

Teacher Recruitment and Retention: Local Strategies, Global Inspiration

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Journal of Teacher Education
2022, Vol. 73(4) 333–337
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DOI: 10.1177/00224871221118155
journals.sagepub.com/home/jte



Although teacher workforce and labor market concerns have dominated the field of teacher education for decades in the United States (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Garcia et al., 2022), the teacher shortage crisis is a worldwide conundrum. “Even where general teacher supply and demand are in balance, many countries face shortages of specialist teachers and shortages in schools serving disadvantaged or isolated communities” (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2011, p. 10). Student achievement correlates to the economic and societal advancement of nations (Hanushek, 2013), and an effective teacher workforce is pivotal to student learning. Studies confirm that teacher quality is the central school-based predictor of student achievement (Lasley et al., 2006; Vagi et al., 2019) and that years of uninterrupted and efficacious teaching can counteract the learning deficits of students placed at risk (Chetty et al., 2011; Freedman & Appleman, 2009). Although the motivating factors for teachers choosing to enter or stay in a school have changed over the last few decades—usually around issues of turnover brought about by school conditions (Craig, 2020; Geiger & Pivovarov, 2018; Ingersoll et al., 2018), few opportunities for advancement (Guha et al., 2017), burnout (Saloviita & Pakarinen, 2021), lack of prestige (Matete, 2021, Lee et al., 2020), limited autonomy (Warner-Griffin et al., 2018), challenging student behavior in the classroom (Williams et al., 2020), and poor pay (Allegretto & Mishel, 2018)—the need for more teacher workforce proposals has not.

Despite the vast educational, cultural, and scale differences among our teacher preparation programs around the world, we find that our dilemmas in teacher recruitment and retention are fundamentally similar in nature. Schools worldwide have greater difficulty in recruiting novice teachers (Ingersoll et al., 2018; O’Doherty & Harford, 2018; Perryman & Calvert, 2020) and offering competitive packages to support and retain teachers beyond their initial years in the field. Modernizing the ways we offer meaningful professional incentives to nurture and retain beginning and effective teachers remains top of mind for international practitioners and researchers in the field of teacher education.

This editorial is divided into two parts. First, the editors of the *Journal of Teacher Education* propose that global challenges in teacher education require international collaboration. Although teacher labor issues are best addressed at the regional or local level, educationalists should commit to

identifying solutions (read as an orientation toward challenge, Hallman et al., 2022) that are born out of the international exchange of ideas. The suffusion of ideas from the global to the local, and from the local to the global, may bring to bear our best thinking to stem the teacher recruitment and retention crisis. Second, and to demonstrate this point, we highlight four regional examples that showcase teacher education practices specific to teacher recruitment and retention that can be reconsidered as long-standing strategies.

Permeation of the Global and Local

There has always been great pressure on the field of teacher education to escape our arcane, reactive, and short-sighted recruitment and retention practices and to be more innovative and evergreen in our approach. For all that is neoteric, additive, and evolving in teacher recruitment and retention (See et al., 2020), there is an equal if not greater amount that is still business as usual (Hill-Jackson, 2020). This assessment overshadows the time-honored and proven practices in teacher education taking place around the globe that may reshape how we think about teacher recruitment and retention efforts for the long term.

As the teacher shortage is a global problem, it requires proposals that are predicated upon international imagination and collaboration (Craig, 2017; Kelchtermans, 2017). A permeation of ideas, which transcend geography, is needed as we meet this moment in the global teacher recruitment and retention emergency. Defined as glocalization, this view recognizes the “interpenetration of the global and the local, resulting in unique outcomes in different geographic areas” (Ritzer, 2003, p. 193). Glocalization is an opportunity for practitioners and researchers to learn what works from our global peers—allowing novelty and best practices in addressing the teacher labor shortage to penetrate between, within, and throughout the field. In addition, this theory emphasizes the position that no place in the world, Western, Eastern, or

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other regions, is privileged in its ideas and that developments to buoy the teacher labor market can be found on every continent around the world. Broadening the scope of how we, as scholars of teaching and teachers of teachers, confront such stagnant challenges requires reflection and the bilateral transmission of strategies from the global and local.

Local Strategies, Global Inspiration

Perhaps driven by the fear of an unrelenting teacher shortage, current conceptions of teacher recruitment and retention call for more new and novel approaches that often become stop-gap, idiosyncratic, removed from best practices, and run the risk of not being sustainable over time. In reconceptualizing teacher recruitment and retention, we appeal to the global teacher education community to recast enduring, proven practices as possible long-term strategies. This is not to say that we should abandon short-term innovations in teacher recruitment and retention. Instead, the teacher education labor crisis demands that we commit to short-term and long-term recruitment and retention strategies in parallel. In the passages to follow, we share four local examples of existing teacher education practices that may inspire the international community in attracting and keeping teachers.

Online Professional Development (PD) Advances in Oceania

One approach to patching the broken teacher pipeline and retaining teachers for the long haul is for schools to provide high-quality PD opportunities (Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018). Teachers are pushing back on PD that is defined by formalized, school-driven, and sit-and-git approaches to teacher training (Noonan, 2019) and yearn for more personalized, on-demand opportunities for PD through online outlets (DeMonte, 2013; Yurkofsky et al., 2019). In Oceania, a remote region of Australia, Main and Slater (2021) found that PD offered to literacy preservice teachers through online learning platforms was just as effective as face-to-face in making teachers feel supported and improving academic outcomes for students as face-to-face. In addition to PD offerings through online modules, teachers were able to engage in relevant conversations with an on-demand online instructional coach, who served as a proxy when the instructional coach at their school was unavailable. Their model highlights the need for an interdisciplinary consortium of partners (teacher education programs, P–12 schools, community organizations) to employ a lifelong learning approach to PD. Similar approaches should attempt to engage teachers at every stage of their career (preservice and inservice from early career until retirement) with specifically tailored topics chosen by teachers. Teachers are yearning for transformative, continuous, and job-embedded PD experiences that give them voice and choice (OECD, 2019) while empowering them to learn on

their own terms—anytime and anywhere. To effectively forge a robust teacher workforce that can withstand deleterious factors that cause attrition (burnout, low pay, working conditions, etc.), teachers' PD experiences must be safeguarded and elevated as a factor that may suppress attrition. PD that is reimaged as online continuous professional learning may be a powerful long-term teacher retention strategy.

The Finland “Teacher Retention” Phenomenon

The education community stood in collective awe as numerous reports and studies applauded Finland's success with improving primary and secondary students' academic achievement by bolstering the effectiveness of their teachers and teacher education programs through advance training (Jenset et al., 2018). By extending the number of years teacher candidates were in a teacher education program at an accredited university and the number of classes teacher candidates were required to complete (Sahlberg, 2010), Finland educationalists were able to mandate that teacher candidates acquire a keen understanding of pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, scientific content, and research methodologies that undergird best teaching practices (Jakku-Sihvonen & Niemi, 2006; O'Doherty & Harford, 2018). These adjustments raised the prestige and starting salary of the teaching profession that helped to attract serious applicants to teacher education programs. Researchers have observed, perhaps as an unintended outcome, that retention of Finnish teachers is demonstrably higher to Western counterparts (Sutcher et al., 2018). Darling-Hammond and Rothman (2011) estimated that only 3% to 4% of Finnish teachers leave the profession each year, suggesting that Finland does not have the same teacher attrition issues as the rest of the world. Finland's teacher recruitment strategy appears circuitous but it is simple: identify those who are called to teaching and showing an interest in the profession versus those merely looking for a job (Yinon & Orland-Barak, 2017), educate and prepare teachers well (Niemi, 2017), in a network of university-prepared programs in which teaching and teachers are valued (Mansell, 2009), and will ensure a steady stream of highly effective educators who remain in the profession for longer time periods.

The Rise of Housing Incentives as Compensation for Teachers in the United States

Scholars have examined the link between duration in teaching longevity and pay and “these studies generally find that higher teacher pay reduces the probability that teachers leave the profession” (Hanushek et al., 2004, p. 327). Many policymakers, most notably in the United States, realize that teacher salaries may be too low to attract and retain enough talented and well-prepared people to the teaching profession—especially for underserved schools. As a consequence, a cacophony of

compensation schemes have emerged, including signing bonuses, forgiveness of student loans in exchange for a commitment to teach in hard-to-staff schools, stipends for board-certified teachers (Hirsch, 2005), and pay for performance merit increases (Hill & Jones, 2020). Because teacher pay has not kept pace with inflation (Amrein-Beardsley & Geiger, 2019) and is not comparable with other professions of equivalent education and training (Ingersoll et al., 2014; OECD, 2015), housing benefits have emerged as another common-sense approach to attract and keep teachers (Honawar, 2006). These housing benefits also include giving teachers living stipends or offering discounts on home rentals and purchases.

States such as New Jersey, California (de Wit, 2017), and North Carolina (Dare Foundation, n.d.) have built teacher villages, or complexes with below-market rental rates, as a way to offset low teacher salaries. Similarly, and taking advantage of the federal government's Good Neighbor Next Door[®] program, Texas school districts offer housing grants and down payments for homes (Housing and Urban Development, n.d.). For over a decade, the Housing Community Development Corporation of Hawaii has offered experimental housing rentals for teachers in remote communities (Lee, 2019), while the state of Hawaii is seeking land appropriations through legislative relief to build affordable housing in high-need communities for prospective teachers and public servants (Relating to Land Act, 2022). The research is scant on the evaluation for the effectiveness of housing incentives (Loewus, 2018), but early signs point to this promising approach to reimagine compensation for teachers.

Authentic School–University Partnerships That Honor Real-World Clinical Experiences in the Southern Region of Africa

In South Africa, the University of Cape Town (UCT) and Western Cape township of Khayelitsha established a school–university partnership in 2012 known as the School Improvement Initiative (SII) as a long-term investment toward teacher candidates and teachers (Silbert, 2019). Reciprocity and collaboration are fundamental elements to the SII partnership, in which the overarching goal is to strengthen the university and select schools' capacity to provide “real-world” experiences for teacher candidates and more comprehensive support to practicing teachers (Walsh & Backe, 2013). School leaders in the township acquire insight from the university on how to improve the effectiveness of PD opportunities for teachers and which pedagogical approaches best support students' learning outcomes. Furthermore, teachers in the district are able to benefit from tailored PD opportunities presented by university faculty while receiving mentoring and classroom-based support throughout the school year. For UCT, teacher candidates are offered the ability to have extended clinical experiences

beyond graduation, allowing for more time in the classroom in an effort to glean best practices from high-quality mentor teachers (Silbert et al., 2015). The collaborative nature of the partnership stems from an intentional commitment to examine social inequities and the willingness by schools and the university to address the historical and contemporary social, cultural, and economic factors in the community that affect students' learning outcomes. Teacher candidates who undergo robust clinical experiences, nurtured by authentic school–university partnerships that give them a clear outlook on the realities of teaching, tend to have a smoother transition into the classroom and remain in the profession longer (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Sutchter et al., 2016).

Closing

In the current international teacher labor crisis, there is no panacea for encouraging, developing, retaining, or attracting quality teachers to the profession. Although acknowledging most of what works in teacher recruitment and retention has place-based assumptions and realities, the field of teacher education can find sustainable approaches through the permeation of the global and local. The truth is recruitment and retention strategies such as on-demand PD for novice teachers in Australia, Finland's elevation of teaching and teachers, housing perks in the United States, and real-world clinical experiences mediated by robust school–university partnerships in South Africa are not new or novel. In deliberating the teacher workforce crisis, these international teacher education examples of (g)local acumen assist in drawing a not-so-straight line from current effective practices in teacher education to reimaging teacher recruitment and retention.

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