

the **JOURNEY  
CONTINUES**

From Recruitment to Retention



**NATIONAL  
REPORTING SYSTEM**  
for Adult Education

U.S. Department of Education,  
Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education

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## Workbook Description and Training

This workbook has been designed to accompany the NRS 2023 regional training, *The Journey Continues: From Recruitment to Retention*. The training provides new strategies for analyzing and approaching challenges with learner and teacher retention. This accompanying workbook will help you and your state team accomplish the following:

- Understand and review data patterns of learner and teacher retention;
- Explore learner-centered strategies to support and improve learner persistence; and
- Draft a state-specific teacher retention plan to articulate strategies to support teacher retention.

## The Three Ps

As you progress through the workbook, keep in mind the three *Ps* and how they may inform, impact, or be influenced by learner and teacher retention.

- **Programs:** Local providers, program structures and content, and desired program outcomes
  - For example: building capacity to enhance understanding and effectiveness through improving services and instruction
- **People:** Learners/students, partners, and others who are directly affected
  - For example: professional development to state and local staff for capacity building of state teams and local providers
- **Policy:** Mandates, legislation, partner agreements, and other factors that influence the governance of adult education
  - For example: informing policy that governs or impacts adult education

## Part I: Why Student Retention Matters and What the Data Tell Us

In this section, you will learn about common data that can be used to inform and connect enrollment and retention.

### A Data Bridge: Common Data Points for Consideration

In your assigned teams, do the following:

- Select a reporter.
- Using the template titled “A Data Bridge: Common Data Points for Consideration,” complete your assigned rows as follows:
  - **Column 3.** What questions would you ask, or what considerations would you review, to better understand student retention at the state (or local) level?
  - **Column 2.** What data sources could you use to inform retention considerations (column 3) and enrollment considerations (column 1)?
- Capture your responses on a flip chart.

### A Data Bridge: Common Data Points for Consideration Template

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
Enrollment Considerations	Overlapping Data Points for Consideration (i.e., a Data Bridge)	Retention Considerations
<b>Category: Student/Learner Participation</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is participating?</li> <li>• What is changing?</li> <li>• How has this changed over time?</li> <li>• What is the impact for state and programs?</li> </ul>	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <p>NRS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tables 1–4</li> <li>• Break down demographics and by provider</li> </ul> <p>State:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">–</p> <p>Other:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">–</p>	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is staying? How long are they staying?</li> <li>• How has this changed over time?</li> <li>• What is the impact for state- and local-level partners and policy?</li> </ul>
<b>Category: Instruction and Support Services</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What types of instruction and enrollment support services are programs providing?</li> <li>• Do the instruction and support services you provide match student needs?</li> <li>• What implication does this have for recruiting and instruction?</li> </ul>	<p>NRS:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">–</p> <p>State:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">–</p> <p>Other:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">–</p>	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we know if the instruction and support services we provide to students are an effective match?</li> </ul>

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
Enrollment Considerations	Overlapping Data Points for Consideration (i.e., a Data Bridge)	Retention Considerations
<b>Category: Student Perceptions and Understanding</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do potential students learn about the program?</li> <li>How do student perceptions, expectations, and needs match what you offer?</li> <li>How do programs recruit teachers, and how effective are those programs?</li> </ul>	NRS: —  State: —  Other: —	<i>Example:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do students provide feedback during the program/during participation?</li> <li>How does the student's experiences match teacher expectations and student needs?</li> </ul>
<b>Category: Partnerships</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What partnerships could support instruction and service needs of students?</li> </ul>	NRS: —  State: —  Other: —	<i>Example:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How are the services of current partners supporting student retention?</li> </ul>
<b>Category: Other</b>		
	NRS: —  State: —  Other: —	

### A Data Bridge Share-Out

#### Notes:

## Part II: Student Retention Challenges and Strategies

In this section, you will reflect on student retention challenges and explore different strategies to help overcome these challenges.



### Questions to Consider




Think about the student retention challenges your state listed in the pre-session. Now consider the following questions:

- What themes or patterns have you noticed regarding challenges across states?
- Have any new challenges emerged that you had not considered?

### Student Retention Strategies

The table below lists several learner retention strategies that your state may consider implementing to improve learner outcomes. For more retention strategies, review [Appendix A](#) (pp 21–25).

 Goal Setting	<b>Set Goals With Adult Education Students</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Identify goals</b> meaningful to the learner. Keep goals conservative or break down long-term goals into smaller, more realistically achievable goals.</li><li>• <b>Identify benefits</b> of and barriers to reaching learners' goals by developing a goal-setting questionnaire that includes questions about positive and negative forces that might influence goal pursuit and action steps for goal achievement.</li><li>• <b>Write positive goal statements</b> to make goals more tangible.</li><li>• <b>Create a goal plan</b> that includes steps and deadlines for achieving each goal.</li><li>• <b>Monitor progress and revise goals</b> as necessary.</li><li>• <b>Use career navigators</b> to help students set goals.</li></ul>
 Student Buy-In	<b>Get Student Buy-In</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Support learner persistence</b> through cost-effective ways to learn more about the personal interests of students.</li><li>• <b>Model success</b> by introducing new students to adults with similar backgrounds who already have been successful at learning.</li><li>• Assist students in understanding the <b>costs and benefits of program participation</b> by illustrating the positive correlation between employment and educational attainment.</li><li>• Strive to have a <b>diverse teaching staff</b> so that learners see themselves and their values reflected in their teachers.</li></ul>

 <p>Other Data</p>	<p><b>Leverage Other Data Sources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mine data to re-engage students.</b> Look through student record databases to identify former students and reach out to them through direct communication.</li> <li>• <b>Create learner focus groups</b> to provide a forum for raising issues and concerns and to give practitioners valuable feedback for assisting learners. Learner focus groups can evolve into learner support groups.</li> </ul>
 <p>Flexibility</p>	<p><b>Offer Flexibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Build learner autonomy</b> by offering choice in the classroom, which may include letting learners choose whether they want to work on an assignment individually or in small groups, choose the order of activities during a class session, or choose their next assignment.</li> <li>• <b>Offer flexible course schedules</b> to meet the needs of working learners.</li> <li>• <b>Use distance and blended learning</b> to offer students flexibility of location.</li> <li>• <b>Offer wraparound services</b> to understand and address students' individualized needs.</li> </ul>
 <p>Technical Instruction</p>	<p><b>Offer Technical Instruction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Integrate technical instruction</b> into adult education programs to help create career pathways for learners and aid them in navigating transitions into the educational pipeline.</li> </ul>

## Strategy Round-Robin Roundtables



### Instructions

**Round One:** Find your preselected roundtable group to discuss the student retention strategies that were presented by the NRS Support staff (roundtable assignments are provided during the session). Use flip charts as needed to capture key thoughts. Each roundtable will designate a reporter for the share-out after the rounds.

**Round Two (Time Permitting):** Move to your next table as assigned. Use flip charts as needed to capture key thoughts. Designate a reporter for the share-out after this round.

### Guiding Questions

- What is one strategy mentioned that you have not tried, and what would it look like if the strategy were implemented in your state?

- Which of these strategies has your state tried, and what have been some of the lessons learned?
- How can or how does your state support these strategies?
- What additional strategies have worked in your state?

### ***Roundtable Share-Out***

Each roundtable reporter shares highlights from the roundtable discussion.

- What is a key takeaway from or reflection about the different strategies you heard?

### **Notes:**

### **State-Level Considerations to Support Student Retention**

While many of these strategies focus on local providers, the following are ways states can support local providers in implementing these strategies.

- **Program design guidance** that includes researched and promising practice strategies. For example:
  - Student engagement component in RFPs.
  - Staffing e.g., career navigators, academic supports.
- **State-level partnerships** that support these strategies. For example:
  - Implementation of technical skills in curriculum and courses.
  - Support services (childcare, transportation)
- **Provider networking opportunities** to share practices and lessons learned.
- **State-driven recognition or incentivization** to local providers
- **Use data to provide guidance** on follow-up outreach for separated and reportable participants
- **Provide professional development opportunities** for teachers on how to work with students on identifying and constructing goals meaningful to students.



## Activity: What Impact Does Retention Have in My State?

### Part 1

In your state team, do the following:

- Select two retention challenges from your pre-session work.

- Identify one strategy for each challenge.

- Broadly identify the stakeholders and individuals needed to make each strategy operational.

- Articulate at least two data-driven metrics of success for each strategy.

### Part 2

In your state team pairs, do the following:

- One state shares their responses with their partner state.
- The partner state asks any clarifying questions and then provides feedback that includes, but is not limited to, additional considerations and expectations and metrics for success.
- The teams switch places.
- Select one or more reporters who represent both teams to share out to the group.

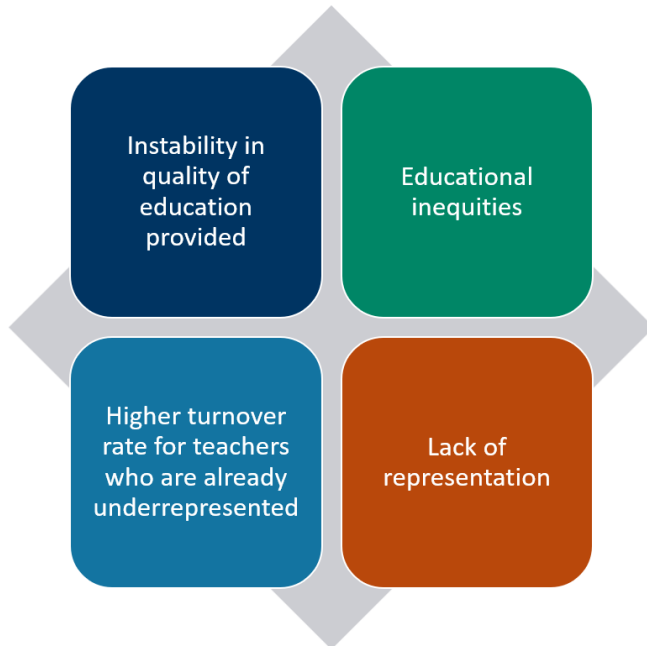
### Activity Share-Out

Notes:

## Part III: Strategies for Teacher Retention

In this section, you will reflect on the cost of teacher attrition and explore what data can be used to understand trends in teacher turnover.

### The Cost of Teacher Attrition on Students



Sources: Bristol, 2019; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017, 2019; Monk, 2007; Ronfeldt et al., 2013.

### Adding Up the Cost of Attrition

Use the attrition calculator (<https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/teacher-turnover-report>) to estimate the cost of teacher turnover. Start by answering the following questions:

- How many teachers left last year? Note: this uses district; consider the equivalent for your state and adult education.
- How would you describe your state and regions within your state (urban, suburban, or rural)?

The screenshot shows a web-based calculator interface. On the left, there are two main sections: '1. How many teachers left your school or district?' and '2. What's the cost of replacing a teacher?'. Section 1 includes a button 'Enter a Number' (highlighted in blue) and 'Let Us Help You'. Below is a slider for the number of teachers, with a value of 55 entered. Section 2 includes a slider for the cost of replacing a teacher, with a value of \$21,000 entered. Below the sliders are radio buttons for 'Rural District', 'Suburban District', and 'Urban District'. On the right side of the interface, the 'Estimated Cost of Turnover \*' is displayed as '\$1,155,000' in large orange text. Below this, it states 'Cutting turnover in half would save \$577,500' in large blue text. A red asterisk note explains that teacher turnover is costly and affects student achievement. At the bottom right, there is the Learning Policy Institute logo and a blue arrow pointing to 'See the full interactive'.

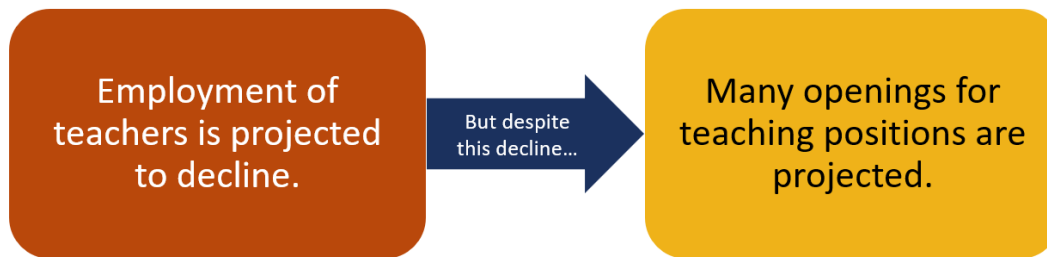
Source: Learning Policy Institute, 2017.

## Understanding National Trends in Teacher Retention

Turnover is more frequent among part-time than full-time teachers.

Full-time teachers tend to have more experience than part-time teachers.

Younger teachers and those early in their careers are the most likely to leave.



Sources: Loewus, 2021; National Reporting System, n.d.; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022; Young et al., 1995.

### *Examples of Data That States Can Use to Understand Teacher Retention Trends*

- Program and participant demographic characteristics
- In-service policies
- Program climate
- Administrative supports
- Compensation policies

### **Discussion: What Data Points Can States Use?**

Use the template below to do the following:

- Share what data sources (at the local, state, and/or federal levels) capture those characteristics (pre-session work).
- Answer the following question: What impact might the characteristics shown in column 1 have on teacher retention and student performance in your state?
- Discuss:
  - Identify any key themes.
  - Highlight any outliers.

**Who Teaches Adult Education?**

Area of consideration or characteristics of the teacher	What data source at the local, state, or federal levels could provide this information?	What impact might these characteristics have for you and your state on teacher retention? On student performance?
<b>Demographics (age, gender, ethnicity/race)</b>		
<b>Degree achieved</b>		
<b>Certification</b>		
<b>Years of adult education experience</b>		
<b>Industry</b>		
<b>Compensation</b>		
<b>Professional development</b>		

**Activity Share-Out**

**Notes:**

## Part IV: Strategies for Teacher Retention




This section explores teacher retention strategies that may help your state retain current teachers you have.




### Questions to Consider

- How can my state or providers support teachers?
- How can my state support local programs in keeping these teachers in the profession?
- How can my state help local programs attract promising new teachers?
- How can my state ensure teachers are receiving the professional development they need?

### Teacher Retention Strategies

The table below shows several teacher retention strategies that you and your state may consider for improving learner outcomes. For more teacher retention strategies, check out [Appendix B](#) (pp. 26–27).

 <p>Monitor</p>	<p><b>Monitor Teacher Retention and Attrition</b></p> <p>To identify the factors that contribute to teacher attrition programs, states should monitor trends in teacher retention at various levels by using the types of data outlined below.</p> <p><b>People Level</b></p> <p>Pre-service experience, qualifications, experience level, performing ratings, and psychological factors</p> <p><b>Program Level</b></p> <p>Program-level demographics, program climate, performance levels, administrative support</p> <p><b>State/Policy Level</b></p> <p>Demographic characteristics, compensation policies, in-service polices</p>
 <p>Induction</p>	<p><b>Support Induction and Mentoring</b></p> <p>One way to provide systemic and ongoing support to adult educators is through a program-based professional development method known as <i>induction</i>. Induction and mentoring can help new adult educators learn the teaching craft, become better instructors, and serve their students more effectively. Set criteria for mentor selection and assignment include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interpersonal skills</li><li>• Instructional effectiveness</li><li>• Leadership</li><li>• Work experience</li><li>• Content-area and grade-level expertise similar to that of the mentee’s assignment</li></ul>
 <p>Flexibility</p>	<p><b>Provide Flexibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduce the time needed for coursework.</li><li>• Incorporate planning and professional development into teachers’ contractual time.</li><li>• Implement 4-day work weeks, if relevant.</li></ul>

 <b>Administrative</b>	<p><b>Provide Administrative Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide more autonomy, encouragement, and acknowledgment.</li> <li>• Provide ongoing feedback and targeted professional development.</li> <li>• Use feedback for accountability and development.</li> </ul>
 <b>Teacher Engagement</b>	<p><b>Promote Teacher Engagement</b></p> <p>Teachers are perhaps best positioned to offer guidance on the types of policy solutions most likely to reduce teacher shortages and the best ways to implement these policies.</p> <p>Teacher engagement should be structured, constructive, and solution oriented.</p>
 <b>Professional Development</b>	<p><b>Support Personalized Professional Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide career and personal growth goal setting development and guidance based on individualized areas of need.</li> <li>• Provide leadership development and growth opportunities through internal and external opportunities.</li> </ul>

### Activity: What Teacher Retention Strategy Aligns With Teacher Engagement?

In your state teams, discuss the following:

- Who do you think needs mentoring?
  - New teachers
  - Teachers without certifications
  - Young teachers
  - Other

What data do you have to identify those who need to be mentored? Who is already being mentored in your state?

#### Activity Share-Out

**Notes:**

## Part V: Teacher Retention Plan

Now that we have discussed teacher retention strategies, it's time to explore ways to implement those strategies.

### Identify Realistic Program Goals

The SMART approach helps you set manageable and measurable goals.

- **Specific:** Be Clear and specific so your goals are easier to achieve.
- **Measurable:** Goals should be measurable so that you can track your performance.
- **Attainable:** Choose realistically attainable goals that consider available resources and stakeholders.
- **Relevant:** Goals should be relevant to the program and instructors/teachers.
- **Time-bound:** Choose target dates to help track progress.



### Develop a Plan

A strategic teacher retention plan is a comprehensive, forward-thinking, and holistic process that outlines the recruitment and retention of teachers. The plan must be:

- **Proactive:** Consider emerging trends in adult education, including the ebbs and flows of federal initiatives, geographic changes, and available resources.
- **Detailed:** Include a detailed approach to increase qualified prospects and specific strategies for retaining high-quality instructors.
- **Data-driven:** Use data to inform decision making, target resources, structure incentives, and provide supports.
- **Targeted:** Establish state program goals that address the needs of all program stakeholders, including teachers, students, and the community.

### State Planning Time: Teacher Retention Plan, Part One

**Note:** Templates for Sections II, III, and IV are provided in [Appendix D](#) (pp. 36–42).

In your state team, do the following:

- Review the teacher retention challenges you identified during the pre-session and consider the teacher retention strategies that were presented. **Use this information to inform and complete Sections I and II.**
- Consider **at least two strategies** that would help your state accomplish its primary teacher retention goal.
- **Complete Section III** of the plan.

- Time permitting, brainstorm Section IV.
- Be prepared to share with another state.

## State-to-State Feedback: Teacher Retention Plan, Part Two

### With your partner state:

- Provide a brief summary of your teacher retention challenges.
- Describe your primary goal, two teacher retention strategies related to this goal, and the rationale for each.
- Identify at least one area of the plan in which you would like feedback from your partner state.

### As you listen:

- Gain an understanding of the context of your partner state.
- Provide constructive ideas in the area identified.

### Notes:

## Action Steps

The final step in teacher retention planning is to put the plan into action. This includes:

- Developing the implementation steps
- Delegating responsibilities
- Creating deliverables and timelines
- Identify needed support

This Action Plan section will not be drafted in detail during the live training but should be part of a comprehensive teacher retention plan.

## State Planning Time: Teacher Retention Plan, Part Three

In your state team:

- Revise Sections II and III based on feedback from your partner state ([Appendix D](#), pp. 37–39).
- Complete one row—that is, one key action step—in [Section IV](#) ([Appendix D](#), pp. 39).
- Training facilitators will guide training participants on which sections to complete for the gallery wall.
- Post on the gallery wall.



## Gallery Walk and Report-Out

In your state report-out, share:

- The primary goal of your teacher retention plan
- The challenges you want the plan to address
- One strategy and one key action step related to this strategy
- Data sources or data considerations to help you measure success

## Part VI: State Role to Support Local Providers in Student and Teacher Retention

In this section, you will discuss ways to support providers with student and teacher retention.

### Large-Group Discussion: State Role to Support Providers

Reflecting on Days 1 and 2, discuss the following:

- What are potential or existing ways that states can support local providers in these areas related to teacher retention?
  - Use of data to inform retention strategy and progress monitoring
  - Professional development

#### Notes:

## Part VII: Highlights From the Strategy and Implementation Readiness Checklist (SIRC): Teacher Retention

### Activity: Discussion Tables

As a state team, decide who will participate in one of the following discussion tables:

- Using data to inform retention strategy and progress monitoring
- Professional development to support teacher retention

### Topic: Using Data to Inform Retention Strategy and Progress Monitoring

At your table, discuss and capture on a flip chart how you identify factors related to teacher or student retention. Reflect on the following questions:

- How does the state currently disaggregate data at the individual program and teacher levels to identify factors related to teacher or student retention? What system or process is used to do this?
- What methods does the state use to collect qualitative data that may help inform teacher or student retention?
- Do local providers use data to inform teacher retention and related strategies? If so, what kinds of data do they use? If not, how could the state assist providers in doing so?

### Topic: Professional Development to Support Teacher Retention

At your table, discuss and capture on a flip chart how you identify factors related to teacher or student retention. Reflect on the following questions:

- Are local programs aware of factors that lead to teacher attrition?
- Do you engage your local providers in identifying their professional development needs related to teacher retention? If so, how? What data do you use—or could use—to inform identification of these needs?
- Have you identified a process to help identify whether local programs are offering professional development content to address teacher retention? If so, describe.

### Share-Out and Key Takeaways

- Each table reporter shares highlights from the table.
- What is a key takeaway from, or reflection on, the different strategies you discussed?

**Notes:**

## Part VIII: Next Steps and Considerations

### Questions to Consider

- What is one thing (new or revised) that you in your role, will do differently regarding **student retention** in the next 3 to 6 months?

- What is one thing (new or revised) that you in your role will do differently regarding **teacher retention** in the next 3 to 6 months?

- As a result of these changes, what is **one inspiring story the data will tell about adult education student retention or teacher retention** within your state in 2 years?

## Resources

- Bristol, T. J., & Martin-Fernandez, J. (2019). The added value of Latinx and Black teachers for Latinx and Black students: Implications for policy. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 6(2), 147–153. <https://doi-org.air.idm.oclc.org/10.1177/2372732219862573>
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- Carver-Thomas, D., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2019). The trouble with teacher turnover: How teacher attrition affects students and schools. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 27(34–39), 1–32. <https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.27.3699>
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- Monk, D. H. (2007). Recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers in rural areas. *Future of Children*, 17(1), 155–174. <https://doi.org/10.1353/foc.2007.0009>
- National Reporting System. (n.d.a). Table 7: Adult education personnel by function and job status (program year: 2018–2019 [aggregate table]). <https://nrs.ed.gov/rt/reports/aggregate/2018/all/table-7>
- National Reporting System. (n.d.b). Table 7: Adult education personnel by function and job status (program year: 2019–2020 [aggregate table]). <https://nrs.ed.gov/rt/reports/aggregate/2019/all/table-7>
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- Young, M. B., Fleischman, H., Fitzgerald, N., & Morgan, M. A. (1995). *National evaluation of adult education programs* [Executive summary]. Development Associates, Inc.

## Appendix A: Identified Learner Retention Strategies

The following learner retention strategies have been collected from different resources on learner retention. As with any potential strategies, these strategies may need to be adapted to fit your state program and services.

### Set Goals With Adult Education Students

- Identify goals that are meaningful to the learner. Keep the goals small or break down long-term goals into smaller, more realistically achievable goals.
- Organize and prioritize the goals.
- Identify the benefits of and barriers to reaching the goals.
- Write positive goal statements to make the goals more tangible.
- Create a goal plan that includes steps and deadlines toward achieving each goal. Monitor progress and revise goals as necessary.

Sources: Comings, 2007; Comings et al., 1999; Kerka, 2005; National Research Council, 2012.

Consider other goal-setting strategies, such as:

- Develop a goal-setting questionnaire that includes items about positive and negative forces that might influence goal pursuit and action steps for goal achievement (Meder, 2000).
- Incorporate strategies into instruction to address negative forces (such as math anxiety) that students identified as potential hindrances (Meder, 2000).
- Use career navigators to help students identify goals (Bruch et al., 2023).

#### Resources

- Bruch, J., Borradaile, K., Raketic, M., & Lucchesi, G. (2023). *Career navigators in adult education: What experts say about their role and how to support their success*. Princeton, NJ: Mathematica. [Career Navigators in Adult Education \(mathematica.org\)](https://mathematica.org)
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- Comings, J., Parrella, A., & Soricone, L. (1999). *Persistence among adult basic education students in pre-GED classes* (NCSALL Report #12). Harvard Graduate School of Education.
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- Meder, P. (2000). The effect of continuous goal setting on persistence in math classrooms. *Focus on Basics*, 4(A), 7–10.
- National Research Council. (2012). *Improving adult literacy instruction: Supporting learning and motivation*. National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/13469>

## Get Student Buy-In

### *Engage Topics of Interest*

- Support learner persistence through cost-effective ways to learn more about the personal interests of students. For example, ask learners to write on a sheet of paper (to be shared with the instructor only) five topics they find personally interesting and five they view as boring. Instructors can use this information to select texts, tasks, and assignments that will be meaningful and engaging to learners (National Research Council, 2012).

### *Model Successful Students*

- Programs should introduce new students to adults like them who already have been successful at learning (Comings, 2007).

### *Cost-Benefit Analysis*

- Assist students in understanding the cost benefit of program participation and persistence. For example, share with learners data that illustrate the positive correlation between employment and educational attainment (Institute of Education Sciences, 2020).

### *Teacher Diversity*

- Strive to have a diverse teaching staff so that learners see themselves and their values reflected in their teachers (Carver-Thomas, 2018; Dortch & Sainato, 2022).

#### Resources

- Carver-Thomas, D. (2018). *Diversifying the teaching profession: How to recruit and retain teachers of color*. Learning Policy Institute. [https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Diversifying\\_Teaching\\_Profession\\_REPORT\\_0.pdf](https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Diversifying_Teaching_Profession_REPORT_0.pdf)
- Comings, J. (2007). Persistence: Helping adult education students reach their goals. *Review of Adult Learning and Literacy*, 7(2), 23–46. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241474711\\_Persistence\\_Helping\\_Adult\\_Education\\_Students\\_Reach\\_Their\\_Goals](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241474711_Persistence_Helping_Adult_Education_Students_Reach_Their_Goals)
- Dortch, D., & Sainato, T. (2022). *The value of teacher diversity: New ways to representation*. Steps: Student Training & Education in Public Service. <https://www.publicservicedegrees.org/college-resources/increasing-teacher-diversity/>
- Institute of Education Sciences & Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast. (2020). Retention strategies for adult educators [PowerPoint slides]. [https://www.floridaipdae.org/dfiles/resources/workshops/ABE/2020\\_REL\\_Retention\\_Strategies\\_AE/REL\\_Retention\\_Strategies\\_AE\\_2020\\_Presentation\\_Part1.pdf](https://www.floridaipdae.org/dfiles/resources/workshops/ABE/2020_REL_Retention_Strategies_AE/REL_Retention_Strategies_AE_2020_Presentation_Part1.pdf)
- National Research Council. (2012). *Improving adult literacy instruction: Supporting learning and motivation*. National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/13469>

## Leverage Other Data Sources

### *Keep the Doors Open*

- Mine data to re-engage students. Look through student record databases to identify former students and reach out to them through direct communication (Kerka, 2005; Lane et al., 2012).

### *Learner Focus Groups*

- Create learner focus groups that offer a forum for raising issues and concerns, give practitioners valuable feedback for assisting learners, and can evolve into learner support groups (Goforth & Jonik, 2001).

#### Resources

- Goforth, D., & Jonik, M. (2001). *What works: Recruitment and retention of Ontario Works clients—Phase 2*. Workplace and Employment Preparation Branch, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada.
- Kerka, S. (2005). *Learner persistence in adult basic education*. California Adult Literacy Project. <https://www.calpro-online.org/pubs/100719LearnerPersistenceNewsletterPress.pdf>
- Lane, P., Michelau, D. K., & Palmer, I. (2012). *Going the distance in adult education college completion: Lessons from the Non-traditional No More project*. Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. <https://www.wiche.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/resources/ntnmStateCaseStudies.pdf>



## Offer Flexibility

### **Build Learner Autonomy**

- Build learner autonomy by offering choice in the classroom. For example, instructors can encourage learners to choose whether they want to work on an assignment individually or in small groups, choose the order of activities during a class session, or choose their next assignment (National Research Council, 2012).

### **Distance Learning and Online Options**

- Offer flexible course schedules and online options to meet the needs of working learners (Lane et al., 2012; Macdonald & Jiang, 2021).
- Distance- and blended-learning offer students flexibility of schedule and location that has been found to greatly benefit students (Burik et al., 2021)

### **Wraparound Services**

- Offer wraparound services to understand and address students' individualized needs (The Hunt Institute, 2022).

#### **Resources**

- Burik, A., Fedele-McLeod, M., Ganguli, D., Griffin, M. D., Iserman, H., Jordan, N., Kriebel, S., Lorenzo, Y., McMahon, C., Neginskiy, K. C., Pearson, P., Petersen, T., Reyes, K., Rublaitu, T. N., Swain, S., Young, L., & Zachry, C. (2021). *Increasing engagement and student persistence through distance- and blended-learning models: What the research says and which practices work*. California Adult Literacy Project. <https://calpro-online.org/documents/CALPRO-Research-Brief-15-508.pdf>
- The Hunt Institute. (2022). *Attainment for all: Postsecondary pathways: Centering equity in wraparound services*. Cary, NC: Author. <https://hunt-institute.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/final-A4A-brief-april-22.pdf>
- Lane, P., Michelau, D. K., & Palmer, I. (2012). *Going the distance in adult education college completion: Lessons from the Non-traditional No More project*. Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. <https://www.wiche.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/resources/ntnmStateCaseStudies.pdf>
- Macdonald, K., & Jiang, J. (2021). *Supporting adult students by providing flexibility and resources*. The EvoLLLution. <https://evollution.com/attracting-students/accessibility/supporting-adult-students-by-providing-flexibility-and-resources/>
- National Research Council. (2012). *Improving adult literacy instruction: Supporting learning and motivation*. National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/13469>

## Incorporate Technical Instruction

- Integrating technical instruction into adult education programs can help create career pathways for learners and aid them in navigating transitions into the educational pipeline (Institute of Education Sciences, 2021; Modicamore et al., 2017).

### **Integrating Technical Skills in Practice: Washington State’s ACE Program**

The Accelerating Connections to Employment (ACE) initiative was fashioned in part after Washington state’s nationally recognized Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) strategy, which combines basic skills and technical college faculty to offer occupational instruction to students with basic skills needs. The consortium, which emerged through partnerships with the Annie E. Casey Foundation, developed the ACE model to include interventions that enhance the ways in which Workforce Investment Boards and community colleges help low-skilled workers obtain training and employment supports. The model comprises several evidence-informed components, such as dual instruction and contextualized learning (Institute of Education Sciences, 2021; Modicamore et al., 2017)

### **Resources**

- Institute of Education Sciences. (2021). *Adult education strategies: Identifying and building evidence of effectiveness*. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=NCEE2021007>
- Modicamore, D., Lamb, Y., Taylor, J., Takyi-Laryea, A., Karageorge, K., & Ferroggiaro, E. (2017). *Accelerating connections to employment: Volume I: Final evaluation report*. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED618503.pdf>

## Appendix B: Identified Teacher Retention Strategies

### Monitor Teacher Retention and Attrition

#### *Identify Factors Contributing to Teacher Attrition*

- Programs can use the types of data and information to monitor changes in teacher retention over time and to update stakeholders periodically on trends at the program and state levels (Finster, 2015b).

#### *Implement Targeted Responses to Teacher Attrition*

- After identifying factors that contribute to attrition, programs must determine how to overcome the challenges and address the trends (Finster, 2015a).

#### Resources

- Finster, M. (2015, September 30). Diagnosing causes of teacher retention, mobility and turnover and matching to interventions: Guidelines for TIF grantees. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED577277.pdf>
- Finster, M. (2015, January). Identifying, monitoring, and benchmarking teacher retention and turnover: Guidelines for TIF grantees. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED577276.pdf>

### Induction and Mentoring

#### *Use Teacher Induction and Mentoring to Address Early Attrition*

- Comprehensive induction programs not only can improve teacher retention but also can “accelerate the professional growth of new teachers, provide a positive return on investment, and improve student learning (American Institutes for Research, 2015).

#### *Increase Teacher Retention and Improve Student Achievement*

- Receiving high-quality induction and mentoring has been associated with first-year teachers showing student performance gains equivalent to those of fourth-year teachers who did not have this support (Potemski, 2014).

#### Resources

- American Institutes for Research. (2015). *Promoting teacher effectiveness: Teacher induction and mentoring brief*. <https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/te/mentoring.pdf>
- Potemski, A., & Matlach, L. (2014). *Supporting new teachers: What do we know about effective state induction policies*. Policy snapshot. American Institutes for Research. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED558029.pdf>

## Teacher Engagement

### ***Give Teachers a Seat at the Decision-Making Table***

- Teachers are perhaps best positioned to offer guidance on the types of policy solutions most likely to reduce teacher shortages and the best ways to implement these policies (Sherratt, 2016).
- Build teacher self-efficacy and autonomy, give teachers a voice, recognize their contributions, and support their professional development (Grantmakers for Education, 2014).

#### **Resources**

- Grantmakers for Education. (n.d.). *A toolkit for teacher engagement*. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED558186.pdf>
- Sherratt, E. (2016). *Creating coherence in the teacher shortage debate: What policy leaders should know and do*. American Institutes for Research. <https://www.air.org/resource/brief/creating-coherence-teacher-shortage-debate-what-policymakers-should-know-and-do>

## Flexibility

### ***Support Work-Life Balance***

- Create a culture that understands, promotes, and has established norms that support work-life balance (Lester, 2015).
- Implement a 4-day work week (Anderson, 2015).

### ***Pay Teachers for Planning***

- Incorporate planning and professional development into teachers' contractual time (Thompson, 2021).

#### **Resources**

- Anderson, M., & Walker, M. B. (2015). Does shortening the program week impact student performance? Evidence from the Four-Day Program Week. *Education Finance and Policy*, 314–349.
- Lester, J. (2015). Cultures of work–life balance in higher education: A case of fragmentation. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 8(3), 139–156. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039377>
- Thompson, P. N., Gunter, K., Schuna, J. M., & Tomayko, E. J. (2021). Are all four-day school weeks created equal? A national assessment of four-day school week policy adoption and implementation. *Education Finance and Policy*, 558–583.

## Administrative Support

### ***Provide More Autonomy, Encouragement, and Acknowledgment***

- Decreased autonomy occurred when teachers believed that their professional opinion was not of value to their colleagues (Skaalvik, 2015).

## ***Use Feedback to Retain Teachers***

- Providing teachers with ongoing feedback and targeted professional development after evaluations can be an effective strategy to retain teachers (Workman, 2016).

### **Resources**

- Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2015). Job satisfaction, stress, and coping strategies in the teaching profession—What do teachers say? *International Education Studies*, 8(3), 181–192.  
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1060892.pdf>
- Workman, E., & Wixom, M. A. (2016, May). *Mitigating teacher shortages: Evaluation and feedback*. Education Commission of the States. <https://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/Mitigating-Teacher-Shortages-Evaluation-and-Feedback.pdf>

## Appendix C: Teacher Retention Plan Template

Use the template below to develop a teacher retention plan. The plan should be proactive, detailed, data-driven, and targeted.

# NRS Regional Training 2023 Teacher Retention Plan Template

## Section I: Challenge, Goals, Rationale, and Strategies

**Challenge or Topic: What teacher retention challenge or topic does this plan address?**

**Goal: What will it take to change or improve the teacher retention challenge or topic?**

**Rationale: What are the drivers and needs for this goal?**

**Strategies: What approaches will be used to accomplish the goal?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Section II: Strategy Development, Data Needs, and Stakeholder and Partner Considerations

Strategy #____:	<i>Insert a strategy from Section 1</i>	
What specific data do you need to inform and measure the success of this strategy? *(See Data Considerations for Teacher Retention Plan for broad-level data at the end of this appendix.)	How will the data inform this strategy?	What, if any, are the limitations of this data source?
<b>What are milestones or benchmarks of success for this strategy?</b>		
<b>What stakeholders will be affected by this strategy and in what ways?</b>		
<b>What partners are required to implement this strategy, and what are their roles?</b>		
<b>What are potential challenges to this strategy and solutions to address them?</b>		



Strategy # ____:	<i>Insert a strategy from Section 1</i>	
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<b>What are potential challenges to this strategy and solutions to address them?</b>		

### Section III: Local Program Engagement

<b>How will you communicate your plan to local programs/providers?</b>
<b>What role and level of engagement will your local programs/providers have in the plan?</b>
<b>What state-level supports will local programs/providers need for their roles or engagement?</b>

### Section IV: Resources

<b>What resources are needed to implement this plan?</b>	
Human Resources/Personnel	
Budget	
Policy/Legal	
Community	
Technology	
Marketing/Branding/Communication	
Professional Development	
Other	

## Section V: Action Steps

*Note: For the purposes of the training, this section refers to actions necessary to accomplish the overall goal and related strategies. In application, action steps may overlap across strategies; i.e., the same action step may appear in more than one strategy. For this reason, it may be helpful in practice to complete this section for each strategy and then do an overall action step section of the plan.*

Action Steps			
Action Steps	Responsible Parties	Evidence of Completion	Timeline
List action steps relevant to this plan.	List the parties responsible for executing each action step.	List how you will know each action step has been taken or completed.	List due dates and key activities for completing each action step.

### **Data Considerations for Teacher Retention Plan**

Various data considerations may be helpful to identify the factors contributing to teacher attrition and to implement targeted strategies for teacher retention. The following are examples of the types of data that states may want to consider to inform their teacher retention plan and its outcomes.

- Data disaggregated to the individual program and teacher/instructor level. For example:
  - Unique teacher identifiers
  - Longitudinal data on teachers
  - Data on teacher demographics, for example:
    - » Age
    - » Gender
    - » Ethnicity/race

- » Education level (e.g., degrees, certifications, licensure)
- » Years of teaching experience
- » Tenure
- » Location
- Data on staff trends in your state over the last 3 to 5 years
- Data on staff changes in your state. For example:
  - Requests for medical leave
  - Retirements
  - Resignations
- Data on staff wellness. For example:
  - COVID-19 pandemic impacts
  - Perception of workload
  - Program morale
- Data on professional development activities. For example:
  - Topics offered
  - Incorporation of teacher retention content
  - Participant applications of learned skills and knowledge
  - Teacher engagement in decision making
  - Teacher recognition
- Disaggregated data on teacher vacancies. For example:
  - Geographical
  - Course level and class type

## **Appendix D: Teacher Retention Plan Template**

The Teacher Retention Plan template in this appendix is for posting to the gallery wall. Feel free to remove this template from the workbook. Appendix C contains a copy of this template for future reference.

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- » Years of teaching experience
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