expands their impact on Native American students' education. This initiative, included under the Demonstration Grants for Indian Children and Youth, supports teacher leadership models to increase the retention of effective, experienced Native American teachers and support student success.

- + **FY23 Funding:** \$2.75 million for the Native American Teacher Retention Initiative (NATRI) grants under OIE
- + **Proposed FY24 Funding:** \$5 million for the Native American Teacher Retention Initiative (NATRI) grants under OIE

## RECRUITMENT FUNDING

Making the teaching profession affordable is a necessary step in the aim to recruit teachers into the workforce. Supporting prospective teachers through grants, scholarships, and other financial aid supports are imperative to recruiting a strong and diverse teacher workforce. Additionally, teachers of color are more likely to enter the profession through nontraditional pathways, therefore, we must consider continued and robust investments into initiatives like Grow Your Own programs which recruit homegrown school staff and community members into the teacher workforce.

**To support pre-service teachers on their journey to the classroom, we recommend:**

### The Augustus Hawkins Centers of Excellence Program

**The Augustus Hawkins Centers of Excellence Program** to support comprehensive teacher preparation at programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and minority-serving institutions of higher education (MSIs).

- + **FY23 Funding:** \$15 million for the Augustus Hawkins Centers of Excellence
- + **Proposed FY24 Funding:** \$45 million for the Augustus Hawkins Centers of Excellence

### The Teacher Quality Partnership Grant Program (TQP)

**The Teacher Quality Partnership Grant Program** to support year-long, paid teacher and school leader residency programs and Grow Your Own (GYO) programs.

- + **FY23 Funding:** \$70 million for the Teacher Quality Partnership Program (TQP)
- + **Proposed FY24 Funding:** \$132 million for the Teacher Quality Partnership Program (TQP)

## Beyond Funding: Data Collection

Across the country, teacher shortages are plaguing schools and severely impacting student achievement. To address pressing challenges and measure progress in alleviating them, we need consistent nationwide data - yet there is not a permanent national mechanism to collect school level data on the demographics of our teaching workforce. At one time, the Office of Civil Rights' Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) collected some teacher diversity data. However, the small amount of information they did collect on teachers was dropped from the 2020-2021 data collection requirements.

While many Members of Congress have introduced bills to alleviate teacher shortages, elected officials must rely on demographic data from organizations, external entities, and states to try to determine whether these strategies are working, and where they are most needed. Without this essential data, policy makers and other stakeholders will find it hard to identify best practices or effectively aid school districts that are experiencing ongoing issues.

**The NPAB recommend that we work together with Congress to do the following:**

### **Codify the Collection of Essential Teacher and School Data**

**Codifying the collection of this essential data and allowing government entities to track and report the findings** will enable legislators to make better policy decisions as they relate to teacher shortages and diversity. The most feasible method is to leverage the Office of Civil Rights' biannual Civil Rights Data Collection (CDRC) survey. To tackle the persistent teacher shortage problem, we must have consistent, longitudinal data that remains available. The information collected will provide insight into the learning conditions of students and allow us to better serve children through the teaching workforce.



*"There are so many potential teachers who cannot afford to choose between an education and taking care of their basic human needs right now. They cannot afford to choose between being educators and more lucrative professions. These are not only recent high school graduates, but parents and workers who could and would enter the profession if we clear the way. "*

**-Jeane Lakin, Colorado**

## 4 | CONCLUSION

### CALL TO ACTION

With the drastic declines in enrollment in teacher preparation programs across the country, finding plausible and sustainable ways to retain professionals and recruit pre-service teachers has become a nation-wide challenge. Failure to strategically support and invest in the education workforce will only continue to widen student learning gaps for years to come. As teachers, our call to the profession is to ensure the academic and social success of our students. As members of the Teach Plus National Policy Advisory Board, we find ourselves in the perfect moment to collaborate with our colleagues and Congress to guarantee successful outcomes for all students in all communities.

**We call the 118th United States Congress to action by working in tandem with Teach Plus fellows to address the nation-wide teacher shortage. Together, we will form a comprehensive strategy that utilizes data, and effective methods for recruiting and retaining teachers, to invest in the profession. Teach Plus believes all three components (data, recruitment, and retention) must be addressed to create effective policy at the national level and will ensure a sustainable workforce of teachers across all states.**

The Teach Plus National Policy Advisory Board would also like to express its appreciation to the Appropriations Committee and their work to allocate funds to educational programs, to the congressional staff who have created spaces for our board members to speak about educational policy, and to the Members of Congress that boldly serve the nation's teachers, students, and school staff. The National Policy Advisory Board looks forward to strategic federal investments in our workforce through policy that will create effective educational experiences for all students and all teachers across the nation.

**In Community,**

**The National Policy Advisory Board**

Teach Plus | 2023-2024

# ABOUT TEACH PLUS

[teachplus.org](http://teachplus.org) | National Policy Advisory Board

Teach Plus is a **teacher leadership organization** that specializes in facilitating teachers and their voices into policy and advocacy. Teach Plus empowers excellent, experienced, and diverse teachers to take leadership over key policy and practice issues that affect their students' success.

Since 2009, Teach Plus has developed **thousands of teacher leaders across the country** to exercise their leadership in shaping education policy and improving teaching and learning, to create an education system driven by access and excellence for all.

# NOTES: