

Exploring the reasons for—and possible solutions to—the widespread world language educator shortage

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New research out of Bowling Green State University is exploring the reasons for—and possible solutions to—widespread shortages among

world language educators.

From 2008-09 until 2015-16, enrollment in teacher preparation programs nationwide dipped nearly 38%, with states reporting more shortages in world languages than any other subject, according to American Academy of Arts and Sciences data. The COVID-19 pandemic only exacerbated the need for qualified teachers in a wide variety of districts.

With that shortage in mind, Dr. Brigid Burke, associate professor in the BGSU College of Education and Human Development, and co-author Diane Ceo-DiFrancesco of Xavier University published research earlier this year in *Foreign Language Annals* about how world language teachers are recruited and retained.

The research found that the No. 1 reason world language educators chose their path was due to a world language teacher they had in [high school](#), suggesting recruitment of these educators will be paramount in confronting shortages.

The researchers suggested a collaborative solution borrowed from another industry that already has experienced shortages: Trades. In certain areas of commercial construction in which union labor is most common, a collaborative approach among unions, contractors and [union members](#) has benefitted all three, the researchers found.

Similarly, they recommend a [collaborative approach](#) among teacher education programs, current and former world language teachers, university professors, pre-service teachers and professional organizations to create task forces with the purpose of recruiting the world [language](#) teachers of tomorrow.

More information: Brigid M. Burke et al, Recruitment and retention

of world language teacher education majors: Perspectives of teacher candidates and alumni to remedy a global shortage, *Foreign Language Annals* (2022). [DOI: 10.1111/flan.12613](https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12613)

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