



Supporting Teaching and Learning through Better Data Act

Led by Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA)

Teacher and school leader shortages are impacting many communities in the United States, particularly in rural and high-poverty communities and subjects such as special education; science, technology, engineering, math (STEM); English language; and career and technical education (CTE). Teacher shortages are becoming more pervasive, with current vacancies [up to 3.1%](#), compared to an average of 1.7% from 2015 – 2019. Particularly, there is a shortage of *qualified* teachers in classrooms across the United States. [A recent study](#) found that across the country there were at least 163,000 positions held by underqualified teachers and an additional 36,000 left vacant entirely. This is an issue that disproportionately impacts rural students, students of color, low-income students, and students with disabilities.

A major issue in addressing widespread teacher shortages is the lack of access to complete and accurate data on the quantity, quality, and diversity of the teacher workforce. There are several existing mechanisms for collecting data on the teacher workforce, including Titles I and II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Titles II and IV of the Higher Education Act, Title I of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the National Teacher and Principal Surveys, and the Teacher Shortage Areas data collection. However, the data are often out-of-date and incomplete for understanding the full scope of teacher shortages. For example, the [Teacher Shortage Areas](#) data collection outlines the subjects in which states anticipate having shortages but not the specific number of qualified teachers, expected vacancies, or how many new teachers are being adequately prepared in those areas. Without accurate data, local, state, and federal policymakers cannot develop evidence-based solutions to address the unique challenges faced in different states or regions.

The *Supporting Teaching and Learning through Better Data Act* will:

- Require the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to conduct a study on current data collections related to the educator workforce.
- Provide recommendations on strengthening educator workforce data collection, analysis, timeliness, and dissemination, that can help stakeholders and policymakers understand and address educator supply, demand, and shortages.
- Identify gaps in existing federal data sources, such as the qualifications and credentials of the teacher workforce, compensation information, and number of teachers that have received federal grants, and make recommendations for closing such gaps.
- Create a grant program to support state agencies to increase access to well-prepared and diverse educators and improve state educator workforce data collection and analysis.