

## WHITE PAPER

Key findings and take-aways from *Leveraging R&R;*  
*A Recruitment & Retention Series*

# LEVERAGING R&R

## A Recruitment & Retention Series

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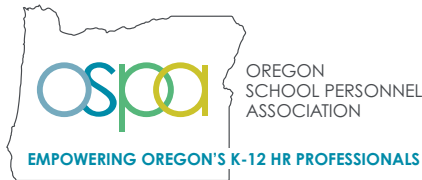
THE PURPOSE OF THE SERIES

In 2022-2023, the Oregon School Personnel Association (OSPA) in partnership with the Educator Advancement Council (EAC), presented Leveraging R&R: A Recruitment and Retention Series. This four-part series centered on the purpose of recognizing our shared interests and informing the conversation between educators, professional organizations, State agencies and Legislators, plus many more vested stakeholders, about action forward to address Oregon’s educator shortage.



The Educator Advancement Council is an innovative partnership aimed at helping Oregon achieve high-quality, well-supported and culturally-responsive educators in every classroom.

Building upon the Governor’s Council on Educator Advancement recommendations, the Oregon Legislature passed Senate Bill 182 in 2017, creating the Educator Advancement Council (EAC). This bill recognizes that high-quality educator preparation and ongoing, effective professional learning and support for educators are critical variables to excellent teaching, improved student learning, and educator retention.



The Oregon School Personnel Association (OSPA) is a non-profit, membership organization serving as a statewide hub to empower Oregon’s K-12 HR professionals with knowledge, networking, and resources.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Leveraging R&R: A Recruitment & Retention Series** brought together educators, professional organizations, State agencies and Legislators, plus many more vested stakeholders about action forward to address Oregon’s educator shortage. The four-part series served as a catalyst to build connection and trust, resulting in a safe space to recognize shared interests and initiate candid dialogue about root causes of Oregon’s educator shortage – the first, critical step to identifying problem(s) of practice and developing a clear, data-driven change process of continuous improvement across Oregon’s K-12 districts and schools.

Collective thinking focused on how we might:

- I. Think differently about Oregon’s education system?
- II. Use data-driven insights to uncover root causes, envision the possibilities and inform change?
- III. Change perception about the educator profession to have a positive impact on recruitment and retention of Oregon’s teachers?
- IV. Strengthen connection and trust to advance candid dialogue about problem(s) of practice and shift strategies to address those issues?

Oregon’s top-down, bottom-up approach was informed by the American Association of School Personnel Administrators (AASPA) 5 Shifts findings from the 2022 National Educator Summit.



“Leveraging multiple perspectives, a diversity of experiences and sharp thinking – that’s why we are here.” –Dr. Kimberly Matier, Executive Director, Educator Advancement Council

HOW DOES THE TEACHER SHORTAGE IN OREGON COMPARE?

Scholaroo, an education research agency, analyzed the most recent data showing the number of teachers in each state compared to the state population to understand the teacher shortage in the U.S.

In Part II of the series, Upbeat explored some of this research in their presentation.

[Read their full presentation here.](#)

Top 10 States with the Highest Teacher Shortages in the US as of March 2023: (Ranked from worst to best)

- |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Florida    | 6. Michigan   |
| 2. Oregon     | 7. Washington |
| 3. California | 8. Arizona    |
| 4. Nevada     | 9. Kentucky   |
| 5. Hawaii     | 10. Tennessee |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY [Continued]

As a result of the Leveraging R&R series, we are now positioned to identify actionable recruitment and retention strategies to attract educators, especially in hard-to-fill positions, and retain our existing, valued educators.



Dr. Kimberly Matier, Executive Director of the Educator Advancement Council shares the Series' Purpose.



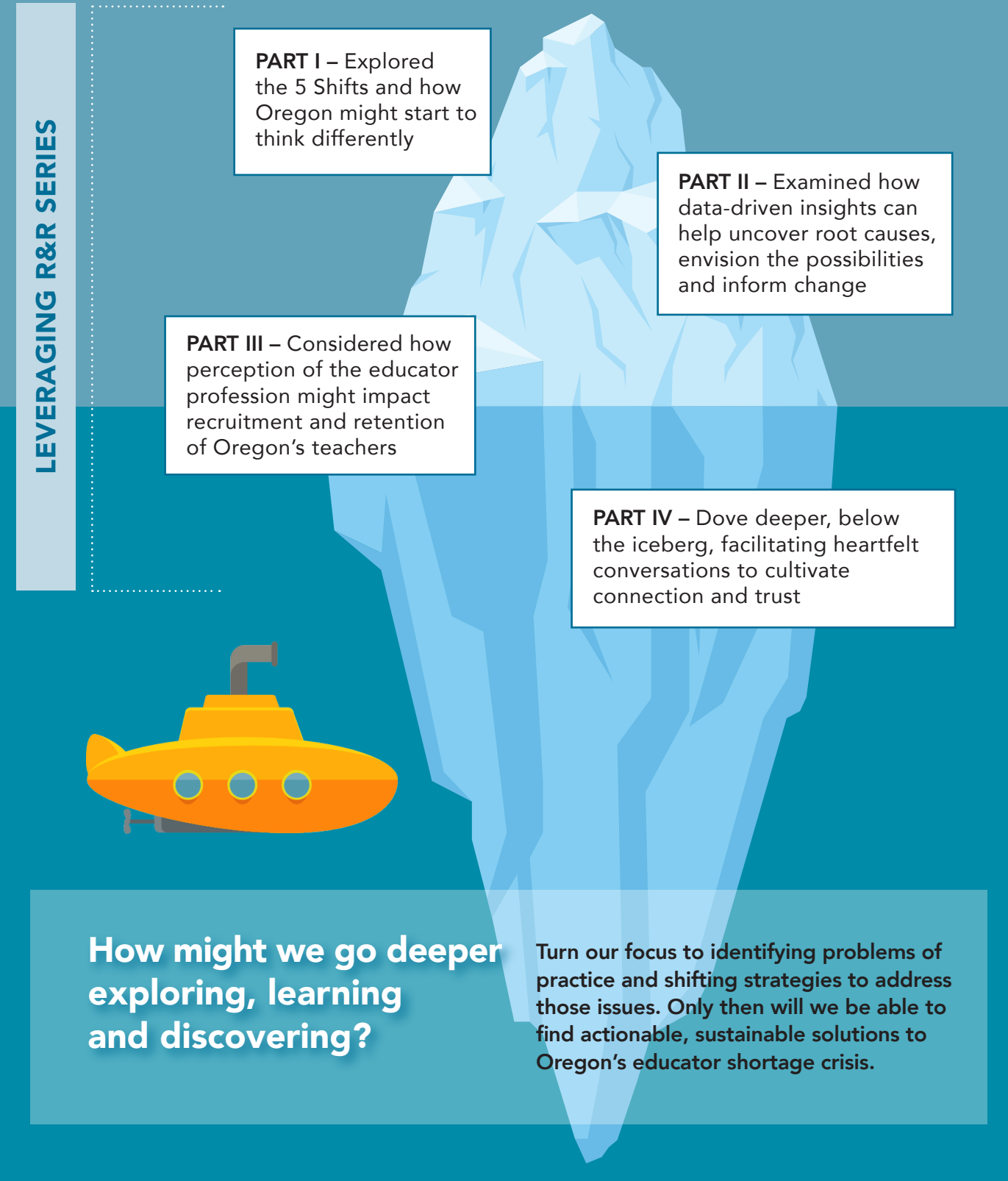
Senator Michael Dembrow shares the Series' Mission.

### INTEREST IN THE EDUCATION PROFESSION CONTINUES TO DECLINE

According to EducationWeek, “While most respondents said they have confidence in their local teachers, **only 37 percent say they would want their child to become a teacher**. It’s a record low for that response and a 9-percentage point drop from 2018.” A variety of factors play into the steeply declining interest in the education profession including:

- Low compensation compared to other professions
- Lack of respect
- Low morale among educators
- High cost of postsecondary education and resulting student debt
- Lack of training in managing classroom and social support for student success
- Polarized opinions around curriculum based on fear that students are taught what to think instead of how to think

## EXPLORING UNDER THE ICEBERG OF OREGON’S EDUCATOR SHORTAGE



**PART I FOCUS:** *How might we think differently about Oregon's education system?*

## Background: National Level Findings

### 5 SHIFTS TO ADDRESS THE NATIONAL EDUCATOR SHORTAGE

Shift	Traditional Call to Action	Comprehensive and Systemic Action
1	Create Pathways to Careers in Education.	Reduce Barriers to careers in education while preserving standards of excellence.
2	Provide educators with more resources.	Design comprehensive human capital management systems to meet diverse educator needs.
3	Increase educator pay.	Establish transparent and equitable total rewards systems.
4	Support employee wellness.	Strengthen educators' sense of purpose, belonging, and connection.
5	Promote the profession.	Creating a culture and climate that delivers exceptional support for professional growth and success.

Discoveries from the 2nd National Educator Shortage Summit presented by the American Association of School Personnel Administrators (AASPA) on January 19-29, 2023.

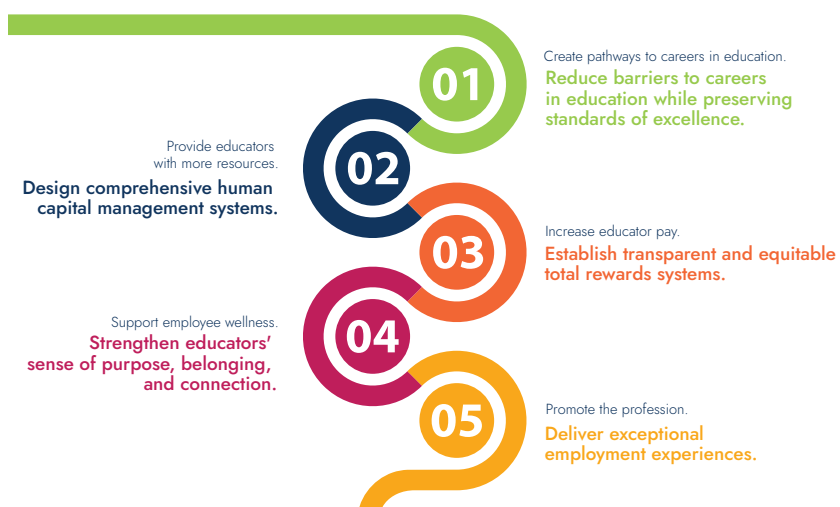
Five comprehensive shifts are presented in contrast to traditional calls to action. A discussion of each shift contains high-level recommendations, along with examples of actions that different stakeholder groups can take to address the educator shortage. Representatives from stakeholder organizations, including government, associations, nonprofits, preparation programs, and PK-12 education organizations can use this paper to chart a pathway forward. Ensuring each student has the future they deserve requires disruptive change. It involves redesigning talent systems in education to create workplaces that both attract new people into education and also retain those who want to stay.

[Read AASPA's full report here.](#)

## The 5 Shifts Session Discussion

The 5 Shifts involve redesigning talent systems in education to create workplaces that both attract new people into education and retain those who want to stay. These 5 Shifts provided the framework for our discussion in Part I of the series.

[Read Full Part I Discussion Summary here.](#)

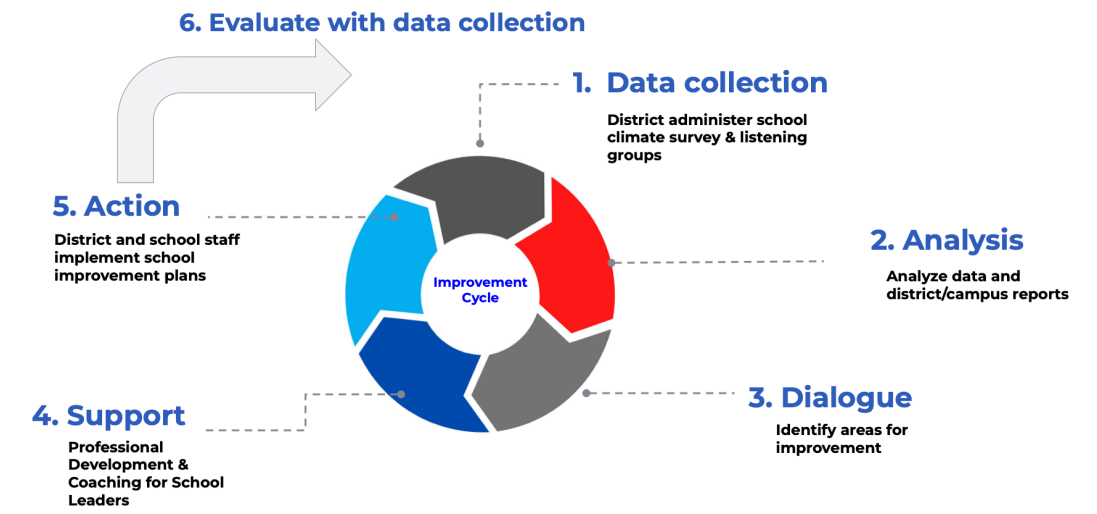


## Developing a Data-Driven Improvement Cycle for Retention

Upbeat's Head of Leadership Coaching, Dr. Brenda Tanner, explored causes of teacher turnover and a data-driven approach to develop an improvement cycle for retention. Key learnings from Dr. Tanner's session supported discoveries made at the national level around the 5 comprehensive shifts in thinking about recruitment and retention.

### Action Forward: How Data Helped Inform School and District Practices to Improve Staff Retention

Samantha Fuhrey, Superintendent Newton County, Georgia Schools, shared how they used Upbeat's data-driven approach to develop successful strategies to help make their employees feel connected and heard to improve retention.



[Slide from Samantha Fuhrey's presentation.](#)

## Part I Post-Event Survey

Participants conveyed what they valued most; the opportunity to collaborate and network with colleagues across the state to collectively think about Oregon's PK-20 education system problem(s) of practice.

### KEY LEARNING – What causes teacher turnover?

**Work/Life Balance** – Teachers are more satisfied with their jobs when they have a reasonable teaching load (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Johnson, 2004; Luekens et al., 2004).

**Career Path** – A survey of New York City teachers found that about seven in ten think that public school teachers do not have good opportunities for advancement and that the lack of upward mobility is a key obstacle to making the profession attractive (Farkas et al., 2000).

**Distance** – Teachers are more likely than college graduates in other occupations to live near where they grew up and to prefer areas with similar characteristics to where they grew up (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2005; Reininger, 2012).

**Meaningful Work** – Research has shown that meaningful work is a significant predictor of workers' intentions to stay at their jobs (Scroggins, 2008).

**PART II FOCUS:** *How might we use data-driven insights to uncover root causes, envision the possibilities and inform change?*

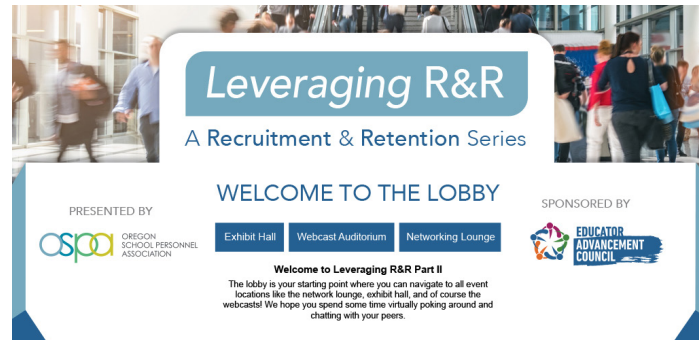
### Inspiration for Change

Oregon's 2022 Teacher of the Year, Ethelyn Tumulad, inspired participants with her story that centered on resiliency, relationships, and representation, especially for people of color. In her presentation, she quoted Elaine Welteroth from her book *More Than Enough*; "When you exist in spaces that weren't built for you, sometimes just being you is the revolution."

Which speaks to the challenge—

*"Oregon's population of ethnically and linguistically diverse students increased by 3.9%, while employed teachers have only grown by 1.3%."*

[Read full OPB Article here.](#)

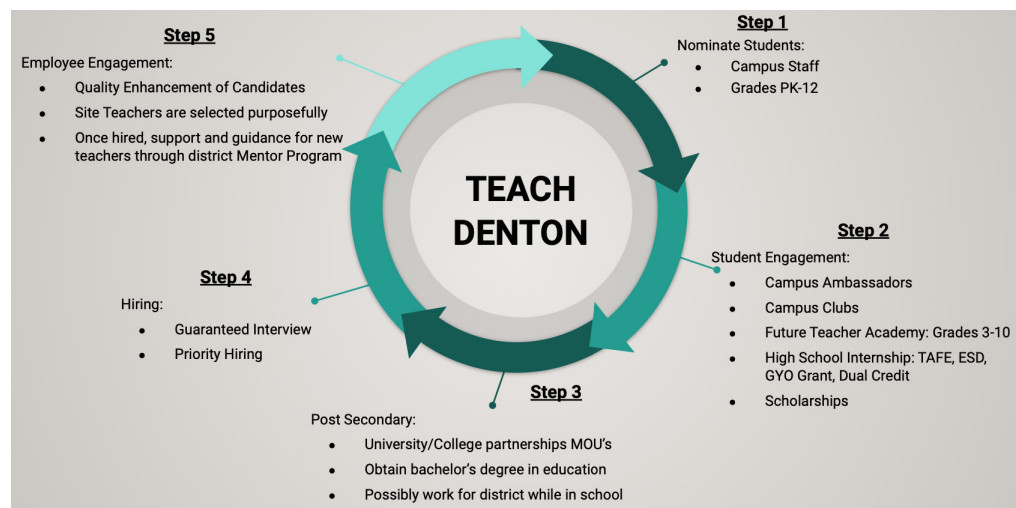


Part II was our first virtual event of the series—The Leveraging R&R Virtual Event Lobby

### Grow Your Own – Denton, Texas ISD Story of Success

Guest speaker Leah Zavala, from Denton, ISD, Texas, shared how Denton ISD is Growing Our Own, by filling their educator pipeline through programs beginning in elementary school and generating exceptional outcomes.

[See full presentation here.](#)



#### KEY LEARNING

Grow Your Own programs provide a clear, step-by-step career path for students, leveraging the fact that teachers are more likely than college graduates in other occupations to live near where they grew up and to prefer areas with similar characteristics to where they grew up (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2005; Reininger, 2012).

### Understanding Engagement Trends and Data to Support Staff Retention

Upbeat's Megan Lane Conklin, Director Insights and Analytics, helped participants:

- Understand the research-based factors impacting teacher retention and the improvement cycle process for improving culture
- Examine data regarding teacher engagement collected from thousands of teachers and support staff in multiple states
- Gain understanding of key strategies used to effectively address teacher retention

#### KEY LEARNING

Upbeat's Spring 2022 Engagement Survey, which included 18,076 teacher respondents, 4,242 non-instructional respondents across 16 states including Oregon, and was broadly representative of U.S. public school teachers, data pointed to three categories for improvement with supporting strategies:

#### School Safety & Order

School safety audit: What works and what doesn't?

Teacher involvement in school safety plan

Teachers & students feeling safe at school

#### Teacher Voice & Leadership

Solicit teacher feedback on school decisions

Form hiring committees to help screen candidates

Provide leadership opportunities for teachers

#### Appreciation

Let teachers know they are doing great work

Provide public recognition for teachers

Acknowledge teachers for working hard

[Read Upbeat's full presentation here.](#)

**PART III FOCUS:** *Advancing the conversation about root causes, possibilities, and change; how might perception about the educator profession impact recruitment and retention of Oregon's teachers?*

## Poll Everywhere

Participants engaged in an interactive poll resulting in real-time feedback to advance the conversation about using data-driven insights to uncover root causes, envision the possibilities and inform change. A sampling of Poll Everywhere responses:

*What is your WHY for the IMMEDIATE need you selected?*

- *So much burnout everywhere. Educators need to feel valued, respected, and proud to do what they do.*
- *We have teachers now and need to stop the flow OUT of education.*
- *Wellness, belonging, purpose, and connection cannot be faked.*
- *To make schools places where people want to work, and kids want to learn.*
- *Educators often feel a sense of purpose, but they need the correct supports.*

### KEY LEARNING

Part III participants were asked to prioritize the 5 Shifts:

- 28%** Reduce barriers to careers in education while preserving standards of excellence
- 21%** Strengthen educators' sense of purpose, belonging and connection
- 19%** Design comprehensive human capital management systems
- 18%** Establish transparent and equitable total rewards systems
- 14%** Deliver exceptional employment experiences

*See the appendix for more of the Poll Everywhere results.*

## University of Oregon Students' Fresh Thinking About the Educator Profession

David Koranda, Professor of Practice Emeritus, Interim Advertising Area Director, University of Oregon, School of Journalism and Communication, helped envision the possibilities by introducing two undergraduate student teams of advertising majors who competed for an opportunity to present ideas about how we might:

- Change the narrative around Oregon's PK-20 education system to focus on the good
- Help attract new people to Oregon's education profession who reflect the diversity of students
- Support and retain Oregon's current educator workforce

### KEY LEARNING

UO students remembered their teachers who applied their unique talents and skills outside the classroom as coaches or activity advisors, or inside the classroom teaching electives, which informed their creative retention strategy based on personal/professional development and aimed at student enrichment.

**PART IV FOCUS:** *How might we strengthen connection and trust to advance candid dialogue about problem(s) of practice and shift strategies to address those issues?*

## Cultivating Connection and Trust

The Fearless Dialogues team led participants through an interactive session designed to retrain the eyes and ears of educators to see gifts instead of stereotypes, and to hear value in the stories of others. From this shared space of meaning, where participants see and hear worth in others, the pump is primed for hard conversations and for cultivating hope that leads to sustainable change, and the recruitment, retention, and diversity of educators.

### EXPERIMENT #1 Experience the Museum of the Vocal Eye

Groups of 2-3 people moved around the room to view compelling images placed on the walls. During this seeing exercise, for each image participants were asked to consider the following Museum Vox Ocular questions:

**Who do you see?**

**Who don't you hear?**

**Where is hope?**

How might we allow grace to discover what exists in the in-between of binary positioning? How might we fear a little less? Exploration of five fears that stifle conversation, including the fear of:

- 1. The unknown**
- 2. Strangers**
- 3. Appearing ignorant**
- 4. Plopping\***
- 5. Oppressive systems**

*\* Plopping is when you share your truth, and everyone watches like it falls to the ground like you didn't say it – then the next person comes along and says the same thing that is warmly received.*



*Fearless Dialogues team member, Dustin Mailman, discussed ways in which we might fear a little less*

**EXPERIMENT #2  
A call to remember a time when you felt invisible**  
Exploration of the four markers to overcome invisibility:

- 1. Belonging – your existence is needed**
- 2. Self-esteem – your existence is valued**
- 3. Control – your existence is uniquely authentic**
- 4. Meaningful existence – your existence makes a difference**

Empathy and connection can be strengthened simply by looking people in the eye.

EXPERIMENT #3  
Keepers of Precious Truths

Each group designated a *Keeper of Precious Truths* who was given an egg to hold. Each group member wrote two things on the egg: one inspirational and one detestable. The *Keeper of Precious Truths* was holding the egg of beautiful truths as well as rough, jagged, hard truths. They were then asked to drop the egg, which broke. This experiment demonstrated through brokenness, how two things can be true at the same time.

EXPERIMENT #4  
The 3 Feet Challenge

Each person was given a 3-foot-long measuring tape to challenge participants to hear the stories of 3 people, within 3 feet, in 3 days. To illustrate that change is only 3 feet away.



Participants were broken into groups based on their self-selected gift; activist, connector, educator, artist, healer, or neighbor

KEY LEARNING

The Fearless Dialogues team created a unique space for unlikely partners to engage in hard conversations and meaningful interaction centered on empathy. The four experiments relate to fundamental concepts and skills that carry through recruitment and retention.

Teach Denton Academy: We are the Salespeople of our Profession

Back by popular demand, we welcomed Leah Zavala and Superintendent Dr. Robert Stewart, in-person to share more insights about how Denton, Texas, Independent School District is Growing Our Own through their Teach Denton Academy.



The Teach Denton Academy in action—[see video here](#).

KEY LEARNING

Teach Denton Academy wraps around from recruitment to retention and was built on the premise that the influence of a teacher can never be erased.

RECOMMENDATIONS

WHAT'S NEXT – Establish Predictable Outcomes

Pilot a 3-year study to develop systematic processes to increase recruitment, retention, and diversification of the educational workforce. The pilot should consist of 5 to 6 districts/educational communities across Oregon.

The processes, based on the work of Michael Fullan (2016), should be designed to ensure a coherent change process of continuous improvement that will focus on:

- **Focusing the Direction:** Through purpose driven, collaborative work, we will identify high-impact goals supported by clear talent strategies and implemented with an emphasis on change leadership.
- **Cultivating Collaborative Cultures:** The facilitator will design learning and coaching sessions that focus on a culture of growth and capacity building within the participating districts/educational communities.
- **Deepening Learning:** Learning goals will support intentional, strategic action with lead learners participating in a change process centered on continuous improvement.
- **Securing Accountability:** Internal accountability measures will be identified as benchmarks throughout the scope of the pilot. External accountability measures will be collaboratively identified with each participating district/educational community and a focus on SMARTIE goals that will result in an increase in the diversity of Oregon's educator workforce.

About Michael Fullan

Michael Fullan, O.C., is a worldwide authority on educational reform with a mandate of helping to achieve the moral purpose of all children learning.

A former Dean of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) of the University of Toronto, Michael advises policymakers and local leaders around the world to provide leadership in education.

“We cannot solve our problems with the **SAME THINKING** we used when we created them.”

– ALBERT EINSTEIN

ADDITIONAL POLL EVERYWHERE RESULTS FROM PART III

Question	Top Responses
Which shift would you identify as an overall priority?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduce barriers to careers in education while preserving standards of excellence</li><li>• Design comprehensive human capital management systems</li><li>• Establish transparent and equitable total rewards systems</li><li>• Strengthens educators sense of purpose, belonging and connection</li><li>• Deliver exceptional employment experience</li></ul>
Which shift would you prioritize for long-term future?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduce barriers to careers in education while preserving standards of excellence</li><li>• Design comprehensive human capital management systems</li><li>• Establish transparent and equitable total rewards systems</li><li>• Strengthen educators’ sense of purpose, belonging and connection</li></ul>
What success has your organization experienced related to educator shortage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mental health supports for current staff</li><li>• Partnering with CTE Coordinators SOESD</li><li>• Support staff GYO members are some of the most diverse candidates we have seen, this is huge for us. Of course the other side of this is we need to backfill our support staff roles!</li><li>• Well established internship and mentoring program for specialists - LBL</li><li>• Internship agreements with Universities to hire candidates while in their program</li><li>• GYO has been our most promising initiative - GAPS</li><li>• We have had multiple classified staff make the change to certified; I am very interested in if we could be part of the apprenticeship program</li><li>• I have see our own GYO working for our Instructional Assistants for Emergency licensure, and our local community and student teachers, and IA's with Bachelor's degrees get Restricted Substitute licenses</li><li>• Recruiting a higher bilingual ratio into our Cadet Teacher programs</li><li>• Budgeting for true professional development. Equipping educators with new and ever evolving changes in education</li></ul>

ADDITIONAL POLL EVERYWHERE RESULTS FROM PART III (CONTINUED)

Question	Top Responses
Has your organization encountered new barriers related to educator shortage? If so, please describe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concerns from senior staff regarding GYO paying for new staff tuition, would rather that money go into retention</li><li>• People want flexibility!</li><li>• Frustration over adding many new educators over the past couple of years, but now we’re facing possible budget reductions; the last one in is the first one out</li><li>• We need to get our school funding changed for good–the way Oregon funds schools ridiculous</li><li>• Lots of contract workers now being hired and this is a new dilemma</li><li>• Lack of funds for employee wellness beyond the one-time HB 4030 funds</li><li>• People interested in becoming classroom teachers (especially elementary) but not specialists (where the need is)</li><li>• Still hard to fill positions- not new but getting worse</li><li>• Current teachers leaving to other Districts—grass is greener on the other side!</li><li>• Competition with the larger districts in regards to compensation</li><li>• Finding qualified classified staff to replace those who have been recruited to teach</li><li>• SPED turnover has been crippling; Resignations all times of the year</li></ul>

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