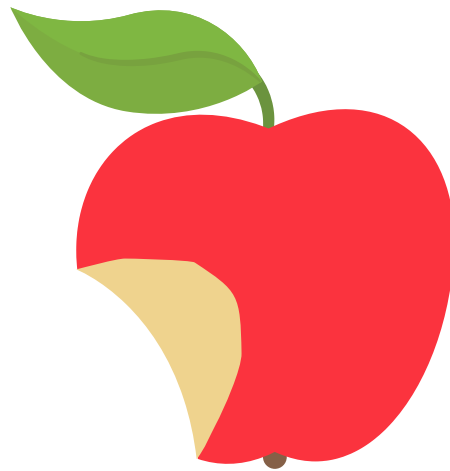
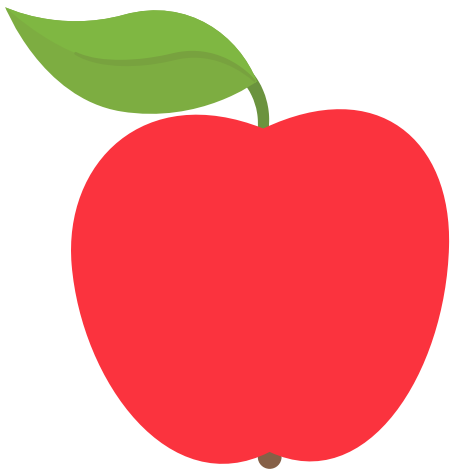
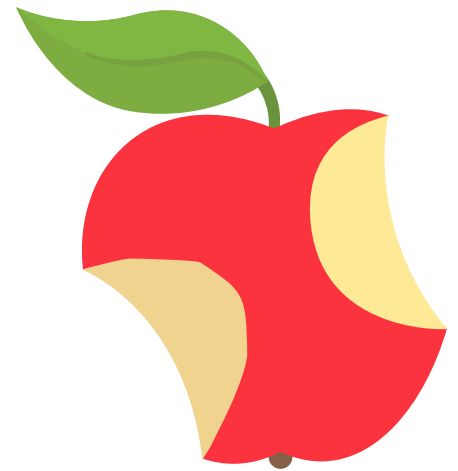


BURNED OUT, PRICED OUT

SOLUTIONS TO THE EDUCATOR SHORTAGE CRISIS



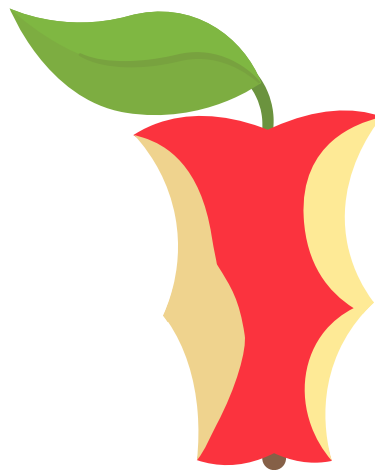
STARTING SALARY



STUDENT LOAN DEBT



HOUSING AFFORDABILITY



BUYING SUPPLIES



INCREASED COST OF LIVING

**Summary for Chapter Leaders
UTLA 2022 Leadership Conference**

INTRODUCTION

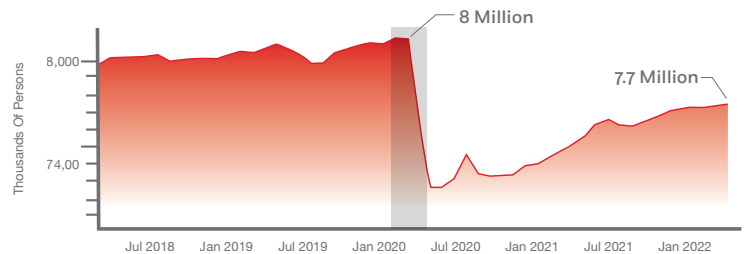
For two decades, academics and policymakers have persistently warned of an ongoing and alarming national teacher shortage while a bipartisan political campaign has been waged against professionalism and greater spending on public education.

During the pandemic, this crisis has moved from a warning to an acute, everyday reality. Veteran educators are retiring in massive numbers. Early and mid-career educators are burned out and have been pushed to their breaking point. And the educator labor pipeline is running dry.

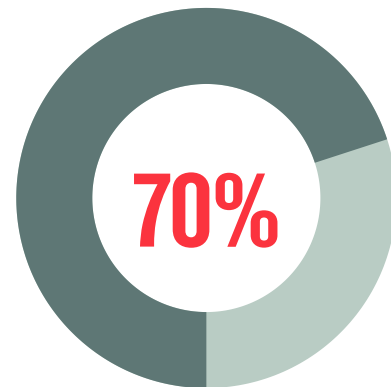
The number of individuals who reported working as public school teachers in the United States fell by 6.8% from 2019 to 2022, representing an exodus of 220,000 teachers from public school districts. **When non-teachers are included, the decline in the number of educators in the nation's public schools is even greater at over 300,000.** And most critically, the pool of future teachers is dwindling and there are not enough people to take the place of the educators whom schools are losing.

The UTLA “Burned Out, Priced Out” report details how the educator shortage crisis impacts LA. The report pairs the results of the UTLA Educator Survey from last spring with analysis and data from state and national shortage studies.

Among the most alarming top-line results of the UTLA survey:



Nearly 70% of LAUSD educators have considered leaving the education profession altogether.



70% do not believe LAUSD values their working conditions or their students' learning conditions.

“I am leaving - this is my last year. I cannot take the stress and burnout of this job anymore. **Over the last 8 years, teachers have been expected to shoulder more and more of the burden without adequate respect, compensation or resources.** I can't do it anymore.”

This volatility can be fixed. This summary of the UTLA “Burned Out, Priced Out” Educator Shortage Report lays out the major factors in the crisis — including a wage penalty suffered by educators and an historic lack of investment in the communities they serve — and the critical solutions.

THREE FACTORS DRIVING THE CRISIS

In the UTLA survey, one of the most common responses to the question of what would cause an educator to consider leaving their profession was “current conditions” or “the status quo.” The retention problem in public education is inextricably linked to the “demoralization of educators.” These are three of the major determinants of that underlying situation:

1. INCREASED EXPECTATIONS OF EDUCATORS WITHOUT ESSENTIAL SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNITIES THEY SERVE

For decades, schools and educators have been blamed for the consequences of not investing in our communities.

The loss of good union jobs that provided a middle-class lifestyle for working families has set the stage for gentrification and higher levels of homelessness. **Even before the pandemic, there were over 17,000 unhoused students enrolled at LAUSD.**

The overwhelming reality of stagnant, poverty wages across all industries in the face of skyrocketing cost of living has meant longer working hours for parents — some taking on two or three jobs — just to afford basic necessities, resulting in less time at home and greater childcare burdens on the students teachers see during the school day. These conditions should spur leadership into investing in the community and ensuring all of our students’ and families’ basic human needs are met. Unfortunately, for the last 40 years, we have seen the social safety net cut to the bone.

Educators are a convenient scapegoat — if policymakers and pundits can blame so-called failing schools, they don’t have to take on issues that hold communities back and impact our students every day, including the wider job market, poverty, low wages, housing insecurity, and a lack of access to healthcare and childcare.

Historic underinvestment and deliberate barriers put into place in many of our neighborhoods have kept our communities from thriving. Schools and educators alone cannot overcome decades of disinvestment.

2. STATE-IMPOSED TESTING THAT LIMITS TEACHER AUTONOMY

Notwithstanding these social trends, the response from the state and federal governments has been to impose a litany of standardized tests and micro-managing performance metrics on public school classrooms — as if reducing teachers’ autonomy and control over their work can achieve what should be a society-wide project of greater investment in our communities.

In 2001 Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act, requiring states to rank their public schools according to standardized test scores and place those whose results did not improve on a list that could result in school closure.

Whereas states’ standardized tests had hitherto been administered only at major transition points in students’ lives — such as between primary and secondary school, or between high school and college — they were now made annual for grades 3–8. NCLB ushered in a new era of emphasis on standardized tests that garnered major profits for testing companies while draining school budgets, wasting instructional time, and sapping teacher and student morale.

LAUSD officials have doubled down on the overuse of standardized tests, adding a number of assessments not required by the state or federal government and increasing the number of tests during the pandemic. **By 6th grade, an LAUSD student will have taken 100+ standardized tests.**

THREE FACTORS DRIVING THE CRISIS (CONT.)

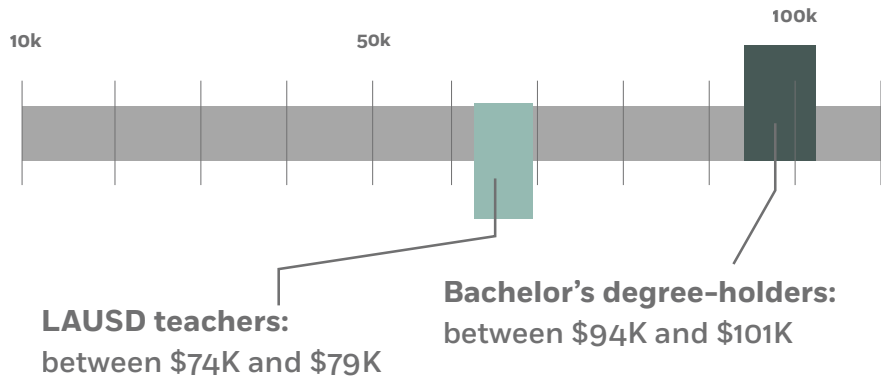
3. INADEQUATE SALARIES COMPARED TO OTHER PROFESSIONS

Since the early 2000s, the economist Sylvia Allegretto of UC Berkeley has compared teacher salaries to those of workers in comparable occupations with similar levels of education and found that **workers who choose a career in public education take a “wage penalty” for doing so – that is, they will earn less in annual income and in lifetime earnings over the course of their career than they would for choosing a profession that requires similar education and skills.** The wage penalty for educators, a majority-women profession, contributes to the wider gender pay gap in the American labor market: according to the US Dept of Labor, in 2020 women earned 82 cents for each dollar earned by a man. For women of color that amount is even lower.

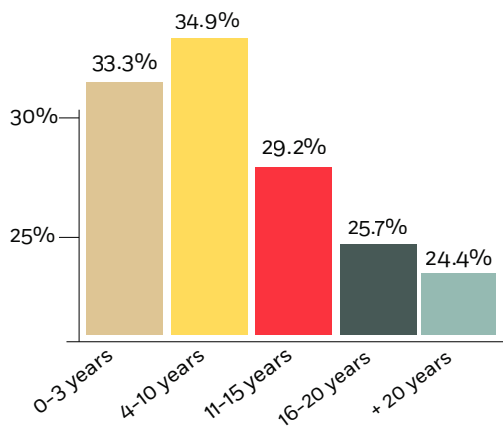
As two decades of data have accumulated, most recent findings from economists are shocking. Whereas in the late 1990s public school teachers earned 6% less in annual income than their peers in occupations requiring similar skills and education, by 2019 the penalty had grown to 19.2%.

AVERAGE ANNUAL SALARY DURING THE PAST 5 YEARS

For the 2019–20 school year, the most recent year of the UTLA study, **the gap between the average LAUSD teacher and the average bachelor’s degree holding worker in LA was 22%.**



28% of UTLA educators work a second job on top of teaching



“If I have to continue working a second job, **I will leave teaching.**”

“The costs of living have outpaced my salary and my priority is now my second job in order to make ends meet. Nearby districts that pay more for the same position are leading the push for my exit.”

Low salaries do not stop public school educators from carving out part of their paychecks to buy the resources students need.



All UTLA members, no matter how many years they have spent in education, **spend a significant amount of money out of their own pockets – an average of \$935 a year.**

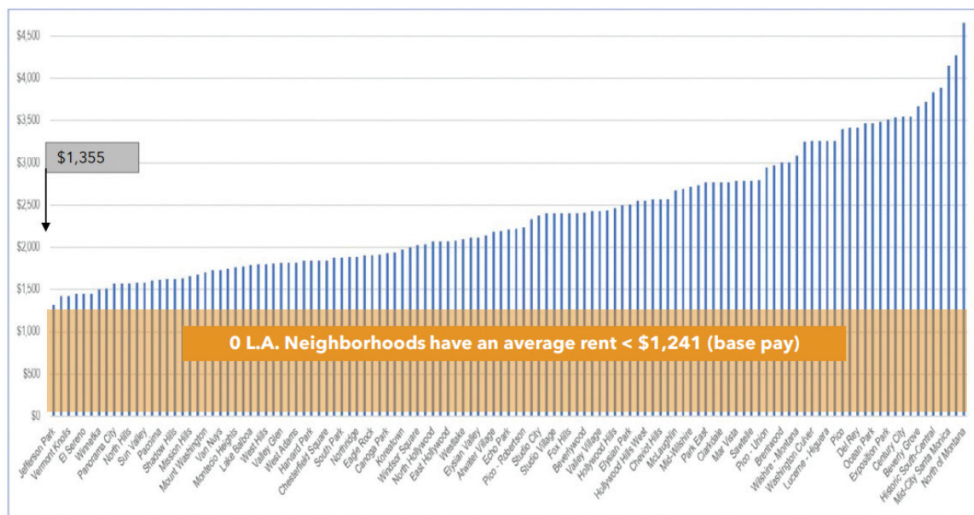
HOUSING CRISIS IMPACTS EDUCATORS AND LAUSD FAMILIES

As poor compensation, poor working conditions, and journalistic and political hostility to the profession have undermined retention of the existing workforce, fewer young workers look to public education as a possible future career. Challenges to retention thus intensify recruitment demands.

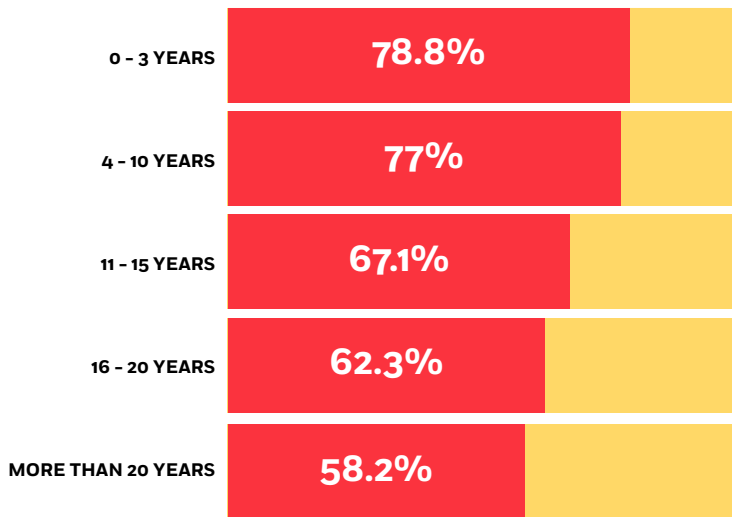
The most salient barrier to recruitment at LAUSD is the large increase in the cost of living. **According to a June 2021 LAUSD report to the Board of Education, there is not a single neighborhood in the City of LA where housing prices are low enough for a first-year LAUSD teacher to live without being “rent burdened.”**

While LAUSD found that the “affordability threshold” for monthly rent and utilities at a starting salary of \$51,440 was a monthly cost of \$1,286 to the educator, the district also found that the lowest average rent across Los Angeles neighborhoods was \$1,355.

“I cannot afford to live in the community I grew up in and now teach in.”



66% of UTLA educators cannot afford to live in the neighborhood in which they serve



“I cannot afford to be a teacher and live in a commutable area of L.A. as a single mom. I share a one bedroom apartment despite... teaching for almost 8 years.”

“I can’t afford to live in L.A. as a teacher and be able to raise a family.”

The LAUSD Office of the Chief Financial Officer has made the connection between a high cost of living and the financial health of the district. **In their most recent Second Interim Financial Report, the CFO justifies their projections for an accelerated decline in student enrollments on the basis of a “lack of affordable housing” for district families.**

5 CORE SOLUTIONS TO THE CRISIS

We are at a unique place in time. There are billions in new state and federal education funds for the first time in generations, with LAUSD unrestricted reserves exceeding \$3 billion.

In 2022, UTLA members engaged in a deeply democratic process with colleagues, parents, and community allies over months of meetings and dialogue to address the urgent needs of educators, students, and our communities. The Beyond Recovery Platform is the result of that process and covers five core solutions to the crisis.

1. PAY INCREASES: CLOSE THE EDUCATOR WAGE GAP

As outlined in this summary, the UTLA Educator Shortage report raises a series of red flags: Educators face a more than 20% wage penalty from the moment they sign a contract with LAUSD, and that grows to 30% by mid-career. 28% of UTLA educators hold a second job to make ends meet. 66% of UTLA educators can't afford to live in the communities where they work. There is no path forward to retaining the educators we have, and attracting new people to the field, that does not invest in the people who do the work of public education.

The Beyond Recovery vision:

- 20% raise over two years for all UTLA bargaining unit members.
- Greater pay equity for educators who suffer from an unequal salary system, including Adult Educators, State Preschool teachers, Career and Technical Ed teachers, Early Education teachers, and Substitute teachers.
- Expanded and improved differentials for bilingual education and advanced degrees, as well as improved pay for extra work outside of regular duties.

2. SMALLER CLASS SIZES & MORE STUDENT SUPPORT

With the 2019 UTLA strike, UTLA educators won a reduction in class sizes and the contractual right to enforce class size caps. This was an historic victory that opened the door for more wins, and now is the time to fight for more. The current caps still allow class sizes as high as 39 students in high school and 36 in elementary and middle school. Lower Special Education caseloads and lower student/staff ratios for counselors, PSAs, PSWs, and school psychologists would have the same dramatic impact as smaller class sizes: more one-on-one support for students.

The Beyond Recovery vision:

- Universal class size reduction across all grade levels.
- Meaningful support for Special Education in the form of reduced caseloads and paid time for IEPs.
- Increased staffing and lower caseloads for counselors, PSAs, PSWs, and school psychologists.
- A wholistic learning environment with more arts and music, ethnic studies, dual-language programs, tutoring, and field trips.

3. END OVER-TESTING OF STUDENTS

The Educator Shortage Survey report details the deleterious impact of overtesting students and micromanaging the work of educators. Students are subject to too many morale-sapping, time-draining, money-wasting standardized tests and educators are left demoralized by the diminution of their professional discretion.

The Beyond Recovery vision:

- Eliminate all standardized assessments that are not state or federally required.

4. EQUITY FOR SCHOOLS & COMMUNITIES

With 86% of LAUSD students living in poverty, we should not pit poor schools against slightly poorer schools. All schools should start with a baseline foundation, with schools of greater need getting additional resources on top of that. Every student deserves to use their school library. Every student deserves a nurse at their campus. Every student deserves time with their counselor.

The Beyond Recovery vision:

- Every school, across the district, regardless of neighborhood, must have the following foundation:
 - A nurse every day
 - Fully staffed library
 - Manageable class sizes
 - Special Education caseload caps
 - More counselors, PSWs, PSAs, and psychologists
- LAUSD must support housing, environment, immigration, and COVID-19 recovery needs for school families and the broader community.
- Rejection of all market-based schemes for our public schools and creation of an Equity System to identify equity gaps in the district and create plans for increasing equity.

5. EXPAND COMMUNITY SCHOOLS & TARGETED SUPPORTS

Because of the work of educators, students, and families, LA has been a leader in the growing national movement for Community Schools. The 34 existing Community Schools in LA have shown how schools with resources for family/community/youth engagement, broadened curriculum, and wrap-around services can transform education.

The Beyond Recovery vision:

- Fully fund 136 Community Schools across the district.
- Expand the Black Student Achievement Program with additional social/emotional health supports and culturally relevant curriculum.

THE TIME FOR ACTION IS NOW

Educators, students, and families have dealt with the consequences of the deliberate underfunding of public education and social services for decades. During the pandemic, these long-standing inequities were laid bare, and the demands on educators have driven the educator shortage to crisis levels.

The UTLA Educator Shortage Report amplifies the urgency of taking action now. Even though LAUSD knows about the crisis facing education, the district has refused to engage in any serious way on the Beyond Recovery platform. Under Carvalho, they are wasting \$122 million on a one-time PR stunt to add four extra days to the school calendar instead of investing in smaller class sizes, increased student support staffing, and proven educator recruitment and retention initiatives.

The Beyond Recovery platform will fundamentally reinvigorate the structure of public schools and build community institutions with the institutional capacity necessary to thrive. That is the path forward for LA schools, and the vision educators, students, and families will organize to win together.

\$1.6B → **\$2.1B** → **\$3B**

LAUSD HAS MORE THAN \$3 BILLION IN RESERVES TO INVEST IN OUR STUDENTS AND OUR WORK.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“Burned Out, Priced Out: Solutions to the Educator Shortage Crisis” is the work of UTLA Researcher Andrew Elrod, UTLA Data Specialist Anthony LeClair, and UTLA Research Assistant Millie Guerbaoui.

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and writing the report, and above all UTLA members, whose commitment to the future of public education enabled this project.

The full report, with citations, will be released in mid-August 2022 and posted on utla.net.

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