Overview

Teacher retention impacts program participation, attendance, service delivery, and instructional course design. In addition, external factors such as population, industry, political, or economic shifts, as well as major health or climate events, can impact who needs adult education and who is available to participate. These factors are why it is important for adult education state teams and local providers to review their retention processes and use quantitative and qualitative data to inform their strategies.

Recognizing the causes of teacher retention and attrition is imperative to implementing teacher retention strategies that prevent program operations and student learning from being adversely affected.

The Strategic Implementation Readiness Checklist (SIRC): Teacher Retention resource is designed as a guide to support states in the development, review, and/or implementation of their teacher retention strategies.

The checklist is organized into strategic themes informed by state and national data trends.

These themes are as follows:

- Strategy Alignment

- Using Data to Inform Retention Strategy and Progress Monitoring

- Local Programs/Provider Engagement

- Program Partner Engagement

- Teacher Engagement: Mentors and Coaches

- Professional Development

The checklist can be used at any point in the teacher retention strategy development, implementation, or monitoring processes by state teams. The information acquired during this process may come from various data sources, including program data, and adult education stakeholders, most notably local providers. It is not expected that every element within each theme requires a "yes" for implementation, but the checklist does allow for a state to determine if enough elements are in place to implement, continue, revise, or cease a strategy through the lens of readiness. The checklist also includes an addendum with a logic model worksheet that can be used to determine the intended progression of a strategy to the desired outcome related to teacher retention.

Strategy Alignment

State vision and goals for teacher retention should be reviewed for alignment, in whole or part, with existing state level initiatives or plans (e.g., strategic plans or the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) unified state plan). This helps states avoid piecemeal approaches to their teacher retention strategies and duplication of efforts across adult education and other state led initiatives. Alignment in this context also may support cross-agency, multifaceted approaches to retaining and engaging teachers and stakeholder support that focus on recruitment, hiring, preparation, evaluation and professional growth, recognition and rewards, and program environment.

Strategy Alignment	Yes	No	In Progress
• Do you have a vision for teacher retention?	☐	☐	☐
− If no, write a vision statement with input from stakeholders.			
− If yes, did someone other than the state director contribute to the vision? Who?			
• Have you developed a retention strategy or strategies to address teacher retention in your state?	☐	☐	☐
• Is your strategy aligned with your vision and values?	☐	☐	☐
• Is the strategy clear?	☐	☐	☐
• Does the strategy follow a logical flow?	☐	☐	☐
• Describe how you intend to address the step(s) with checkmarks in the "No" or "In Progress" columns:			
− Do you have a teacher retention plan?	☐	☐	☐
• Have you developed and reviewed your teacher onboarding processes?	☐	☐	☐
− Does onboarding go beyond orientation and paperwork?	☐	☐	☐
− Does it include			
▪ performance aspects of the job, or	☐	☐	☐
▪ a comprehensive mentoring and induction program that provides essential support and guidance?	☐	☐	☐
− Does leadership provide feedback, support, and coaching with a focus on student learning?	☐	☐	☐
• Do you have procedures for introducing new staff to program culture and expectations?	☐	☐	☐

Strategy Alignment	Yes	No	In Progress

• Do you have a supportive program climate?
The following are some examples of how it would be supportive:
  – Promoting teacher engagement
  – Supporting teacher well-being
  – Requesting and incorporating teacher feedback
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		☐
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			☐

• Do you have a culture that promotes teacher efficacy?
The following are some examples of how it would be supportive:
  – Communicating the funding model and assurances to teachers
  – Allowing teachers opportunities to collaborate with leadership and provide input on program and/or policy decisions
  – Prioritizing time for collaborative planning and professional growth
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	☐
	☐
		☐
		☐
		☐
			☐
			☐
			☐

• Have you assessed the financial cost of teacher attrition (e.g., recruitment, hiring, and onboarding)?
  – Do you have a formal plan to identify and address teacher attrition?
  – How would you describe teacher retention in your state and regions (urban, suburban, or rural) within your state?
  – Have you had turnover within your administration and /or teacher positions?
  – How many teacher positions are currently vacant?
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Describe how you intend to address the step(s) with checkmarks in the "No" or "In Progress" columns:

• Considering your vision and strategies, what might be some implications and/or the impact for the " 3 Ps" regarding teacher retention in your state:

  – People: What people issues affect teacher retention (e.g., student needs and goals; teacher qualifications and experience; teacher characteristics such as age, ethnicity qualifications)?

  – Programs: What program issues affect teacher retention (e.g., course options and support services; instructional approach, delivery methods and class configurations; teacher assignments to classes)?

  – Policy: What policy issues affect teacher retention (e.g., state and local policies affecting teacher hiring, compensation, tenure seniority, qualifications)

Using Data to Inform Retention Strategy and Progress Monitoring

To identify the factors contributing to teacher attrition and implement targeted retention strategies, states should monitor trends in teacher attrition and retention at various levels. Factors to monitor over time include teacher demographics, qualifications, type and length of experience, and performance. Other factors include program culture, student demographics and performance, administrative support, and state policies. States should review and understand retention trends over the past few years to understand patterns, strengths and gaps that can help identify the type of strategies to develop. Once strategies have been developed, data can be used to indicate whether your strategies have been implemented and to monitor whether they are successful in helping you meet your goals and state vision. These questions will guide you in identifying data elements and the data collection you need for each of these processes.

Using Data to Inform Retention Strategy and Progress Monitoring	Yes	No	In Progress
Data to Inform Retention Strategy			
• Do you have a high-quality data system that can disaggregate data to the individual program and teacher level?			
– Do you have unique teacher identifiers?	☐	☐	☐
– Do you have longitudinal data on teachers?	☐	☐	☐
– Do you collect data on teacher demographics?	☐	☐	☐
▪ Age	☐	☐	☐
▪ Gender	☐	☐	☐
▪ Ethnicity/race	☐	☐	☐
▪ Education level/certifications	☐	☐	☐
▪ Years of teaching experience/tenure	☐	☐	☐
▪ Years of non-teaching, related work experience (e.g., industry)	☐	☐	☐
• Do you collect data on staff changes in your state such as requests for medical leave, retirements, or resignations?	☐	☐	☐
– Do your local programs use NRS and other data to understand their retention patterns and trends (e.g., Tables 1, 2A, 4, 4B, and 7)?	☐	☐	☐
• Have you:			
– Reviewed data on staff trends over the last 3–5 years?	☐	☐	☐
▪ If yes, have you cross-walked data with student outcomes (e.g., enrollment, student retention, skill gains completion)?	☐	☐	☐
– Examined external impacts (e.g., pandemic, natural disasters, etc.) on retention?	☐	☐	☐
– Gathered information on			
▪ staff wellness,	☐	☐	☐
▪ perception of workload, or	☐	☐	☐
▪ staff morale?	☐	☐	☐
– Disaggregated data by	☐	☐	☐
▪ years of experience,			

Using Data to Inform Retention Strategy and Progress Monitoring	Yes	No	In Progress

▪ degree,
     ▪ certifications, or
     ▪ class location?			

• What data do you have to understand the reasons why teacher retention declined? – Will your data help indicate teacher retention patterns statewide and in targeted geographic areas?	☐	☐	☐
– Are your retention strategies based on these data?	☐	☐	☐
• What ways are you collecting qualitative data from local programs on retention issues (for example, reviewed exit surveys from former teachers)?			
Data to Inform Progress Monitoring			
• What sources and metrics will you use to inform whether your retention strategy was implemented successfully? • When will metrics be used and how often? Describe below:	☐	☐	☐
– Can data systems disaggregate these metrics to the teacher or class level?	☐	☐	☐

– Do you have an evaluation system to identify effective teachers?
     ▪ Is evaluation based on a common set of standards geared toward student achievement and used to track teacher development?
     ▪ Are evaluations data-driven and help leadership provide clear and consistent feedback?
	☐	☐	☐

– Do local programs provide professional development activities incorporating retention content? – If yes, do local programs	☐	☐	☐
▪ follow-up with participants on the application of learned skills and knowledge, or	☐	☐	☐
▪ have increased capacity (e.g., teachers, staff, programs) and professional development?	☐	☐	☐
– Do you have the ability to disaggregate retention and performance trends over time?	☐	☐	☐
Describe how you intend to complete the step(s) with checkmarks in the "No" or "In Progress" columns:			

Local Programs/Provider Engagement

Student success depends on having the right teacher in every classroom. To increase teacher retention, state programs can assist local programs/providers in identifying recruitment and retention challenges and ways to provide feedback, support, and coaching to teachers, focusing on student learning. The questions below will help your state program move toward a shared understanding of teacher recruitment and retention with local programs/providers.

Local Programs/Provider Engagement	Yes	No	In Progress
Local Program/Provider Awareness of Teacher Retention Issues			
• Do you have a vision for teacher retention?	☐	☐	☐
• Are local programs aware of teacher retention issues related to			
– locality,	☐	☐	☐
– age and ethnicity of teachers,	☐	☐	☐
– part- and full-time positions, or	☐	☐	☐
– teacher years of experience?	☐	☐	☐
• Are local programs aware of the state's goals and strategies related to teacher recruitment and retention?	☐	☐	☐
• Does local strategy align with the state's goals and strategies?	☐	☐	☐

• Have your local programs researched/implemented approaches, services, and resources to assist with reducing teacher attrition? For example,
   – asset mapping,
   – community partnerships, or
   – program resources?
	☐	☐	☐

• What approaches, services, and resources have your local programs researched/implemented to reduce teacher attrition?	☐	☐	☐
Local Program/Provider Communication Related to Teacher Retention			
• Do local programs establish an opportunity for teacher feedback and input in decision-making?	☐	☐	☐
• Do providers have a way to identify the reasons teachers have for leaving or areas of dissatisfaction?	☐	☐	☐
• Has the state provided professional development on teacher recruitment and retention issues?	☐	☐	☐
• What are you doing to incentivize teachers to stay in your program?	☐	☐	☐

Local Programs/Provider Engagement	Yes	No	In Progress
• Do you have administrative support for teachers related to ownership of the classroom and teacher efficacy? For example, to do the following: – Identify the knowledge and skills expected of adult education teachers. – Use teacher induction as a strategy to accelerate the effectiveness of beginning teachers and those new to adult education or a new content area.	☐	☐	☐
• Do local providers conduct teacher evaluations and provide teachers with consistent and timely feedback?	☐	☐	☐
• Do local providers have teacher acknowledgment/recognition programs?	☐	☐	☐
Local Program Design			
• Do local providers have the teachers and program capacity you need to manage – varied class delivery methods – increased workloads	☐	☐	☐
• Are teachers qualified to support integrated education and training initiatives?	☐	☐	☐
Describe how you plan to address the step(s) with checkmarks in the "No" or "In Progress" columns:			

Program Partner Engagement

Program partners such as local businesses and community organizations can provide engagement opportunities with the community at large, which may help attract prospective teachers and/or provide services that assist with retaining quality teachers. The following questions will help you determine your readiness to engage program partners on issues of teacher recruitment and retention.

Program Partner Engagement	Yes	No	In Progress
Program Partner Roles and Expectations			

• Are there existing state partnerships that support teacher retention?
   – If yes, have you formally identified the mutual benefits and potential impact (direct or indirect) of the partnership on teacher recruitment and retention goals?
      ▪ If no, has the state identified potential partnerships that could support teacher retention?
	☐	☐	☐

• Are local programs able to leverage existing state partnerships and services to support teacher retention?	☐	☐	☐
– Have you identified the mutual benefits of partnering with local programs to address teacher attrition.	☐	☐	☐
– Do any partners provide access to a pipeline of potential teachers?	☐	☐	☐

– Are there shared resources that local programs and partners can leverage?
      ▪ Technology
      ▪ Classroom space
      ▪ Student support services
	☐	☐	☐

• Does the state provide guidance to local providers on assessing and entering potential partnerships?	☐	☐	☐

• If yes, does this guidance include considerations for resources and services that assist with teacher retention?
For example:
   – Mental health resources
   – Career development resources
   – Targeted professional development opportunities
   – Focus group facilitation on retention efforts
   – Availability in geographic service areas
	☐	☐	☐

Program Partner Communication Related to Teacher Retention			
• Are program partners aware of your retention goals and opportunities to participate or support implementation of the retention strategy?	☐	☐	☐
• Have you identified team members and a primary point of contact responsible for maintaining program partner relationships that impact recruitment and retention?	☐	☐	☐
• Do your local programs inform teachers of partner services they can	☐	☐	☐

Program Partner Engagement	Yes	No	In Progress
receive to reduce attrition?			
Describe how you intend to complete the step(s) with checkmarks in the "No" or "In Progress" columns:			

Teacher Engagement: Mentors and Coaches

Induction programs that include administrative leadership, mentoring, professional development, and formal assessments provide evidence that teacher attrition can be reduced (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004). Teacher mentors and coaches can be current or retired teachers who function as liaisons between the program and novice teachers. Mentors and coaches provide easily accessible materials and resources, coaching support, and information that is critical to the program and relevant to the field of adult education.

Teacher Engagement: Mentors and Coaches	Yes	No	In Progress
Identification			
• Does the state have a formal process for identifying teacher mentors and coaches?	☐	☐	☐
• Do you have a formal induction and mentoring program that includes these elements?	☐	☐	☐
– Good job match	☐	☐	☐
– Relevant work orientation	☐	☐	☐
– Supportive school community	☐	☐	☐
– Deliberate role design	☐	☐	☐
– Ongoing professional development	☐	☐	☐
– Responsive mentoring	☐	☐	☐
– The Teacher Induction Pathway	☐	☐	☐
– Curriculum writer	☐	☐	☐
– Professional developer	☐	☐	☐
– Mentor/ coach	☐	☐	☐
– If yes, is there a "job description" for the following roles: ▪ curriculum writer ▪ professional developer ▪ mentor ▪ coach	☐	☐	☐
– If yes, do these descriptions specify the skills and experiences required for the roles and describe the activities in which they will engage?	☐	☐	☐
• Do you have an organized approach toward collaboration among instructional staff and across levels of experience and responsibility?	☐	☐	☐
• Do you have a plan for identifying appropriate teachers for the mentor or coaching role?	☐	☐	☐

Teacher Engagement: Mentors and Coaches	Yes	No	In Progress
– If this plan has been implemented, has it been successful?	☐	☐	☐
– Is there a formal feedback process for teachers to comment on how the induction process is working?	☐	☐	☐
– Have you determined how and when you will update the plan?	☐	☐	☐
• Do your mentors and coaches come from the same background as the teachers you are trying to retain (e.g., credentials, specialization, geographical, ethnicity, language, gender)?	☐	☐	☐
• Do you have a plan for informing new and potential teachers about mentors and coaches available to support them?	☐	☐	☐

Describe how you intend to complete the step(s) with checkmarks in the "No" or "In Progress" columns:

Teacher Engagement: Mentors and Coaches	Yes	No	In Progress
Processes			
• Do you have an established process for orienting mentors and coaches to the role?	☐	☐	☐
• Do you have an established process for communicating with mentors and coaches?	☐	☐	☐
• Do you have an established process for mentors and coaches to communicate with program staff about issues or challenges shared with them?	☐	☐	☐
• Do you have an established process for involving mentors and coaches in student retention?	☐	☐	☐
• Do you have an established process for collecting feedback from mentors and coaches about their roles or the activities in which they are involved?	☐	☐	☐
• Do you have an established process for teacher feedback on the effectiveness of the mentor or coach?	☐	☐	☐
Describe how you intend to complete the step(s) with checkmarks in the "No" or "In Progress" columns:			
Incentives			
• Does your program have incentives in place for teacher mentor/coach involvement?	☐	☐	☐
– If yes, did you get teachers' input on what incentives to provide?	☐	☐	☐
• Do you have a way to evaluate or determine the effectiveness of your incentives?	☐	☐	☐
Describe how you intend to complete the step(s) with checkmarks in the "No" or "In Progress" columns:			

Professional Development

Professional development has the potential to increase teacher quality and teacher retention. Administrators should seek to provide well-designed professional development programs, ongoing assistance and coaching, and administrative support. The questions below will help you determine readiness and support to enhance new or existing professional development related to student and teacher retention.

Professional Development	Yes	No	In Progress
• Does the state provide or assist with professional development for local programs on reducing teacher attrition/increasing teacher retention? If yes, does the professional development design include understanding and knowledge of teacher attrition factors?	☐	☐	☐
• Do you engage local providers in identifying their professional development needs related to teacher retention? If so, describe how.	☐	☐	☐
• Does the state use data to identify the professional development needs of local providers across the state? • Do local programs use data to identify their professional development needs?	☐	☐	☐
• Do you provide opportunities for targeted, personalized professional learning?	☐	☐	☐
• Do you provide multiple forums for the delivery of professional development (e.g., consultation, technical assistance, workshops, seminars, conference attendance)?	☐	☐	☐
• Has the state identified a process to help identify if local programs are applying professional development content on teacher retention?	☐	☐	☐
• Have you assessed available financial resources to support professional development and incentive programs?	☐	☐	☐
• Does the state Incorporate retention as part of their professional development technical assistance? − If yes, please describe the process:	☐	☐	☐
Describe how you intend to complete the step(s) with checkmarks in the "No" or "In Progress" columns:			
• Have you identified the metrics to help identify if local programs are applying professional development content on teacher retention?	☐	☐	☐
• Do you use these metrics to evaluate the process throughout and at the end of the year to determine the success of strategies?	☐	☐	☐

ADDENDUM: Teacher Retention Strategy Logic Model Worksheet

A logic model is a visual way to illustrate the resources or inputs required to implement a program, the activities and outputs of a program, and the desired program outcomes (short-term, long-term). Logic models are effective tools to assist in program planning, implementation, management, evaluation, and reporting. They help define a program's intended impact and goals; the sequence of intended effects; which activities are to produce which effect; and where to focus outcome and process evaluations.

Describe the logic model for your state retention strategy to check your understanding of the strategy.

Strategy #

If…	Then…	Which Will Lead To…	And Result In…

Metrics to Inform	Metrics to Inform	Success Metrics	Success Metrics
1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.

Strategy #

If…	Then…	Which Will Lead To…	And Result In…

Metrics to Inform	Metrics to Inform	Success Metrics	Success Metrics
1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.