

Updates on AIR Studies

SB460 Commission on Recruitment and Retention

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Agenda

- Ground updates in four topics of interest
- Share most recent findings from Nevada's Exit/Transfer Survey from 2025-26
- Share updates for each study
- Provide next steps

Topics selected by the commission

Providing health insurance to educators through the Public Employees Benefits Program

Allocation of funding for scholarships for students seeking to become a school counselor, social worker or psychologist

Provision of Nevada teacher advancement scholarships

Allocation of funding to school districts to assist a licensed teacher with obtaining an endorsement in a shortage area

Results from Nevada's Exit/Transfer Survey 2025-26

Nevada Educator Voices -

Questions



Providing health insurance to educators through the Public Employees Benefits Program

Research Questions and Methods

What is the relationship between health insurance benefits and educator recruitment and retention?

- Scanned literature including scholarly literature, research reports, and case studies

How have other states consolidated health insurance plans from county-specific to state-specific?

- Interviewed state plan administrators, district HR personnel, and union leaders

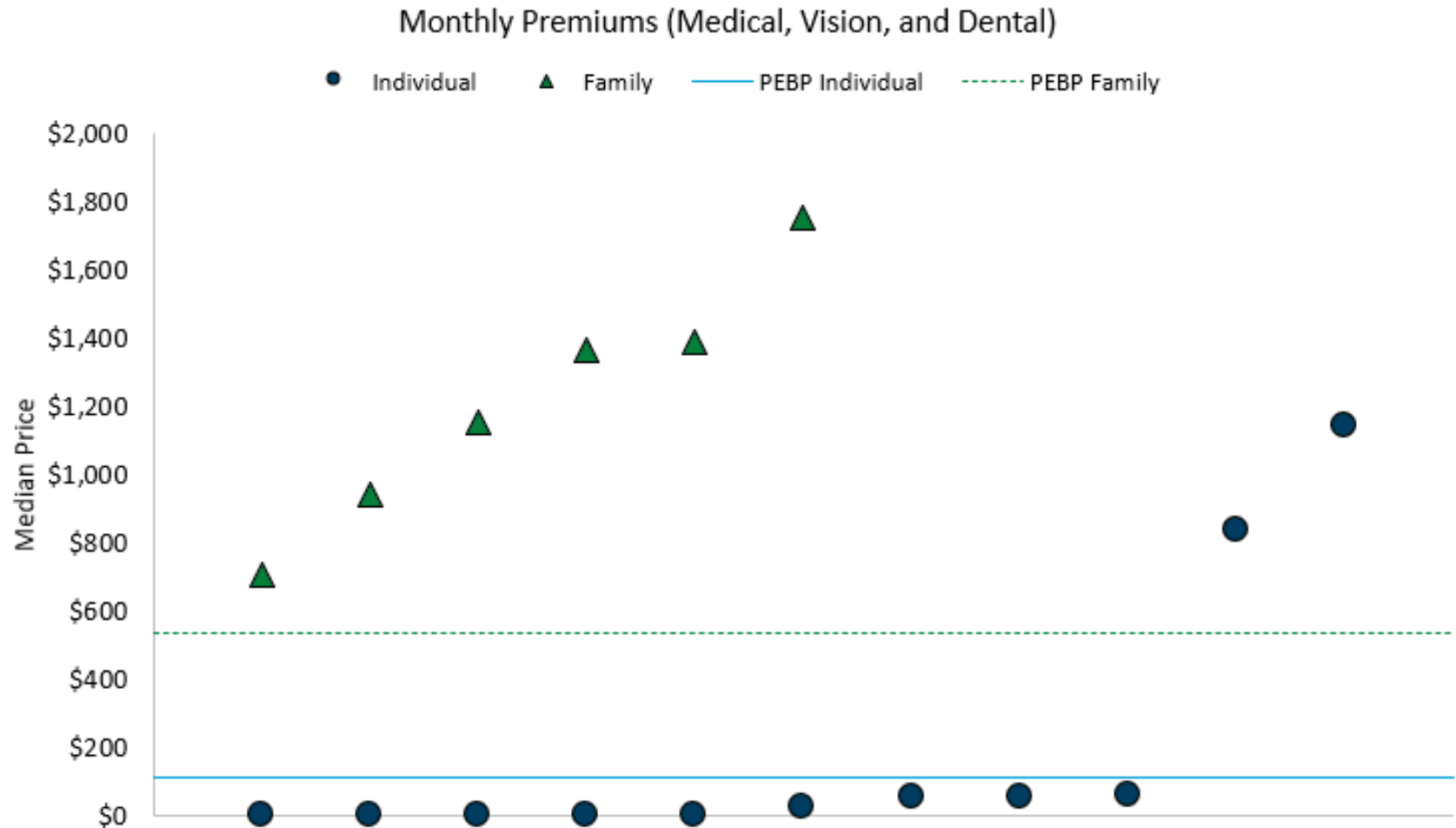
How do Nevada's county level health insurance plans compare to the Public Employees Benefits Program plans?

- Compared Nevada counties' health plans with the Public Employees Benefits Program plans to identify key differences

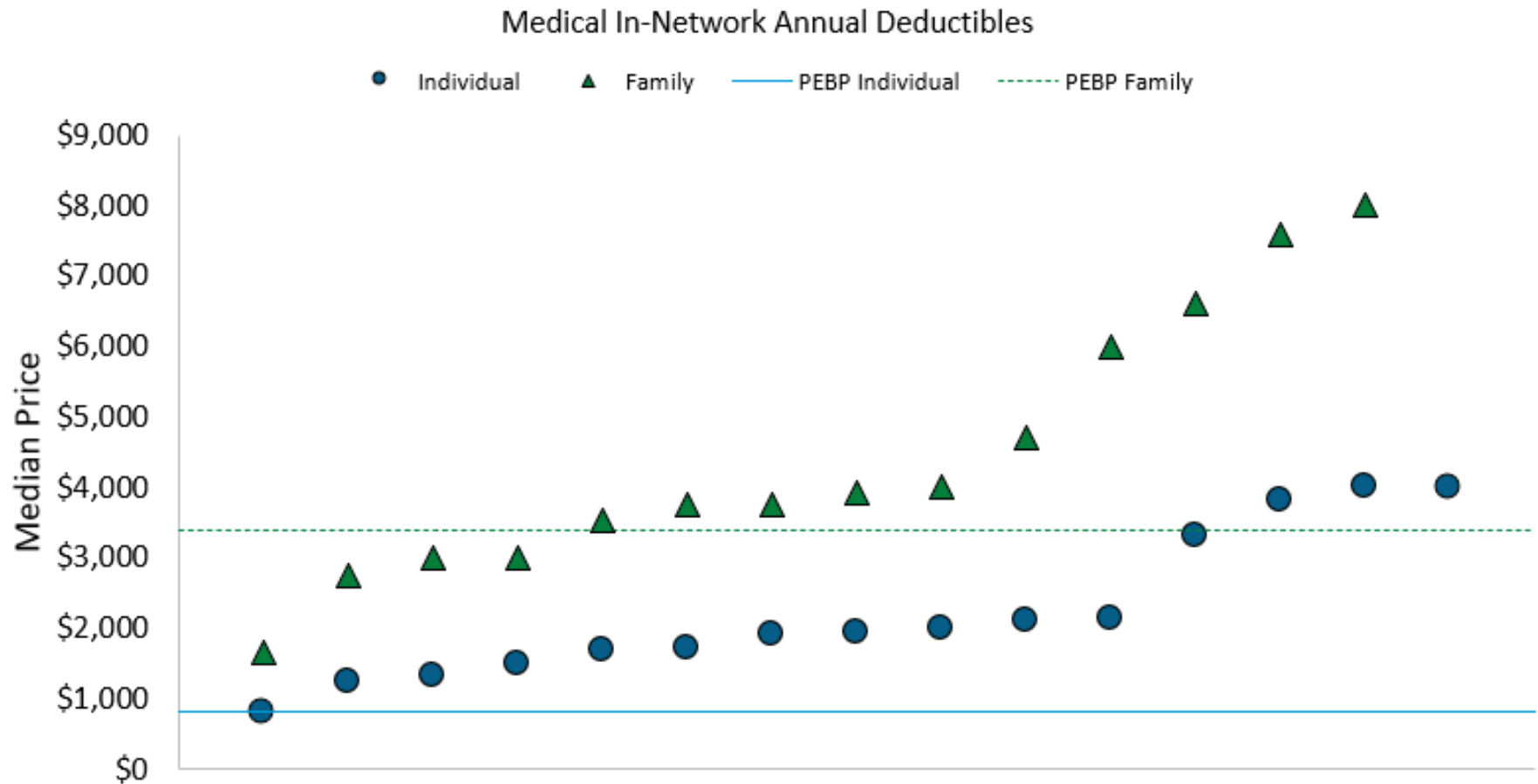
What do we know from research?

- Educator recruitment and retention are tied to health insurance benefits such as premium affordability and coverage quality (Tziganuk 2024; Lubotsky 2015).
- Additional incentives, such as less expensive health insurance, were cited by educators as an influential factor for recruitment and retention (Allegretto 2020; Tziganuk 2024; Schutsky 2025).
- Health insurance premiums have increased disproportionately compared to educator salaries (Lubotsky 2015; Hawksworth-Lutzow 2024).
- State-level health insurance plans can be beneficial for educators in rural and less populated areas, where premiums are more sensitive to small enrollment pools (Barker 2019).

PEBP premiums are higher for most individuals, but lower for families compared to school districts' premiums



PEBP medical annual deductibles & out-of-pocket maximums are lower than many school districts for in-network coverage



Who have we spoken to?

We spoke with stakeholders in two states to learn about the implementation and administration of state-level health insurance for educators.

Georgia	Oregon
Georgia Association of Educators, Leadership Experience leading state and local-level support for educators, including advocacy and training efforts.	Public Employees Benefit Board & Oregon Educators Benefit Board • PEBP & OEGB Leadership Eight years of experience serving as the director for PEBP and OEGB • 2 OEGB Board Members Serve as board members for the OEGB and local school district boards

What have we learned? (Preliminary Findings)

Administrative

Oregon and Georgia

- Created **separate educator plans under the same umbrella** as their state employee plans to preserve oversight boards and provide tailored plans.
- **Passed their policies via legislation.**

Cost-Related

Oregon and Georgia

- State-level plans can **reduce administrative burdens** for districts leading to cost savings.
- Districts can opt-in to a state-level plan while **continuing to subsidize employee premiums.**
- The policy resulted in **larger risk pools, lower premiums, and reduced other healthcare costs.**

What have we learned? (Preliminary Findings)

Opt-in

- **Optional opt-in models require safeguards** (e.g., enrollment periods or participation requirements) to prevent cherry-picking.
- **Georgia**
 - State pays for employer health insurance costs, \$1,885 per certified school employee per month in FY 2026, for those enrolled in the state plan.
 - All public school districts opt-in to the state-level plan.
- **Oregon**
 - Requires all non-self-insured districts to opt-in once collective bargaining agreement within the school district expires.
 - Districts cannot opt-out once they've opted-in to ensure the risk pool remains stable.
 - Most school districts and all community colleges have opted-in to the state-level plan

Questions



Scholarship Programs for Student Support Staff

School-Based Mental Health Professionals (SBMHP)

Research Questions and Methods

To what extent can scholarship workforce programs strengthen the pipeline for SBMHPs?

- Scanned the scholarly literature, research reports, and case studies to understand the relationship

How have states enacted and implemented policies designed to reduce barriers for SBMHPs?

- Identified states that have implemented scholarship programs and interviewed administrators at the state, district administrators, and grant recipients

What have been the facilitators and barriers to implementing policies?

- Analyzing results from qualitative interviews to synthesize lessons learned

What do we know from research?

- **Financial barriers**—graduate tuition, unpaid field experiences, and debt burden—can limit entry into school counseling, school psychology, and school social work, especially for candidates from historically underrepresented backgrounds or candidates preparing to serve high-need communities.
 - ACA’s 2024 Workforce Survey found that the average counselor student loan debt (\$79,434) exceeded the average annual salary (\$70,956), raising concerns about debt burden and long-term workforce sustainability.
- **Financial supports appear most promising when paired with broader workforce strategies**, such as district-university partnerships, supervised placements, mentorship, rural access strategies, and service commitments.

Student access to school-based mental health supports is lacking

Role	Recommended Ratio	National Ratio	Nevada Ratio
<u>School Counselors</u>	1 : 250	1 : 372	1 : 437
<u>School Psychologists</u>	1 : 500	1 : 1071	1 : 1866
<u>School Social Workers</u>	1 : 250	National estimates vary	1 : 8730

- National student-to-provider ratios continue to exceed recommended levels for school-based mental health supports, limiting schools' capacity to support student mental health and learning (Learning Policy Institute, 2023).
- Lower student-to-counselor ratios are associated with stronger academic and engagement outcomes across multiple states (Donohue et al., 2022), although outcomes also depend on how counseling services are structured and delivered (Kearney et al., 2021; Shi & Brown, 2020).

Sources: ASCA (2024–25); NASP (2024); SSWAA (2022); Hopeful Futures Campaign (2022)

Who have we spoken to?

California	Oregon
State Grant Program Administrators California Office of Teacher Credentialing. Oversees Grant administration to school districts. Preparation Program Administrators Professor and program administrator at Loyola-Marymount University who partners with school districts to place students	State Grant Program Administrators Representatives from the Higher Education Coordinating Commission and the Oregon Department of Education who oversee the Oregon Teacher Scholarship Program. They administer scholarships to students (both teachers and SBMHPs) and work with IHE partners.

What have we learned? (Preliminary Findings)

- **Nevada faces significant shortages** across school counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers, with student-to-provider ratios exceeding recommended levels and particularly acute challenges for rural and underserved communities.
- **Other states use a range of approaches**, including California's residency-based model, Oregon's scholarship model, and Idaho's loan repayment or reimbursement model tied to rural and shortage-area service.
- **Program design matters**: eligibility criteria, funding levels, service commitments, rural placement supports, workforce diversity goals, and partnerships with preparation programs and districts all shape how well financial incentives align with workforce needs.

What have we learned? (Preliminary Findings)

California:

- California's School Counselor Residency Grant Program **pairs state and district matching funds to provide stipends**, recruit existing teachers and paraprofessionals through Grow Your Own pathways, partnerships with state universities, and build district capacity to recruit candidates who reflect their school communities.
 - Participants can receive up to \$40,000 in stipends from the state and district (if matching). Participants devote 50% of time to the residency and the other 50% to another school-based role.
 - Time constraints and financial issues are barriers for participants

What have we learned? (Preliminary Findings)

Oregon

- **Design the program around participants' actual pathways—not a traditional student model.** Working adults and graduate students need flexible enrollment, prorated awards, year-round funding, and support that aligns with clinical and licensure requirements.
- **Financial assistance is essential, but funding alone is not enough.** Participants may also need help navigating program requirements, paid release time, continued employment and benefits, mentoring, and coordinated support from districts and preparation programs.
- **Build partnerships, data systems, and evaluation into the program from the outset.** Cross-agency expertise and strong IT infrastructure can reduce administrative burden, improve outreach and implementation, and support tracking of longer-term workforce outcomes.

Questions



State Approaches to Supporting Teacher Add-On Endorsements

Preliminary Findings

Research Questions and Methods

What does the teacher shortage landscape look like?

- Scanned scholarly literature and research reports to characterize the teacher shortage landscape

How have states implemented policies to reduce teacher shortages through add-on endorsements?

- Identified states with financial assistance programs for add-on endorsements and conducted interviews with key stakeholders

What have been the facilitators and barriers to implementing add-on endorsement programs?

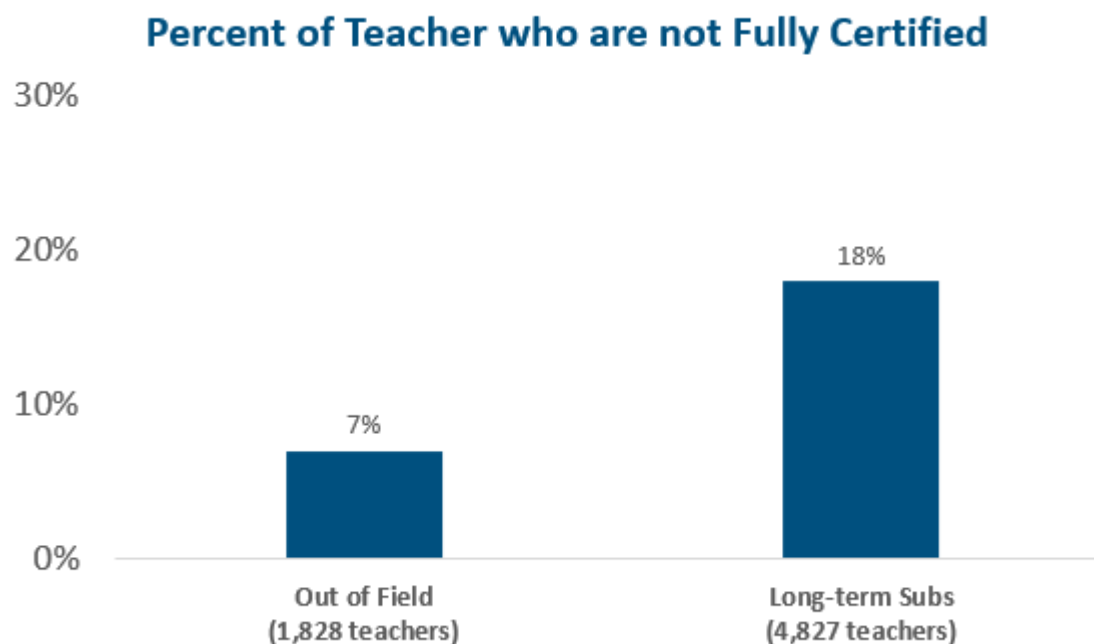
- Analyzing qualitative interview data to identify implementation facilitators and barriers

What does existing literature tell us?

- **Teacher shortages extend beyond vacancies.** Schools may be staffed by teachers working outside their certified subject area, grade level, or specialization (Hobbs & Porsch, 2021; Learning Policy Institute, 2025; U.S. Department of Education, 2016).
- **Teacher assignment matters for teaching and learning.** Out-of-field teaching may affect teachers' content and pedagogical knowledge and, in turn, instructional practice and student outcomes (du Plessis, 2015; Van Overschelde, 2022; Van Overschelde & Piatt, 2020).
- **Qualification gaps have equity implications.** Access to appropriately prepared teachers is not evenly distributed across schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

Teacher shortages in Nevada

Out of **27,081** teachers in Nevada during the 2023-24 school year:



Note: 1,828 teachers were out of field, 4,827 were long-term substitutes. Out-of-field teachers teach outside their certified subject area, grade level, or area of specialization, often without adequate preparation or qualifications (Hobbs & Porsch, 2021).

Source: Nevada Report Card, 2024 educator workforce data at <https://nevadareportcard.nv.gov/DI/nv/2024> (pulled on June 17, 2026)

Overview of add-on endorsement programs

	Washington: Educator Retooling Conditional Scholarship	Arizona: General Education Teacher to SPED Teacher (GETSET)	Colorado: Rural Inservice Educator Stipend
Target Group	All teachers can pursue shortage-area endorsements	General education teachers pursue SPED certification.	Rural educators pursue additional qualifications and endorsements
Financial Aid	\$3,000 per endorsement add-on	\$20,000 per year in tuition assistance	\$6,000 stipend
Requirements	○ Current Washington teaching certificate required ○ Endorsement in a designated shortage area ○ Two-year service obligation for loan forgiveness	○ Enrollment in a state-approved preparation program ○ Continued employment during participation ○ Multi-year completion expectations (2–5 years) ○ Commitment to teaching in SPED roles	○ Enrollment in a qualifying higher education program ○ Three-year commitment in a rural Colorado district ○ Available to educators in rural or small rural districts

Who we spoke with:

State program administrators

We spoke with state-level administrators responsible for designing, administering, or overseeing financial support programs for educators.

Arizona	Colorado	Washington
Arizona Dept. of Education • Director of Professional Learning & Sustainability Oversees GETSET planning and program decision-making. • Lead ESS Recruitment & Retention Specialist Manages GETSET applications, contracts, documentation, and reimbursements.	• Colorado Center for Rural Education, Director Leads implementation and administration of state-supported rural educator stipend programs. • Colorado Department of Higher Education, Educator Preparation Program Manager Supports RIES funding administration and provides technical assistance.	Washington Student Achievement Council • Assistant Director Oversees the Educator Retooling Conditional Scholarship and approves applications and payments. • Program Manager Manages day-to-day administration of the Educator Retooling Conditional Scholarship.

Who we spoke with:

Educator preparation providers

We also spoke with educator preparation providers to understand how add-on endorsement pathways operate in practice and how institutions support participants.

Arizona	Colorado	Washington
University of Arizona, Professor of Disability and Psychoeducational Studies Provides perspective on special education credential pathways, preparation options, recruitment, and financial supports available to educators.	Colorado University- Denver, Director of Partnership for Rural Educator Preparation (T- PREP) Provides perspective on rural educator preparation, access to preparation programs, and pathways into high-need licensure areas.	Western Washington University, Woodring College of Education, Program Manager Manages add-on endorsement applications, registration, program requirements, faculty coordination, budgeting, and student logistics.

What we're learning about Arizona's General Education Teacher to SPED Teacher (GETSET)

- **Enrollment/Persistence**

- GETSET is a Grow-Your-Own model for teachers with 2+ years in their district; prior teaching experience and work with students with disabilities, supports success.
- The reimbursement structure can create a significant financial barrier by requiring some teachers to cover tuition costs upfront.

- **Outcomes**

- Program scale is constrained by both design and administration: districts generally nominate one candidate per year, while contract and reimbursement requirements limit state administrative capacity.
- Moving general education teachers into SPED can have a net-zero effect on staffing: one high-need vacancy is filled, but another is created. Arizona therefore views GETSET as one part of a broader workforce strategy.

What we're learning from Colorado's Rural In-Service Educator Stipend

- **Enrollment/Persistence:**

- How far the stipend goes varies by institution; administrators described a tradeoff between larger awards and serving more educators.
- Relationships and individualized navigation are central to implementation. Interviewees emphasized direct outreach and having a dedicated point of contact help educators navigate program and funding requirements.
- Colorado built administrative capacity into the program from the outset; the authorizing legislation funded dedicated staff rather than adding program administration to an existing agency's workload.

- **Outcomes**

- RIES recipients have high retention: interviewees reported about 91% remain in rural education for three years or more. Recipients may move among rural districts, allowing mobility while retaining educators in rural communities.

What we're learning from Washington's Retooling Scholarship

- **Enrollment/Persistence**

- Washington targets current teachers seeking shortage-area endorsements, especially SPED and ELL; prior teaching experience may support completion and added credentials may help teachers remain employed during district cuts.
- Service obligations are flexible: recipients earn double credit for teaching in any shortage area and single credit for teaching elsewhere.
- The \$3,000 award is paid directly to educators for flexible use but covers only about 25% of tuition for one interviewed SPED pathway.
- Demand exceeds funding; awards are first-come, first-served rather than based on financial need or shortage severity.
- Clinical placement capacity can delay completion; one provider reported too few SPED mentors for one-to-one placements.

- **Outcomes**

- Washington is only now building longitudinal tracking of where recipients teach and how long they remain.

What comes next?

Deepen the evidence

- Continue to interview individuals across Nevada and other states who can provide a new perspective

Synthesize findings

- Describe similarities, differences, and implementation considerations across the states
- Provide lessons learned for Nevada

Create deliverables

- Develop research memos, policy briefs, and webinars to document what we've learned and the implications for Nevada

Questions

