

# Securing Maine's K-12 Teacher Workforce; Ensuring a Healthy Maine Economy

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Strengthening the teacher workforce is essential for ensuring a high quality education for Maine students who will propel our future economy. Negative trends in teacher recruitment and retention could be improved with a statewide job board, service loan forgiveness and tax credits, and coordinating with Educators Rising programs.

## HOW DIRE IS THE TEACHER SHORTAGE CRISIS IN MAINE?

Maine schools have closed not just as a result of the coronavirus, but because there are not enough teachers to staff them.



**1 out of 3** teachers in the Maine workforce are of retirement age



There has been a **50% decline** in enrollment in teacher preparation programs in the last five years. The gap between retiring teachers and new ones who can take their place has worsened.

## WHAT SUPPORTS ARE IN PLACE TO BEGIN ADDRESSING THE SHORTAGE?

The Learning Policy Institute at Stanford University's blueprint for strengthening the teaching profession has already been adapted by a team of researchers, educators, and Maine Department of Education staffers for use in the state with different plans depending on certain contingencies. The policies fall under the following categories:



**Service scholarships and loan forgiveness**



**Competitive compensation**



**High-retention pathways into teaching**



**Developing high-quality school principals**



**Mentoring and induction for new teachers**



**Recruitment strategies to expand the pool of qualified educators**

## CAN WE IMPROVE HIRING FOR OUT-OF-STATE TEACHERS AND REDISTRIBUTION OF TEACHERS ALREADY LIVING IN-STATE?



Legislation to activate a coordinated statewide job board would streamline the certification and credentialing process for new teachers and teachers moving to and within Maine.

**\$10k**  
The average cost of recruiting a new teacher in Maine

Other states use coordinated job boards to actively recruit out-of-state candidates:



CALIFORNIA



MASSACHUSETTS



NORTH CAROLINA

## HOW CAN WE RETAIN HIGH QUALITY TEACHERS ALREADY WORKING IN MAINE?

Teacher preparation is expensive, and student loans are borne by the new educator.

**FAME** (The Finance Authority of Maine) helps coordinate these programs:

**PSLF**

Public Service  
Loan Forgiveness

**SLRP**

State Loan  
Repayment Programs

**The Alford Leaders Program**

provides student debt reduction for  
graduates employed in STEM

Legislators could act to expand these models to include teaching along with STEM fields, which would really help early-career teachers when combined with the **Opportunity Maine tax credit program**.

## WHAT COULD HELP MAINE STUDENTS SEE TEACHING AS A FINANCIALLY VIABLE AND REWARDING CAREER?

State legislators could support **Educators Rising** in Career and Technical Education centers to expand access and teacher recruitment.



**60%** of teachers teach within 20 miles of where they went to school.

**Educators Rising** recruits and prepares students to become teachers by providing nationally recognized microcredentials and curriculums for Career and Technical Education centers.



The University of Southern Maine has recognized the series of **five microcredentials** as equaling a three-credit college course towards a teaching degree.