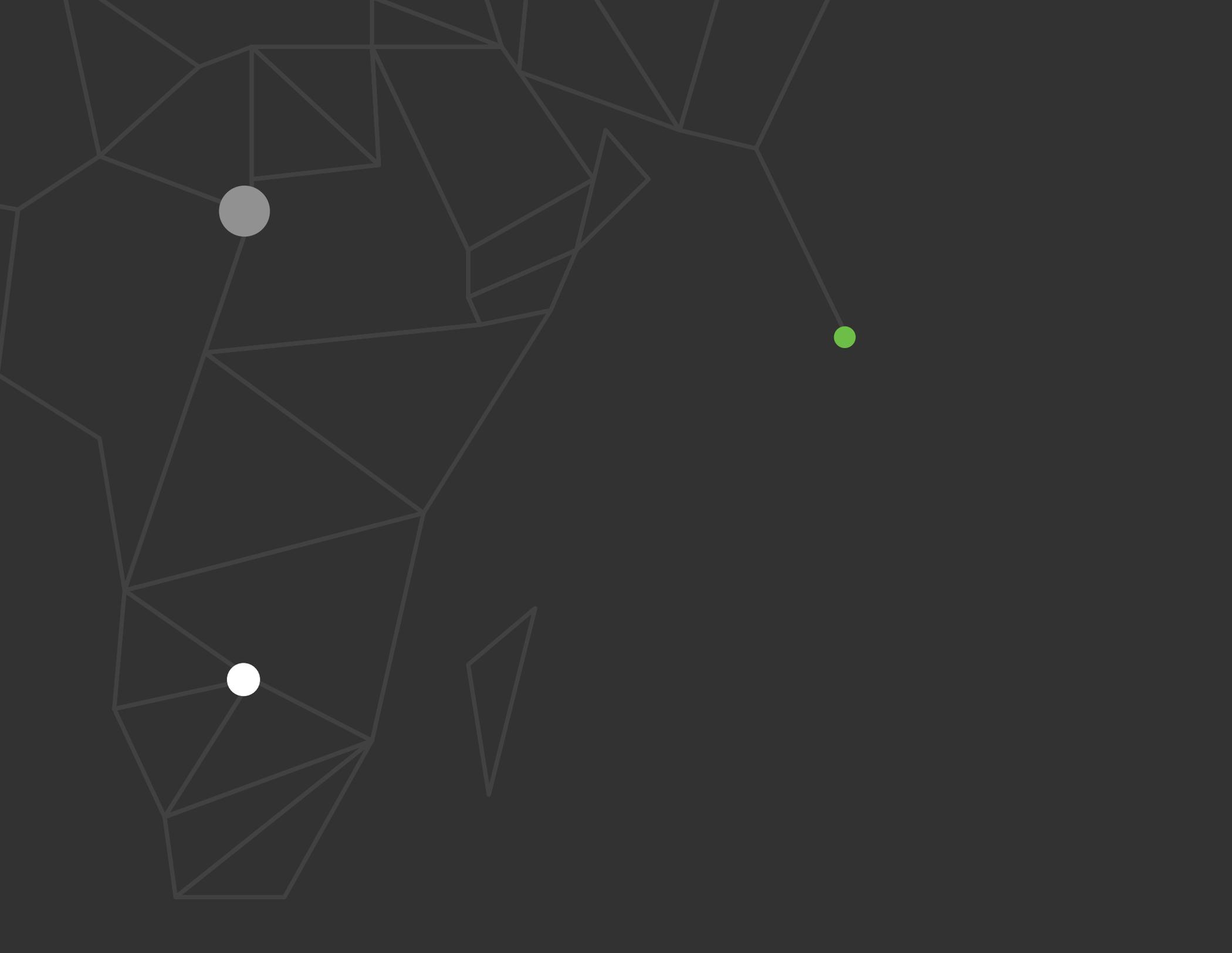


# INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION RECRUITMENT REPORT

2020

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# INTRODUCTION

In our third annual International Education Recruitment Report, we once again set out to provide a resource to guide international school leaders on an area of particular importance: international teacher recruitment.

The international education market is a rapidly changing landscape, with the supply of qualified teachers struggling to keep up with the increasing staffing demands of new and expanding international schools all over the world.

For more than 15 years, Teach Away has been working side by side with thousands of schools around the world to support their recruitment efforts. In recent years, we've seen countless schools struggle to adapt to the growing demand for educators and, consequently, the increasing competition in recruitment.

This year we surveyed dozens of international schools to better understand their current recruitment processes, and the key challenges they are facing in this evolving market. Within this report, you will find valuable data on how to optimize the process, as well as practical solutions to the greatest challenges.

To help determine how to overcome the problems facing schools, we went straight to our network of educators. Based on responses from over 16,000 international teaching candidates, this report provides valuable insights to help international school leaders like you better understand your candidates.

Of the schools we surveyed this year, **74% agree that it's extremely important to make the right hires for their schools.** Given the importance of teacher recruitment, it's imperative that schools do everything possible to make the recruitment process perform as well as possible for both the schools and the candidates.

We put together this report to help you do just that.

“

**A quality teaching staff that fosters student achievement is the key to maintaining and growing student enrollment in international schools. In short, without great teachers, we can't have great schools.”**

**Peter Bateman,**

Executive Director,

Association of International Schools in Africa (AISA)

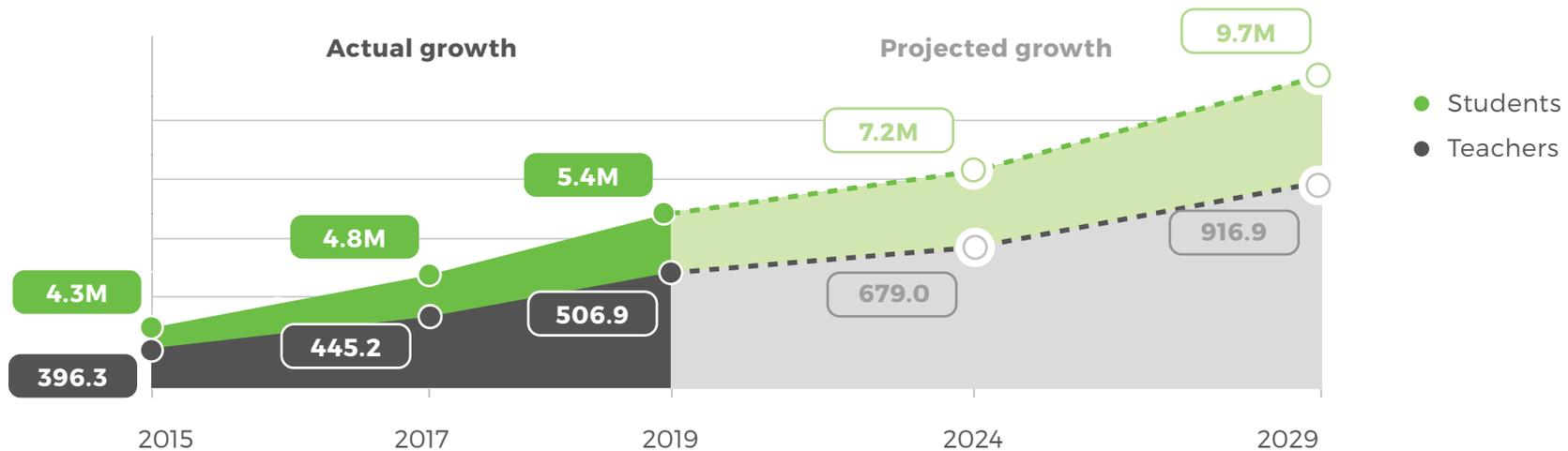
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## THE CHANGING INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION LANDSCAPE

Globally, the demand for international school education continues to grow with more schools opening their doors each year. But supply isn't keeping up with demand. While more and more teachers are needed, overall, the teacher population is declining. Greater workload and stress, fewer students entering the profession, more teachers leaving the profession early, as well as other factors have resulted in a significant strain on international schools. Finding and attracting great teachers – who are the right fit for your unique school – has become more difficult than ever before, and data shows the competition is only going to continue to grow.

### ISC Research's growth projections for the international schools market over the next 10 years



Source: ISC Research, The Global Opportunities Report 2019

But don't just take our word for it. We surveyed 63 school heads to get their thoughts on how the international education recruitment market is trending, what their primary challenges are, and how the difficulty of recruiting candidates is impacting their recruitment process. Here is what they had to say:

**89%** of schools said they sometimes or frequently have trouble finding qualified candidates to fill their open roles (3% always, 8% rarely)

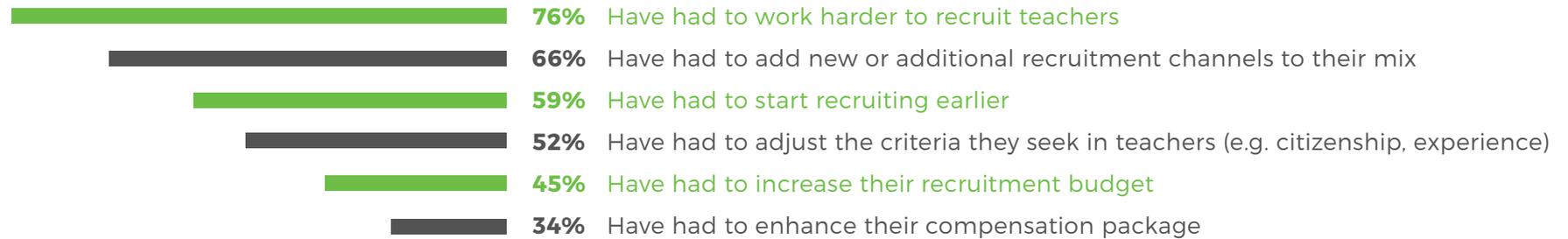
**44%** of schools said they see recruitment becoming more difficult than it's been in the past (only 12% said it's gotten easier)

### Schools' biggest challenges when it comes to international teacher recruitment



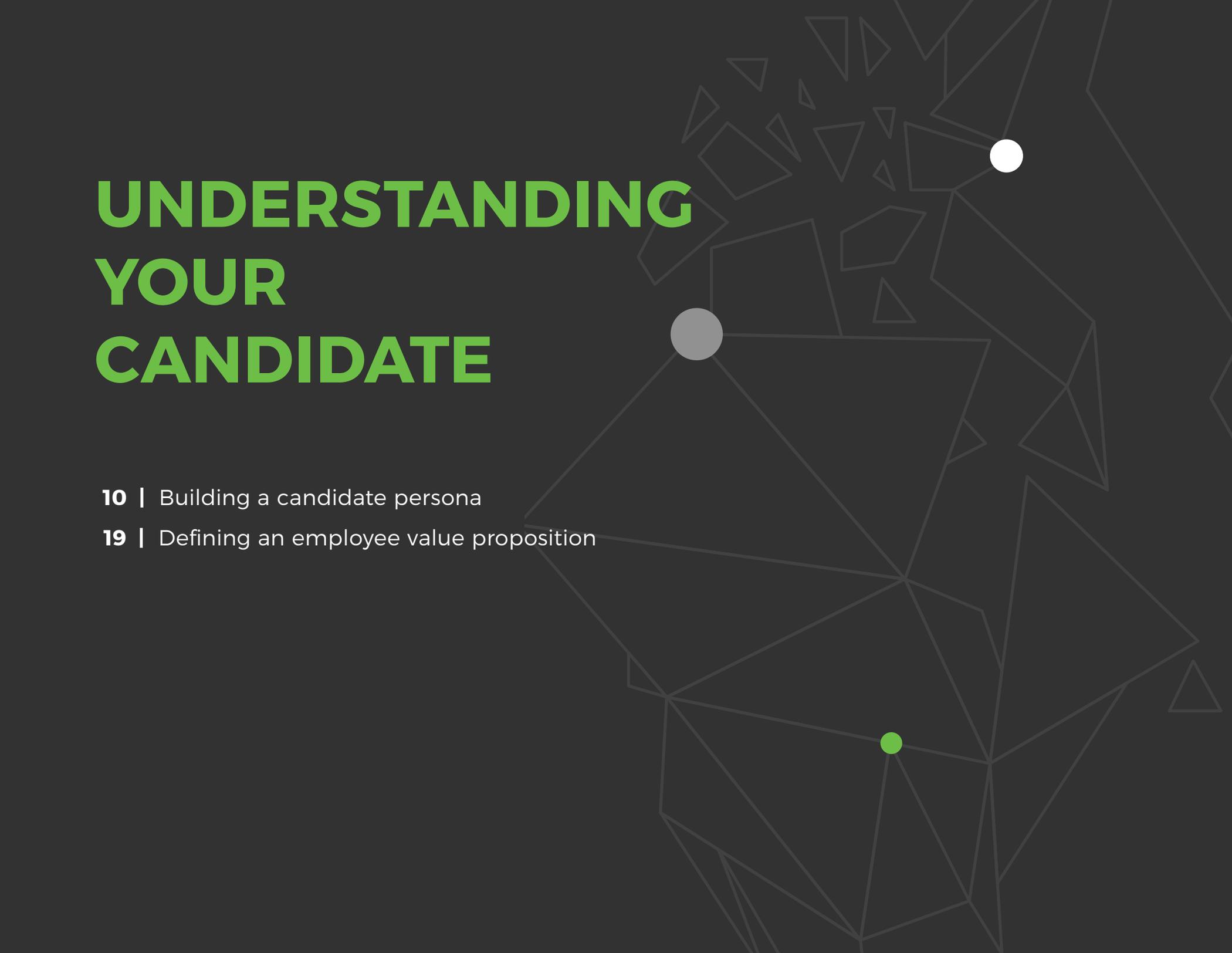
As you can see, according to your peers, it's getting harder and harder to attract the right candidates and this challenge has consequences beyond the scope of recruiting.

**The increased difficulty of attracting qualified teachers has had numerous impacts on schools' recruitment efforts**



So, how do we overcome these challenges? Read on to learn about candidate insights that will help you reach and attract the teachers you're looking for. Plus, get expert tips on how to optimize your recruitment process with tried and true recruitment best practices.

# UNDERSTANDING YOUR CANDIDATE

The background features a dark grey field with a network of thin, light grey lines forming various polygons. Three solid circles are placed at different points: a white circle in the upper right, a grey circle in the middle left, and a green circle in the lower right.

**10** | Building a candidate persona

**19** | Defining an employee value proposition

If you want to attract the right candidates for your school, you first have to understand who your ideal candidate really is and how to appeal to them. One way to do this is to build a candidate persona and align it with an effective employee value proposition. In this section, we'll give you the tools to do just that.

## BUILDING A CANDIDATE PERSONA

Top corporations around the world use customer (or buyer) personas to represent the key traits of their largest market segments. If you apply this concept to international teacher recruitment, you can create teacher candidate personas that will help you attract and hire your ideal candidates.

A candidate persona is an archetype of WHO your ideal candidate is: what motivates them, where they're interested in teaching and why, as well as the job search methods they prefer to use and when they're looking. By understanding your ideal candidate, you're taking the first step to putting in place an effective recruitment strategy, plan and process that will allow you to find the candidates who perfectly fit your school's needs.

An actionable candidate persona should include:

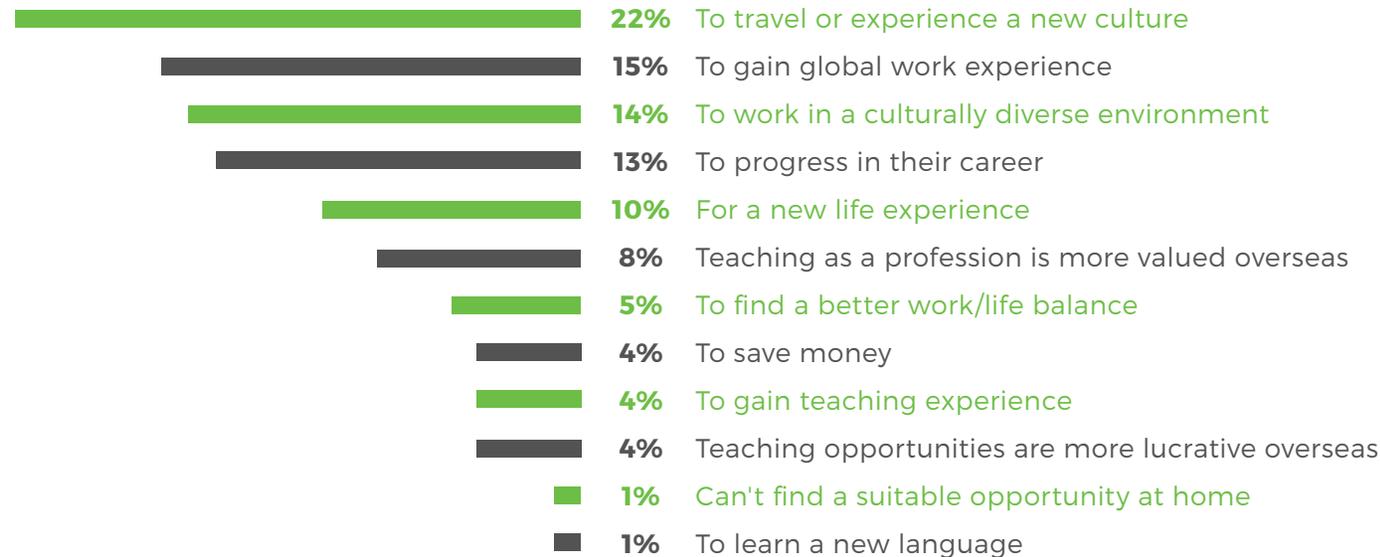
- Current facts (current position, academic background, experience, etc.)
- What fits your company (personality, habits, core values, etc.)
- Inputs and interests (motivation, skill sets, hobbies, etc.)
- Why (and why not) would this person work for you?

To give you a general sense of what matters to international teaching candidates, we surveyed our extensive network of teachers to find out their motivations, preferences, and approaches to job and employer research. The five insights that follow serve as a starting point in helping you create your own candidate persona.

## 1. WHY DO CANDIDATES WANT TO TEACH ABROAD?

When it comes to recruitment, perhaps the most crucial factor to understand is WHY candidates want to move to a foreign country to teach. According to our survey, motivations are varied and not necessarily what you'd expect.

### Candidates' primary motivations for teaching abroad

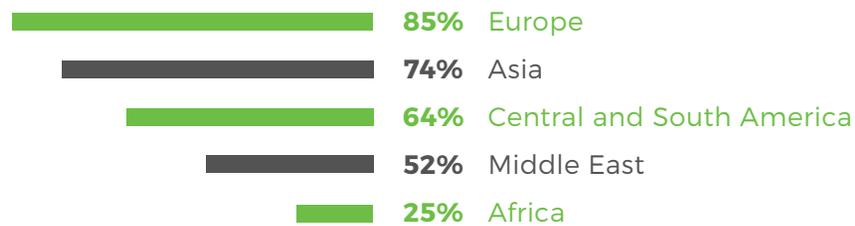


As you can see, among the candidates we surveyed, the top four reasons for wanting to teach abroad are: traveling and experiencing a new culture; gaining global work experience; working in a culturally diverse environment; and advancing their careers. When building your candidate persona, it's critical to keep these motivations top-of-mind, and later thread them into your recruitment process and messaging.

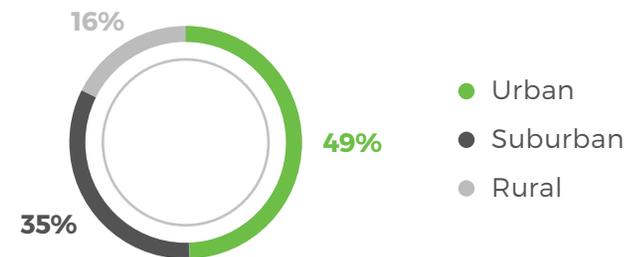
## 2. WHERE DO CANDIDATES WANT TO TEACH ABROAD?

Working in international education, it stands to reason that our next most important piece to understand is WHERE your candidates are most interested in teaching.

### The regions that teachers are most interested in teaching in



### The settings that are most desirable for teachers

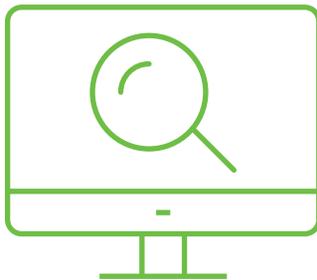


Now that you understand the locations that people are interested in teaching, don't presume that you're at a disadvantage if your school isn't represented in one of the top areas.

What this data set shows is that no two teachers are the same. There is interest in all regions. Finding and attracting those interested in yours is the challenge. It seems that for every one teacher who prefers an urban location, there's another one who prefers a suburban or rural location. The key is to understand what matters to your particular segment of the candidate market and how best to reach them.

### 3. WHAT JOB SEARCH METHODS ARE CANDIDATES USING?

How to connect with your candidate is perhaps the most important portion of the candidate persona. The tools people are using to research and search for jobs have changed dramatically with the advent of the digital age. There is now a cross-section of generations who knew a completely different method for recruitment, a generation that knows only the convenience of the digital era, and one that has been present for both. Regardless, candidates in 2020 demand more control over how they choose their career paths.

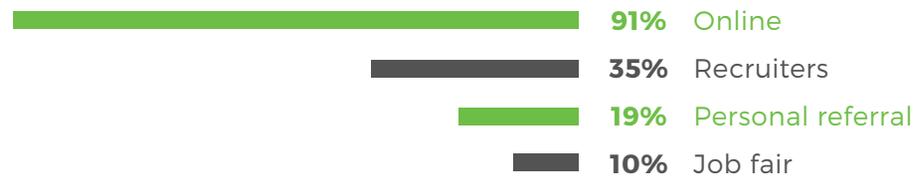


**91%**

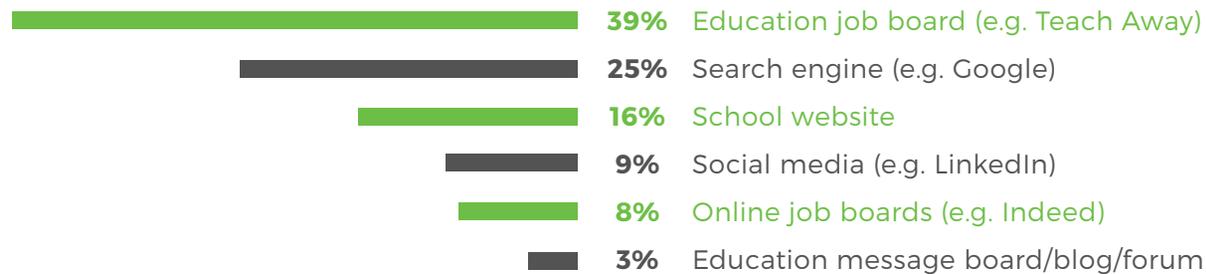
**of teachers today use online job search channels when looking for their next job.  
The takeaway: you must be visible online!**

Online search far exceeds the next most popular method, which is through a recruitment agency – a method that comes with significantly higher human capital costs.

### The job search methods candidates are using



### Candidates' preferred online job search methods



As such, more than ever before, it's critical that school heads and administrators keep up with emerging innovations and trends. Keeping a close eye on how job seekers are looking is at the heart of being able to connect with them wherever and whenever they're searching.

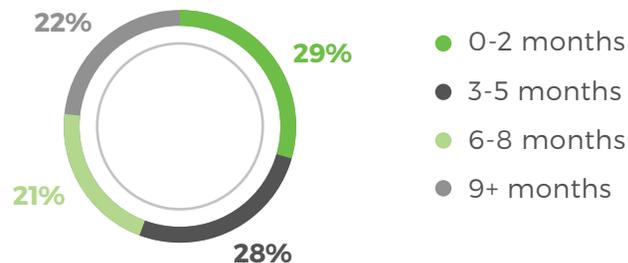
## 4. WHEN ARE CANDIDATES LOOKING FOR JOBS?

Candidates today want to take the time to really evaluate their options and start their job search early. With all of the information that's constantly available on the internet, they no longer need to wait for schools to begin their recruitment efforts to investigate future opportunities.

Thus, it's only logical that the timeline of education recruitment must be adjusted accordingly. Especially considering that international educators who are currently employed in a teaching position abroad are often asked in the fall or winter to sign a letter of intent if they are planning to extend their contract. Naturally, these often very desirable candidates want to assess their options before making further commitments.

As a result, the international educator candidate is often keeping an eye on the job search market year-round and gathering information, so that they can be ready to capitalize on an opportunity that best matches their needs.

### How far in advance of their intended start date candidates begin looking for a new opportunity



**Understanding when candidates are looking, and how long their job search journey typically takes, is a key supporting element of a comprehensive candidate persona.**



**PRO TIP:**

As more candidates research job opportunities on an ongoing basis, year-round recruiting is becoming a trend to take note of. Annual recruitment subscriptions can enable you to market your school to prospective candidates and build a talent pool throughout the year – all for a low one-time fee.

**CONTACT US TO LEARN MORE** 

## 5. WHERE DO CANDIDATES RESEARCH PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYERS?

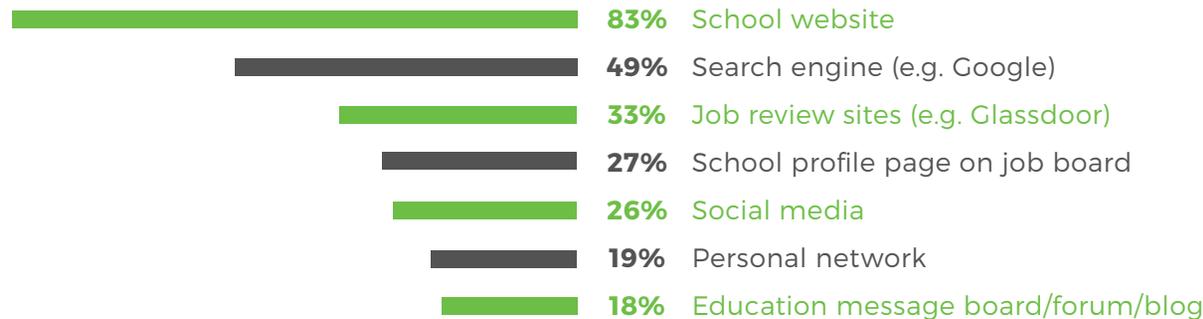
It's crucial for school administrators to keep up with how candidates are researching prospective employers and making career decisions, since new technologies are constantly altering their behavior. The internet age has led to innumerable advancements in what information is available to us and where it can be found. Thus, much like consumers who are informing themselves online and doing their due diligence before making a big purchase, job seekers are also researching prospective employers not just before they accept a job offer, but oftentimes before they even apply.



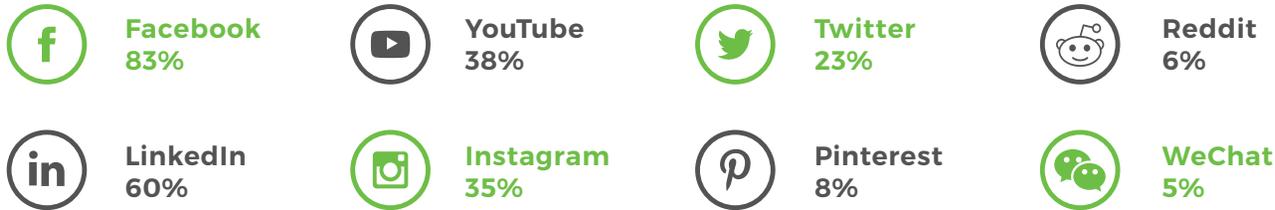
**83%**

of candidates said that they research a school before applying for a job vacancy.

### What candidates use to research a school before applying



Which social media platforms candidates use to research a school:



Candidates today are expecting to be able to find robust information about a prospective employer online – everything from what the school culture is like, to the benefits available to them, what current and past staff have to say about the work environment, and more. In fact, not being able to find the information they’re looking for can deter candidates from pursuing job opportunities at certain schools.



**56%**

**of the respondents we surveyed said not being able to find adequate information about a school would deter them from applying for a job.**

The good news is that most of the channels listed by respondents are well within our ability to control. And by looking at all of the other elements involved in building a candidate persona, we can ensure that the content we offer through these channels is catered to the candidates we know we want to attract.

## DEFINING AN EMPLOYEE VALUE PROPOSITION

So, what exactly makes a candidate decide to apply for a particular school or job? The truth is, there are many factors that play into their decisions. Some, like your school's location, are out of your control. But, as you'll see, there are many other factors that you are able to influence.

It's essential to have a clearly defined employee value proposition (EVP), which outlines everything your school has to offer candidates in return for the skills, capabilities and experiences they bring to your school. An EVP is about much more than just salary: it includes everything you have to offer to a prospective educator.

In short, an EVP should allow a school to provide a multi-faceted and persuasive answer when a candidate inevitably asks themselves (or the school): "what's in it for me?".



### Compensation

Salary



### Benefits

Medical insurance  
Vacation  
Accommodation  
Retirement



### Career

Opportunities to progress  
Professional development



### Work Environment

Work-life balance  
Autonomy  
Recognition



### Culture

Leadership  
Colleagues  
Social responsibility

Your EVP must be unique, relevant and compelling if it is to act as a key driver of talent acquisition, engagement and retention. As attracting the best talent becomes harder, a consistent and efficient communication of your EVP will become increasingly important.

## HINT

This is a great place to look at your candidate persona and ensure that everything you know about your ideal candidate is reflected in your employee value proposition. These two pieces must be fundamentally aligned.

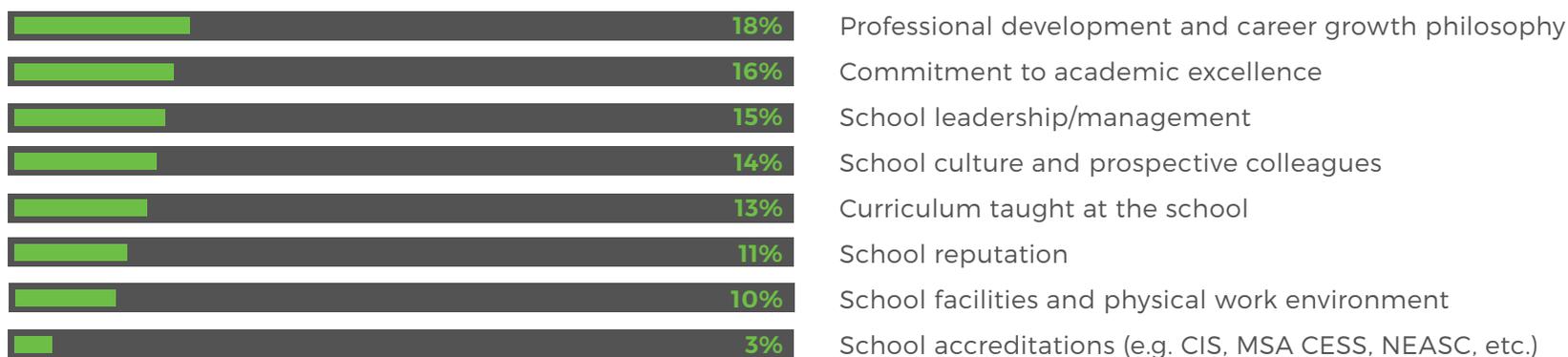
The following three insights should serve as a starting point in helping you define your employee value proposition.



## 1. WHAT MAKES CANDIDATES APPLY TO A SPECIFIC SCHOOL?

There are always factors outside of our control that we need to account for, but not focus on. When thinking about how to best present your school to candidates, it's important to look at the aspects that are within your power to influence.

**After location and compensation, the following factors are most important to candidates when considering schools**

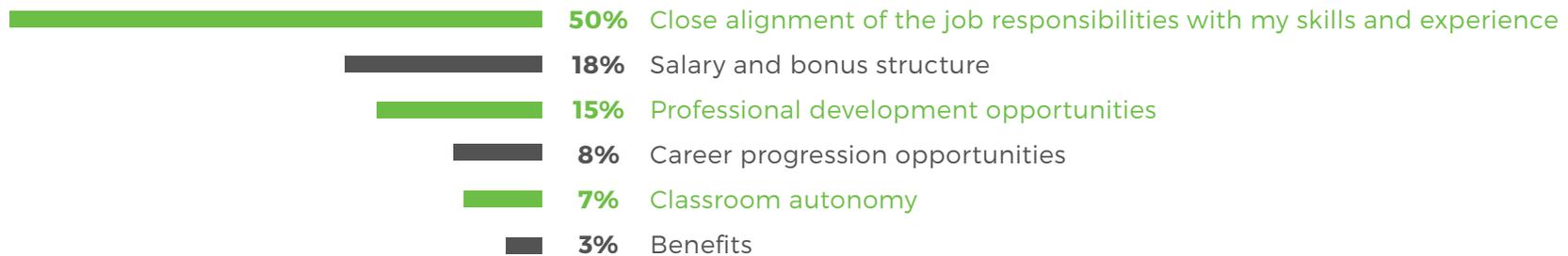


This is good news because it means that even if your school isn't able to offer the most competitive salary, there are other ways it can appeal to candidates. For example, these results show that emphasizing a philosophy that focuses on professional development and academic excellence can be an effective way to stand out from the competition.

## 2. WHAT MAKES CANDIDATES APPLY FOR A SPECIFIC JOB?

Applying to a school and applying for a particular job can be two very different things. Some candidates may search for specific types of schools, or schools in particular locations, while many others are often looking for specific international school vacancies. Our research shows that more than anything else, candidates want to be sure that a role is a good fit for them.

### What's most important to candidates when considering whether to apply for a particular job



In addition, educators, like most other professionals, want to be shown upward mobility and growth opportunities – all of which can factor heavily into what you offer to candidates. What are the unique opportunities you have to offer that can make your job postings stand out from the competition?

### 3. WHAT ARE CANDIDATES LOOKING FOR IN A COMPENSATION PACKAGE?

There is a long-standing belief that salary is the only factor people consider when applying for a new job. While compensation is definitely a key factor for most people, according to our survey results, it is only a portion of a complete compensation package.

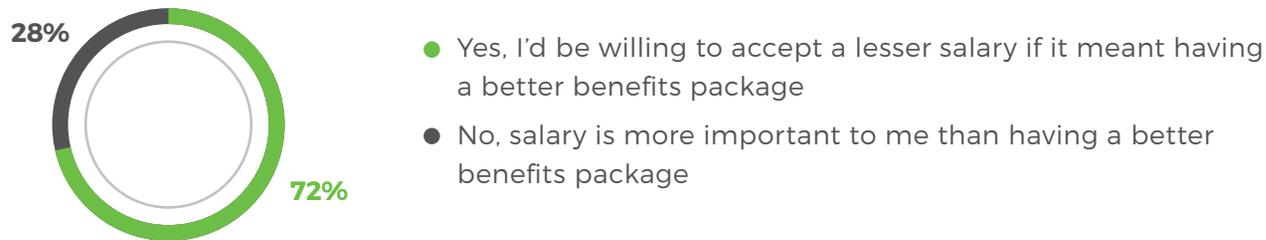
#### The most important factors of a compensation package among the teachers we surveyed



As you can see, accommodation and health insurance are a close second and third to salary. These benefits can be deciding factors for candidates contemplating their next job opportunity.

In fact, when we asked the candidates we surveyed if they'd be willing to accept a lower base salary in return for better benefits, nearly three-quarters of them said they would.

### Would you be willing to forego additional salary for a better benefits package?



Maintaining the perspective that salary is only one portion of a total offering can be helpful when building out your complete compensation package. If salary is not a selling factor for you (and even if it is), be sure to communicate the other benefits that come with working at your school.

Ultimately, the candidate journey through a typical hiring process includes multiple factors and touchpoints. The more deeply you can understand these, the better connected you can get to your ideal candidate. And the more deeply you can understand what you have to offer your ideal candidate, the clearer and more direct your messaging and offering can become.

It's through this understanding of your candidate, and your own school, that you can take the first step to adapting your recruitment process to better attract the right teachers for your school.



# OPTIMIZING YOUR RECRUITMENT PROCESS

- 26** | Looking at the Typical Recruitment Process
- 34** | Examining the Struggle to Attract Candidates
- 40** | Adapting Recruitment Practices to Attract More Candidates
- 55** | Reviewing and Improving Your Recruitment Process

As the demand for teachers grows around the globe, we know that attracting and recruiting qualified teachers continues to be a pain point for international schools.

In order to best provide practical solutions, we'll start by looking at a typical recruitment process. Then, we'll dive into how schools can adapt and improve their practices in 2020, based on the areas they are most challenged by.

## **LOOKING AT THE TYPICAL RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

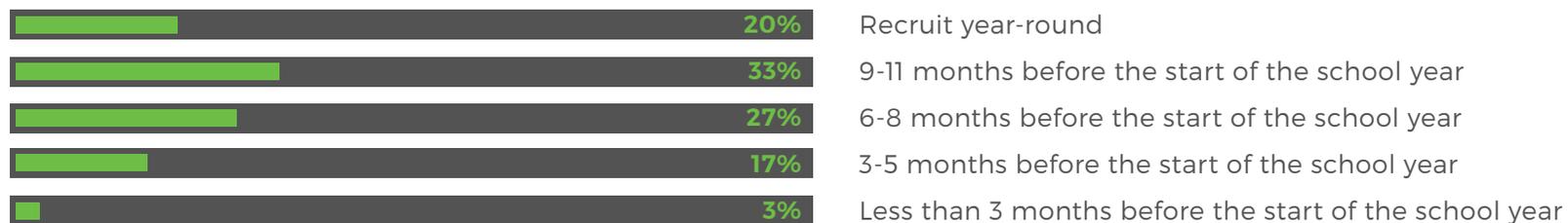
Every school will approach recruitment differently based on a variety of factors, including needs, budget and internal processes. There are, however, many commonalities we can use to generalize what the recruitment process looks like for a typical international school.

To get a better understanding of what this typical process looks like, we asked the school heads we surveyed to tell us about their current recruitment efforts. The following is what they told us.

## WHEN ARE SCHOOLS RECRUITING?

Our survey uncovered that the recruitment timeline varies greatly among our respondents. However, one thing is clear: the recruitment process for most schools takes up a large part of the year.

### When schools typically start recruiting for the following school year



As you can see, our findings show that schools are starting their recruitment process earlier than ever before. 33% reported that they begin searching for candidates at least nine months before the start of the school year they're hiring for, and 20% said they're recruiting candidates all year round. This suggests that not only is hiring top of mind for schools, but also a top priority. Which makes sense, since we know it's paramount for schools to find candidates who are the right fit for their particular role and school.

If you're part of the minority who still takes a shorter lead time for hiring for the next school year, consider this: there is increasing competition for finding quality candidates. Not to mention that the teacher job search timeline is also expanding.

**43%** of teachers are beginning their search at least six months in advance of their intended start date.

**Only 53%** of schools are starting their recruitment efforts more than nine months in advance of the start of their next school year. For schools with a September start date, that means 47% of schools are waiting until January to start their recruitment, opening the doors for proactive schools to get a jump on their competition and hire top talent before other schools even start recruiting.



## HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE SCHOOLS TO FINISH RECRUITING?

In addition to when schools are recruiting, we were also curious about how long it usually takes schools to successfully fill all of their educator vacancies.

### How long it typically takes schools to finish their recruitment for the year



When building out your recruitment timeline for the following year, it's important to factor in the length of time it takes you to finish your recruitment. Figure out when you want to comfortably be finished with your recruitment, work back from there and start your recruitment efforts accordingly.

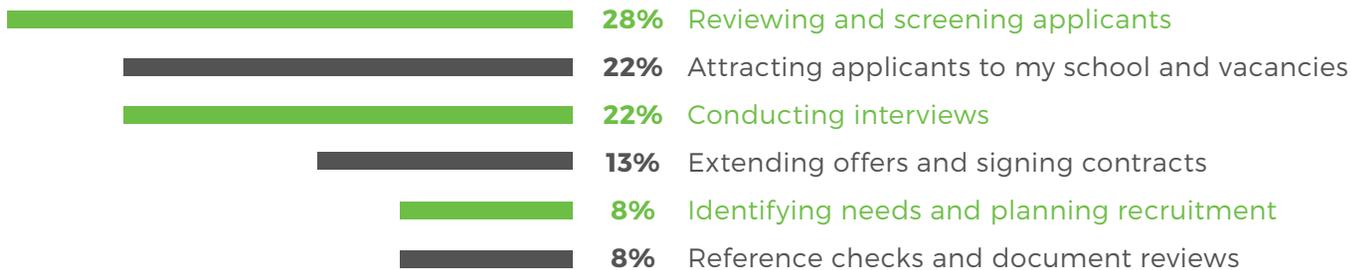
For example, if you want to finish your recruitment by June, and you know it takes you six months to finish your recruitment on average, plan to start your recruitment in December (or even earlier).

If you're anything like most of the school heads we connect with regularly, you're always trying to avoid scrambling to hire teachers at the last minute, and feeling as though all the best teachers have already been scooped up.

## WHAT STAGE OF RECRUITMENT TAKES SCHOOLS THE LONGEST?

In order to make it easier for schools to map out their recruitment timeline in advance, we wanted to find out which stage of the process is the most time consuming. Interestingly, the responses were quite varied, suggesting that certain aspects take different amounts of effort and time for various schools.

### The stage of the recruitment process that takes schools the longest

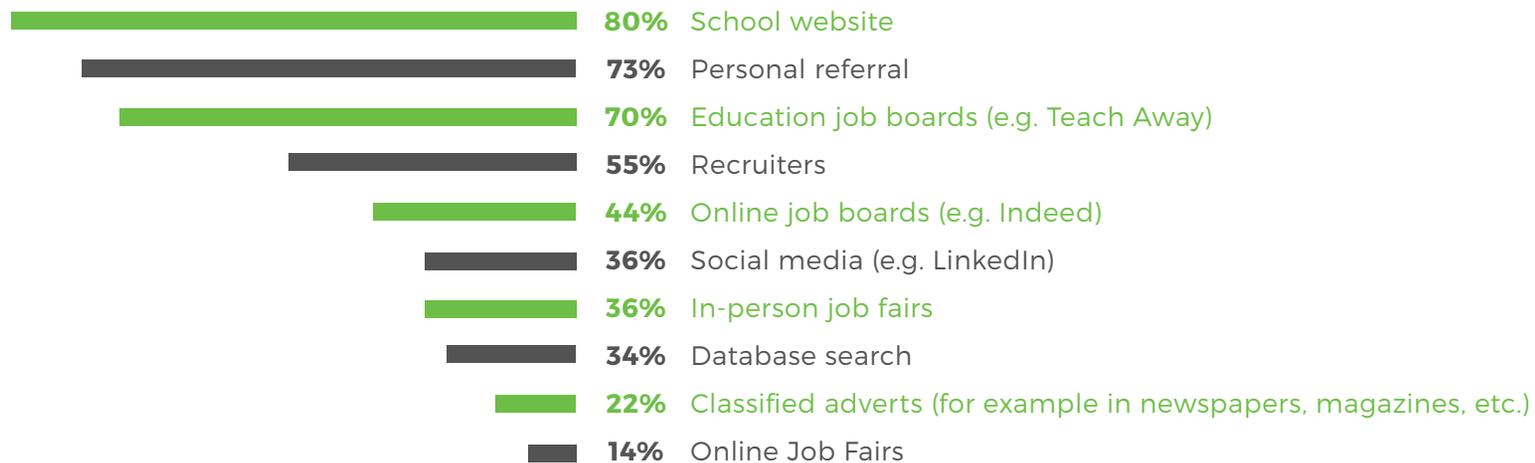


As you can see, for some schools, reviewing applications and conducting interviews can take almost as long as attracting applications from qualified candidates. Plus, you need to factor in enough time to finalize contracts and arrange work visas, so that teachers can arrive on time for the required start date. As such, to minimize stress in the long run, we suggest a flexible timeline that includes padding on both ends to accommodate for internal organization within your recruitment process, as well as provide a buffer for your hiring timeline at the end.

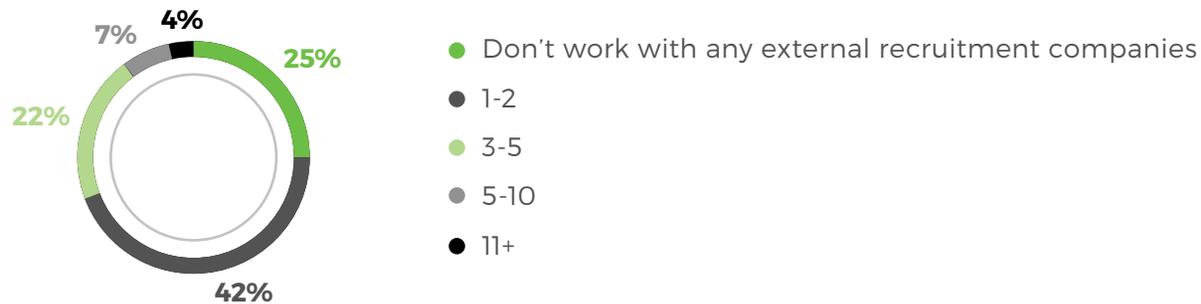
## HOW ARE SCHOOLS RECRUITING CANDIDATES?

How to look for and find candidates is a vast landscape with various options at a school's disposal. Our survey results show that schools are using a wide variety of channels for their recruitment, while only working with a few recruitment partners (if any).

### The methods schools are using for recruitment



**The number of external recruitment partners schools are working with to aid in their recruitment**



Taking a step back from this data to consider the larger picture, we know that it's never a good idea to rely completely on one approach.

Instead, schools should be considering as many of their most effective recruitment channels as possible and determining when and how to pull on these levers to create the most fruitful results. Meaning, figure out which channels work best for your school, and then create a plan that leverages all of them in a complementary way.

Likewise, when using a specific method, you shouldn't necessarily put all of your trust in one recruitment partner. By diversifying your approach and looking to a few different recruitment partners you can have another partner to fall back on if your primary one delivers poor results.

## HOW MUCH ARE SCHOOLS BUDGETING FOR RECRUITMENT?

Of course, diversifying recruitment channels and working with multiple partners might be the ideal scenario, but it may not be accessible to all schools. One critical factor influences how every school is able to approach their recruitment: budget. So, we asked the schools we surveyed to tell us about their recruitment budget

### Schools' average annual recruitment budget



Our data shows that the majority of schools have an annual recruitment budget of less than \$10,000 USD. The great news is that you don't need to have a massive budget in order to have a successful recruitment process. What you need is to understand what works and what doesn't. Find ways to maximize your budget on those key methods with the recruitment partners that deliver the best outcomes. Then track your efforts, evolve them and explore new ones when you have the opportunity. Read on for more tips on how to recruit more effectively.

## EXAMINING THE STRUGGLE TO ATTRACT CANDIDATES

In this year's survey, we delved deeper into where schools were feeling the most challenged in their recruitment process.

### The aspects of the recruitment process schools find most challenging



As you can see, the data shows that attracting enough quality candidates is what schools struggle with the most. But why is this?

As is often the case, the answer to this question is complex and, unfortunately, due in large part to factors beyond the school's control, including:

- A global shortage of international teachers;
- Increased competition for teachers as a result of the increasing number of international schools around the world; and
- Candidate preferences regarding location, pay, opportunity, health and safety (perceived or real), etc.

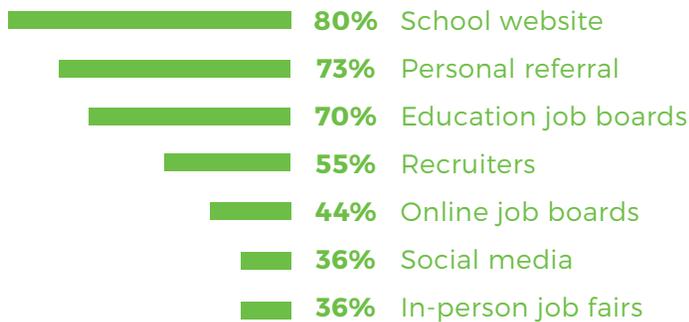
However, as you'll see, there are a number of factors that have come to light through the course of our research that schools do have the ability to impact.



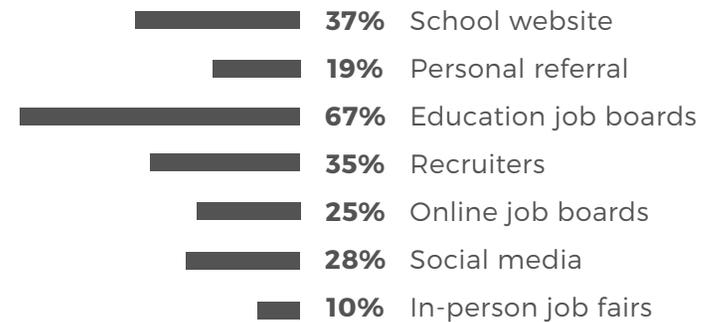
## THE DISCONNECT BETWEEN RECRUITMENT AND JOB SEARCH METHODS

There seems to be a disconnect between where candidates are looking for jobs and where schools are recruiting.

### Top methods schools use for their recruitment



### Top methods candidates use in their job search



This divide is perhaps not an easy one to overcome, but it is something that is well within a school's control to address.

For example, while in-person job fairs might make the most sense and are certainly the traditional way of connecting with candidates, they are simply not where the majority of candidates are searching for jobs: while 36% of schools use in-person job fairs, only 10% of candidates attend them. This likely amounts to a great deal of money being spent on a lower return on investment than other efforts, such as posting on education job boards.

Lastly, 55% of schools seem to be relying heavily on recruitment agencies and recruiters, while only 25% of candidates are using them to find teaching positions.

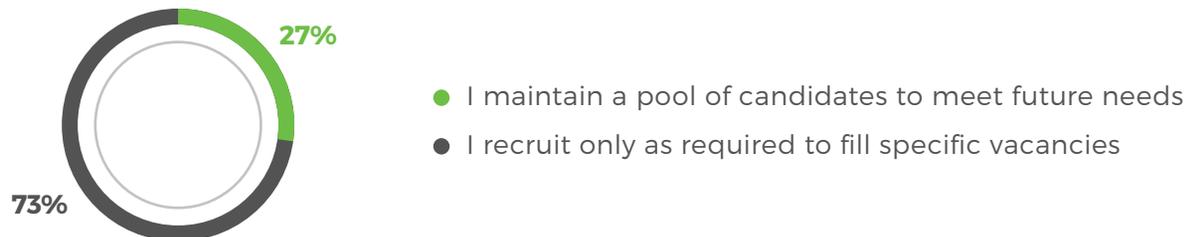
## THE MISSED OPPORTUNITY OF NOT BUILDING A TALENT POOL

One of the biggest challenges when it comes to attracting candidates is that it takes time. Of the schools we surveyed, 22% said the process of attracting candidates is the part of the recruitment process that takes them the longest.

By waiting until they have a vacancy to fill to start the process of attracting candidates, schools are putting themselves in the position of having to start the lengthy process from the beginning each time they need to hire.

The unfortunate thing, however, is that this is exactly how 73% of schools are going about their hiring.

### Does your school build a talent pool to fill future vacancies, or do you hire on an ad-hoc basis?



An alternate approach, which the majority of schools are missing out on, is continuously building a pool of qualified candidates to tap into whenever a hiring need arises. Schools that build a candidate pool throughout the year give themselves the advantage of having a ready supply of interested and pre-screened candidates they can reach out to as needed. Thus, they're able to sidestep the time it takes to attract candidates and drastically reduce their hiring time.

## THE ABSENCE OF A STRONG ONLINE PRESENCE

Based on the candidate job search data we've discussed, we can conclude that when looking to attract candidates, both in volume and quality, schools need to be more conscientious of where candidates are primarily searching for jobs: online.



**91%**

**of candidates are using online job search methods**

Nowadays, most schools are present online in some way, but there seems to be a lot of room for improvement. For instance, only a quarter of the schools we surveyed reported leveraging external websites as a way to promote their school, which can be a big advantage. What's more, 18% of schools seemed to suggest that they have no online presence whatsoever.

### The online channels schools are using to promote their schools



As you can see, the majority of schools are using social media, online job postings, and their school website to promote their schools to candidates. However, using these channels presupposes that candidates are already following your school on social media, going directly to your school website, or actively seeking teaching jobs. Unfortunately, that's often not the case.

The simple truth is that, in order to be visible to your candidates, you need to be visible online. Having a strong presence on various online channels amounts to your credibility, quality and value.

With this critical factor in mind, let's discuss some strategies your school can put in motion to make it easier for candidates to find your jobs, learn about your offerings, and fall in love with your school.

## ADAPTING RECRUITMENT PRACTICES TO ATTRACT MORE CANDIDATES

Today, international educators have many job options to choose from and, with a wealth of information available at their fingertips, they're more informed than ever before. The result? Candidates are treating their job search much like consumers treat big purchases: by doing their research and taking their time to make the right decision for them.

Accordingly, in order to reach today's candidates, international schools need to behave more like corporations trying to reach prospective consumers. To do so, schools need to start thinking of recruitment more as marketing and adopt marketing tactics used in the commercial world in order to help them attract candidates.

As schools build out their recruitment process, they should look at outbound and inbound marketing strategies in particular, and consider how they can be applied to international education recruiting.

**Inbound recruiting:** How schools make themselves visible to candidates who are not actively searching for jobs, but may be interested in considering new or future opportunities.

**Outbound recruiting:** How schools spend their budget to get in front of candidates who are actively seeking jobs.

Ideally, you want to use an inbound strategy to build a pool of interested candidates, so that you don't have to go out and actively recruit each time you have a vacancy. If you can do this well, it can significantly cut down the need for the active recruitment you have to do each time you need to hire someone.

Schools that are first to adopt an inbound recruiting strategy alongside their outbound recruiting will be more likely to attract the best talent. So let's dive deeper into what these strategies entail.

## INBOUND RECRUITING

Let's start with the basics: the candidates you're trying to attract. In the case of all recruiting, there are two types of candidates:

1. **Active:** Those who are actively seeking jobs.
2. **Passive:** Those who are open to opportunities, but not necessarily engaged in the job search process.

The motivation for engaging in what we call "inbound recruiting" is to open up your talent pool to include both types of candidates. This involves using smart inbound marketing efforts that ensure your school – in particular your employee value proposition – is visible wherever prospective candidates are, and pique their interest early.

But where do you start? The internet has completely changed how job seekers discover and apply to jobs.

Research shows that almost three-quarters of candidates are now starting their job search using a search engine, rather than going directly to a job board or an employer website. Plus, social media and other technologies are playing a more crucial role in recruitment than ever before.

While traditional methods of posting specific vacancies on totally saturated job boards or outsourcing your recruitment to expensive agencies still have a place, they are no longer the single solution. It's crucial for schools to start using a variety of new tactics to capture the interest of prospective candidates and build a candidate pool for their ongoing hiring needs. Utilizing Google, job boards, social media, and other inbound recruiting tactics can be a very effective way to lead candidates to your website to learn more about you.

### Online channels that drive candidates to a school's website



The best way to drive as many candidates as possible to your school's website is by using a variety of online channels to capture their attention.

While a select few schools are in the early, experimental phases of developing an inbound recruiting strategy, most schools are still not looking beyond traditional methods. As such, this presents a tremendous opportunity for schools to get ahead of their competitors and use this strategy to help them attract top candidates. Below we will dig into a few options for how to kick-start your inbound marketing efforts.

## Leveraging Search Engines

The term "Google it" has colloquially been understood for more than a decade now to mean: head to the Internet to find your answer. This is because for most of us, our go-to method for research is inputting a question or key statement into a search bar. In doing so, we have come to trust that an accurate answer will appear within the first few options on the results page.

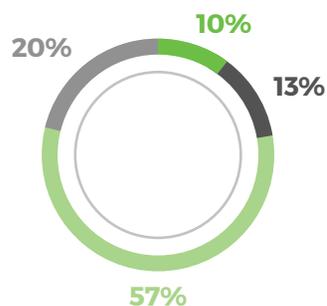
This practice is true for job seeking as well. Research shows that **70% of candidates are likely to start their research using a search engine**. Our own data supports this, with 74% of respondents saying they are using search engines in their job searches.

In the case of job-seeking international educators, there will of course be instances where teachers will already know about your school and head directly to your website for information or to submit an application. But this is the exception, not the rule. The majority of candidates will have likely never heard of your particular school before and will be searching for jobs more broadly.

As a result, at the very least, being visible on Google is crucial. And to ensure your website and job opportunities are found, the top of the list of search results is where you want to be.

In order to get a top spot in search results, you need to start by considering what exactly candidates are typing into the Google search bar when they first begin looking for a teaching job abroad.

### How candidates are most likely to begin their job search using a search engine



- Search for teaching jobs at a particular school they're interested in
- Search for teaching jobs in a particular city they're interested in
- Search for teaching jobs in a particular country they're interested in
- Search for teaching jobs in a particular region they're interested in

90% of the educators we surveyed reported that they begin their job search by entering a location-based search term, such as the city, country or region they're most interested in. For example, they may type "teaching jobs in Dubai" or "teaching abroad in China."

Therefore, it stands to reason that your school's website, and likely your job posts, need to be optimized for the country, region and city where your school is located. If your school doesn't rank on the results page, chances are prospective candidates are not finding your website, or your jobs.

Go ahead and Google your school's specific location and see what comes up. If your school isn't shown on the first page (or, at the very least, top half of the second page), you have a fair bit of work to do. You need to either improve your school's visibility, or consider ensuring you are posting your jobs through sites that are search engine optimized.

## Having a Presence on Social Media

As perhaps the most highly contested digital channel in today's culture, social media has made many inroads into our day-to-day lives, including how we stay in touch with friends and family, share information, shop and more. Regardless of which side of the debate you fall on, there is no denying that, in general, social media can help provide companies with the following:

- Credibility
- Visibility
- Information
- Motivation

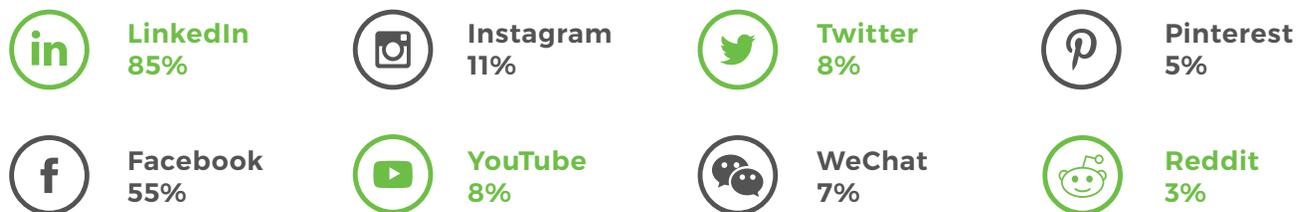
For international school recruitment, it provides all of the above: an opportunity to showcase your school's culture, a presence online outside of just your website, a place to share information about your school, and a platform to encourage candidates to connect, apply or learn more.

In addition, it is largely a low-cost, high-reach way to connect with thousands of job seekers or appeal to passive candidates.

It's also a large area of opportunity that not a lot of international schools are currently capitalizing on. In fact, only 28% of our survey respondents are currently using social media as a channel in their job search – but this number is expected to rise year over year.

By not using social media, you're potentially missing out on attracting nearly a third of candidates who are actively seeking a job. You're also not capitalizing on the chance to connect with the many passive job seekers, who may not be actively looking for a job yet, but are definitely using online channels to gather information and awareness about the options available to them. To help you get an idea of which social media platforms you should be on, we asked our respondents which ones they're using to look for jobs.

**The social media platforms candidates are using to look for jobs**



As you can see, LinkedIn is by far the leading platform being used by candidates searching for jobs. As such, if you haven't already set up a LinkedIn page for your school, including job postings and the ability to apply through LinkedIn, this is an essential first step to leveraging social media for your recruitment efforts.

## Engaging Your Audience with Content

In order for your school to be able to use search engines and social media to their full advantage, it's essential to create online content that will get the attention of candidates. This includes all of the written and visual content you post on your school's website and social media pages, as well as anything that's posted about your school on other websites. Your intent is to spread awareness of your employee value proposition, encourage prospective candidates that fit your candidate persona to engage with you, and convert them into quality applicants.

Going beyond putting the basic information about your school on your website, consider periodically publishing blog posts addressing questions that may come up at different stages of a candidate's journey. This will help improve your search ranking and drive more traffic to your website.

For example, a teacher with no international experience exploring the possibility of working abroad is likely interested in understanding requirements for teaching abroad. Whereas a candidate who has already done their initial research, and found your school through a search engine, is perhaps interested in better understanding exactly what it's like to work at your school.

Furthermore, make sure to stay active on your various social media accounts by posting as regularly as possible (at least once a month). You can post job vacancies on social media, but make sure to also share other content that will engage candidates. Using eye-catching visuals is particularly important on social media, so try to include a photo or video in every post. For instance, you may want to share beautiful photos of the country or city where your school is located to attract candidates.

Lastly, the next best option to creating your own content is ensuring you are visible and well represented on other websites that are already optimized to rank high in search results. There are many established websites catering to your specific audience and producing content to engage them, which you can leverage to get in front of your target audience and ensure your school gets noticed. For example, Teach Away not only runs a leading job board, but our blog has thousands of posts targeted at international educators. Plus, we give you the option of creating a landing page to feature your school on our website, which can highlight the benefits of working with you and direct candidates to your job postings to apply.

## OUTBOUND RECRUITING

Now, let's consider how you can be most effective in combining your inbound recruiting efforts with an effective outbound recruitment strategy. While inbound recruiting is more of an ongoing effort to continually build a talent pool, outbound recruiting offers what we consider a short-term solution. Meaning this is where you look when you have to meet a specific need within a specific time frame.

For example, you are working year-round to build your brand awareness and bring in candidates that are a good fit for your particular school. Come April, you realize you are going to need to fill roles in science, math and geography. You have a few candidates that fit your specifications who have applied recently, but you would like more choices to ensure you find exactly the right candidate for each role. This is where outbound recruiting comes in:

The success of the methods on the right will vary depending on a great number of factors, including school size, budget, access, etc. Let's take a closer look at a few of the more common channels to understand how you can best leverage the ones that are right for your needs.

### Outbound recruiting methods used by international schools



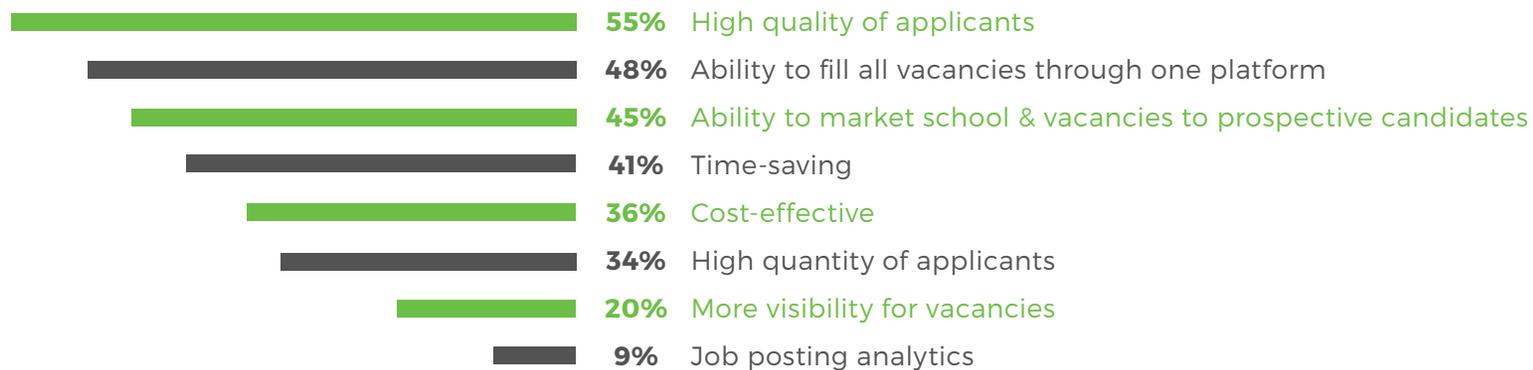
## Job Postings

For many years, posting job vacancies has worked and been fairly simple and quick to implement. All you need to do is pay to post your vacancies on a public job board and wait for the applications to stack up.

To date, schools have been using a wide variety of job posting options: online job boards, classified advertisements, education job boards, publications (online and print), and so on. Each of these options has its own unique set of pros and cons that allow it to be successful to varying degrees. Classified ads, for example, can reach niche audiences, whereas online job boards have a very wide audience reach.

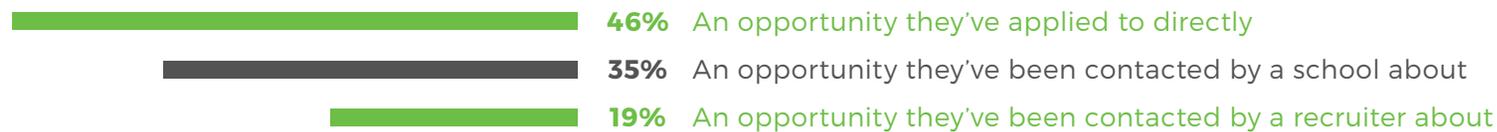
Education job boards, as we discussed earlier in this report, are one of the most popular methods schools are using for recruitment. To find out why, we asked the schools we surveyed what makes this option so appealing.

### Why schools use education job boards



However, job postings are only one way of attracting candidates. There are other ways of finding the candidates you need with a more proactive approach. Our research shows that, while candidates are more likely to pursue opportunities they've applied to themselves, they're also often open to being contacted directly regarding opportunities they are well suited for.

### The types of opportunities candidates are most likely to pursue



Interestingly, 35% of the teachers we surveyed said they were open to communications from schools about opportunities to which they had not applied. Meaning, while candidates prefer to have control over their job search, they are also open to being contacted by schools that have found their profile/contact information through a database of prospective candidates.

## Database Access

Considering more than a third of candidates are open to being contacted directly by schools they have not applied to, access to a legitimate, third-party database of candidates can be a great opportunity for schools looking to take a more proactive approach to recruitment. Schools that take advantage of third-party database access can obtain information about teaching professionals who are looking for jobs, review their qualifications, reach out to them about specific opportunities, and invite them to apply.



**34%**

**of schools are using database search as a channel in their recruitment**

While typically not the most cost-effective method for recruitment, this is absolutely a great opportunity for schools looking to match candidates to particular criteria (e.g. country of citizenship, years of experience, subject matter expertise, etc.). For vacancies that require very specific requirements, finding the right database can be a real time saver and a smart way to approach filling your unique vacancies.



## **TEACH AWAY DATABASE ACCESS**

Get on-demand access to Teach Away's database of ready-to-hire candidates looking for their next international teaching opportunity. Our advanced search filters make it quick and easy to find candidates who match your school's unique requirements.

**CONTACT US TO LEARN MORE** 

## Recruitment Fairs

For international schools, recruitment fairs have traditionally been the go-to option for finding quality candidates.

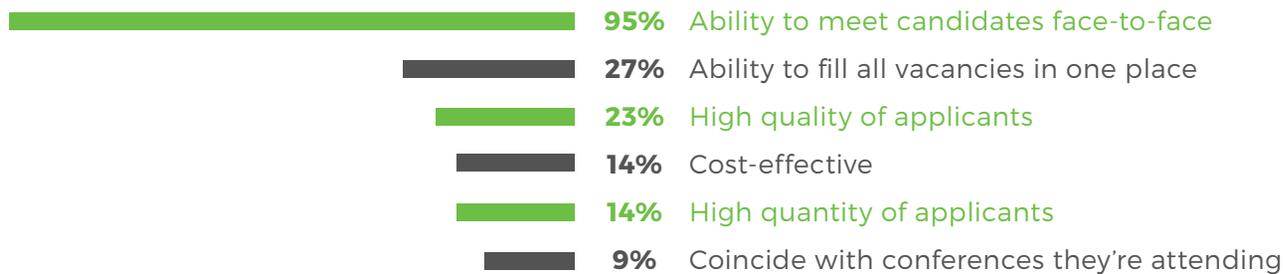


**34%**

**of schools are using in-person recruitment fairs as a channel in their recruitment**

Given the extent to which in-person job fairs are part of the recruitment mix amongst schools, we wanted to find out the primary motivations school heads have for using this hiring method.

### Why schools use in-person job fairs for recruitment



According to the schools we surveyed, in-person job fairs are seen as a tried-and-tested option for recruitment, especially for schools looking to accomplish a large portion of their hiring process in one go. In addition, the primary advantage school heads identified was having the ability to meet candidates face-to-face.

While these advantages are undeniable, in recent years, there has been a downturn in candidate attendance at in-person job fairs.



Only  
**10%**  
of candidates are using in-person job fairs as part of their job search

With so many alternative options available to them, prospective candidates are not as willing as they used to be to spend out-of-pocket dollars to visit busy job fairs, where they are physically surrounded by their competitors.

In fact, of the 72% of candidates we surveyed who said they would be willing to travel for an in-person interview, only 39% said they would do so at their own expense. That adds up to only 28% of candidates who would be willing to travel for an interview at their own expense.

Given that today such a small percentage of candidates is attending in-person job fairs, schools that rely on this channel are severely limiting the pool of candidates they're able to hire from.

## Online Recruitment Fairs

As more and more things move from the physical space to a digital one, it comes as no surprise that online recruitment fairs are making their mark in the industry. Online job fairs are slowly gaining popularity in the international recruitment space for fairly obvious reasons. While you're not able to meet a candidate face-to-face, online fairs are the next closest experience, with no travel costs for schools or candidates. This can be a huge benefit to schools that have tighter budgets, but often recruit from a region (or regions) on the other side of the world – as is frequently the case in the international education sphere.

Online job fairs enable schools to meet and digitally interact with dozens of candidates. You can screen candidates and decide which ones aren't a good fit and which ones you'd like to progress through the recruitment process. Thus, it's a very time-efficient and cost-effective alternative to in-person job fairs.



Despite this, only 14% of schools are using online job fairs as part of their recruitment mix. While online job fairs are still a fairly new recruitment option, they offer a great deal of benefits and early adopters have an advantage leveraging a relatively untapped source of candidates.



## **TEACH AWAY ONLINE RECRUITMENT FAIRS**

Attend one of Teach Away's online job fairs and experience the benefits of an in-person job fair without the overhead! Connect directly with dozens of highly qualified, pre-screened candidates without leaving your office.

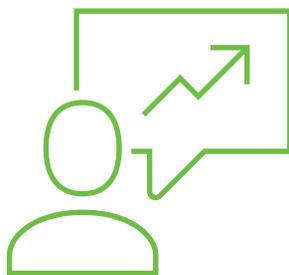
**CONTACT US TO LEARN MORE** 

## REVIEWING AND IMPROVING YOUR RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Whatever method, or mix of methods, you choose for your recruitment process this year, there is one important thing to keep in mind: no two schools are the same. What works best for one, may not work as well for another. The key takeaway from all this is to determine what the perfect equation is for your particular school and which of these recruitment channels provides you with the best returns.

## MEASURING YOUR RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

The first step to determining which recruitment methods are best for your school is to measure your current efforts. However, when we asked the schools we surveyed if they are tracking the methods they are currently practicing, we found that only about half of them are doing so.



Only  
**53%**  
of schools are tracking the success of their recruitment methods.

Given the importance placed on finding the right candidates, it seems counterproductive to not be placing a higher priority on determining the right methods of recruitment for your school. So we've outlined a few recruitment metrics to consider as you explore, experiment and begin to evaluate your efforts.

There are numerous recruitment metrics your school can track. Which precise ones you should be tracking depends entirely on your school's specific situation and what matters most to you based on both your objectives, as well as your constraints and limitations.

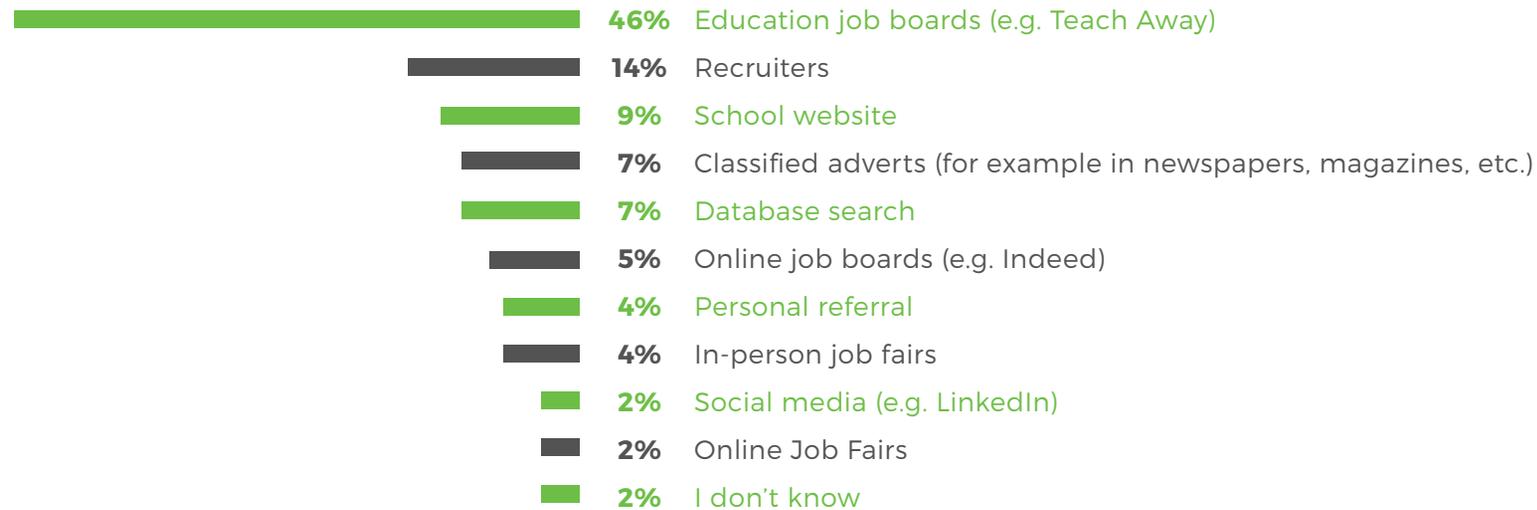
It's preferable, of course, to be able to look to your own data for measurement. However, to get you started, we've included a few of the more popular success metrics in this report. Based on responses from the schools we surveyed, these metrics can give you a baseline for how your industry peers are making sense of this important piece of the puzzle.

As we saw earlier, schools reported that they're facing the following challenges: attracting candidates of suitable quality, attracting a sufficient quantity of candidates, and hiring quickly. So let's start there.



If access to enough candidates is the area you're struggling with most, consider which of the channels we've identified can help you get the most exposure to the greatest number of educators.

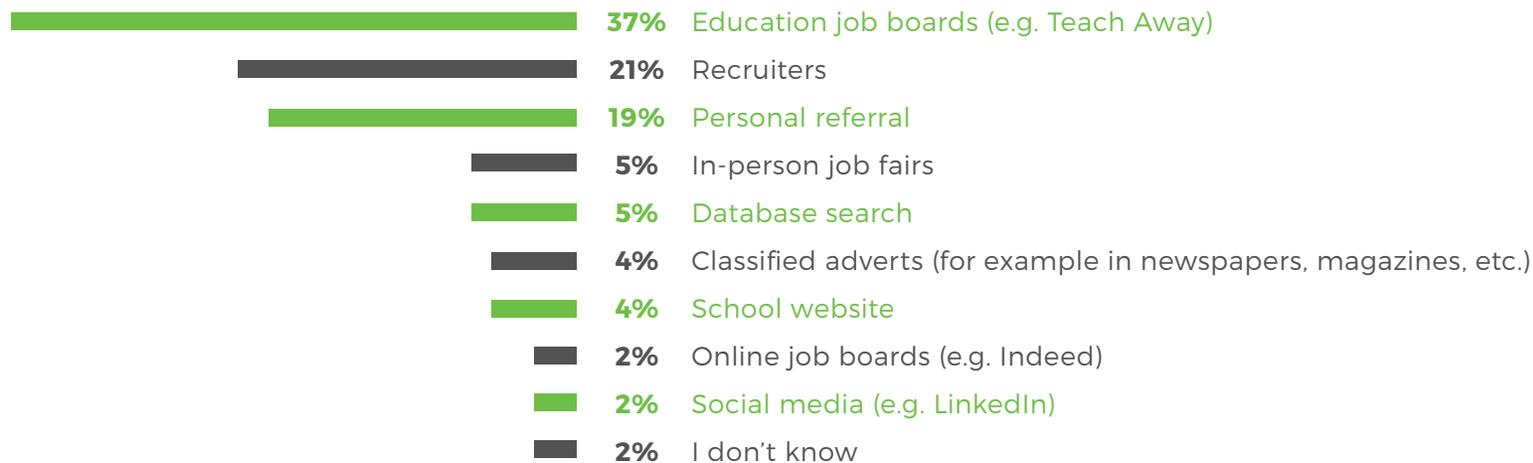
### The source that provides schools with the highest quantity of candidates



Our survey results show that schools find the greatest number of applicants through education job boards. This isn't much of a surprise, since these job boards typically draw a vast number of candidates and have, as a result, built large networks of education professionals.

If finding quality candidates is what you're struggling with the most, to help you, we asked the schools we surveyed where they have the most success attracting top-quality candidates.

### The source that provides schools with the highest quality of candidates



Again, education job boards are the clear leader. And again, this is unsurprising given their exclusive focus on education professionals. The targeted nature of these job boards is likely to drive more qualified candidates than other channels that serve a broader job seeking audience.

Lastly, if the area you most need to work on is time to hire, our survey respondents reported that recruitment agencies, where the fees are high but the results are often quick, might be your best bet.

### The sources that enable schools to hire the quickest

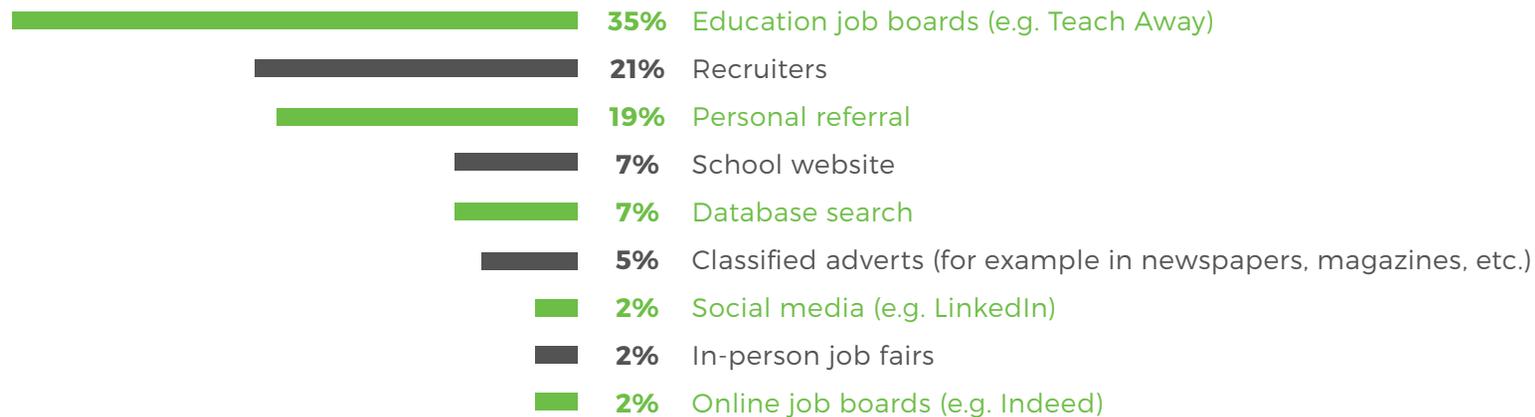


While we will continue to advocate for a properly planned and executed recruitment process, which shouldn't leave schools in a situation where they need to find teachers fast, we also understand that even the best laid plans can sometimes be derailed by such things as a candidate changing their mind at the last minute. These unforeseen circumstances can leave schools needing to make a hire quickly.

Recruitment agencies typically have a ready-made pool of candidates and can often send a list of candidates for your review fairly quickly. However, due to the high per-hire fee often associated with recruitment agencies, you may want to avoid using this method for the bulk of your hiring.

When asked what their most effective method of recruitment is, our school survey respondents identified the following:

**The most effective methods of recruitment for schools**



Regardless of what mix of options you choose for your recruitment, the end goal of the process is always the same: hire the best possible educators for your school.

Even if you're not actively tracking any specific metrics to determine return on investment, you likely have a good sense of what works for you and what doesn't (or hasn't in the past). If you don't, consider trying out a few of the options that your peers have suggested work well for them.

## ASSESSING YOUR RECRUITMENT SPEND

Once you have a good sense of the channels that can help you accomplish the goal you need to achieve, the next step is to look at how to best optimize your recruitment spend. There are two fairly straightforward metrics that can help you make the most of your dollars: cost per application and cost per hire.

### Cost per Application



**51%**

**of the schools we surveyed don't know their average cost per application**

With cost per application (CPA), the trick is keeping track of the number of applications you receive, and measuring it against how much you spent on the channel that drove the applications. To do this, start by capturing the number of applications received from each channel. Then, simply divide your spend for that channel by the number of applications received. For example, if you spent \$500 on one posting on a job board and received 250 applications from that posting, it cost you \$2 per application. That's a very cost-effective CPA, considering the average CPAs reported by the schools we surveyed.

### Schools' average cost per application



Although just over half of our survey respondents didn't know their CPA, the data for the other half indicates that costs per application can vary greatly. Overall, there's room for international schools to improve their budget efficiency and better understand their input versus their output.

While applications can be a good measure of success, we know that not all applications are equally valuable. As such, the number of applications alone may not be the best measure to look at when assessing your spend on a certain recruitment channel.

## Cost per Hire

Your cost per hire (CPH) is arguably the more valuable success metric to consider. The formula is the same, but instead of applications, you measure the number of hires that resulted from a particular channel. This is especially helpful if you are trying out new or multiple recruitment options, so you can understand where you're generating the most hires at the lowest rate. For example, if you paid a recruitment agency \$10,000 and were able to only hire three teachers through them, each hire cost you \$3,333.

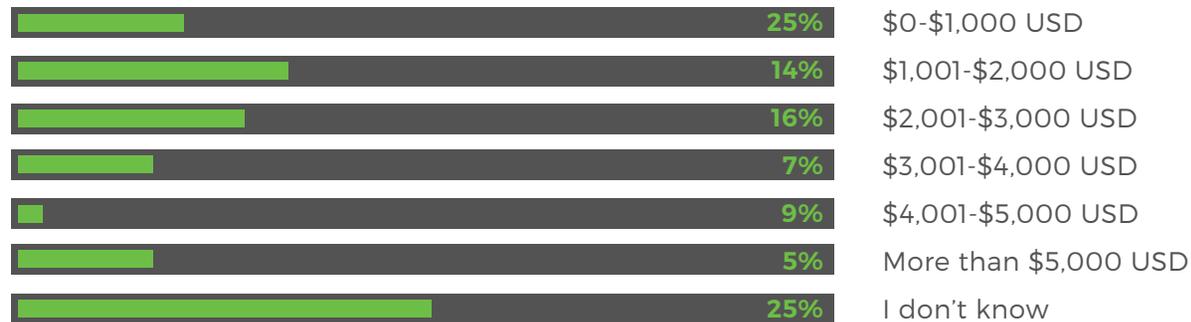


**25%**

**of the schools we surveyed don't know their average cost to hire a teacher**

When we asked our school survey respondents about their CPH, we found that more were aware of this metric and the majority were able to keep their CPH below US\$3,000. This is in line with a per-head fee that a recruiter might typically charge.

### Schools' average cost per hire



That said, there is always room for improvement. It's always best to take the time to evaluate the methods you're currently using against a new option that might help improve your average cost per hire. For instance, if your school (on average) has a high CPH, you should take a critical look at your process and test a few new recruitment methods that can still deliver results, while reducing your spend.

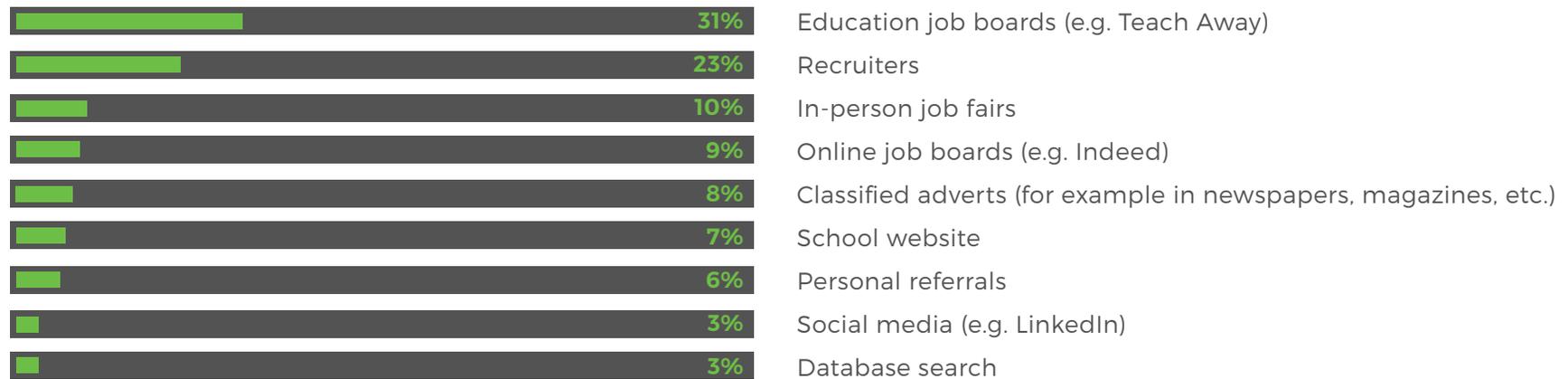
## Budget Allocation

Once you have a better understanding of where you're seeing the greatest return, you can better allocate your recruitment budget.

When attempting to optimize how you spend your recruitment budget, it's important to remember that the point is to help you better hire the teachers you need.

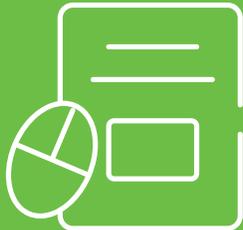
First, consider how you're currently spending your budget. To give you an idea of what the norm is at the moment, we asked the schools we surveyed to tell us how they're allocating their recruitment budget.

### How schools allocate their recruitment budgets



While this shows spending on a variety of recruitment options, schools seem to spend the majority of their budget on education job boards. This makes sense, since our survey results also showed that most schools deem this to be the most effective channel. For your school, take a look at where you're spending your recruitment dollars and compare it to where you're seeing your greatest return on investment (as determined by you).

Is your spend optimized to bring you the best or most efficient results? If not, it's probably time to adjust your recruitment mix starting this coming year. There's a good chance that it will help you attract candidates, save you time and money, and help your school hire the teachers needed to give your students the best possible education.



## TEACH AWAY ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Demand more of your recruitment budget! Sign up for an annual subscription with Teach Away to maximize your recruitment budget and reduce your cost per hire. For one low annual fee, you can post unlimited jobs, build your candidate pool, hire as many teachers as you need.

**CONTACT US TO LEARN MORE**



## KEY TAKEAWAYS



### Keep up with the changing international education landscape.

According to 44% of school heads, recruiting international educators is becoming increasingly difficult. With the demand for international educators projected to grow by more than 80% over the next 10 years, it's only going to get worse.



### Make sure to be visible online.

91% of the candidates we surveyed said they search for their next teaching opportunity online, and they're using a variety of online channels to conduct their search and research prospective employers. If you want to be found, it's essential for your school to have a strong online presence.



### Establish your employee value proposition.

A compensation package is about more than just the salary you're able to offer. Based on our survey, 72% of candidates would accept a lower salary if it meant a better benefits package. In order to attract top talent, you need to craft an employee value proposition that showcases everything your school has to offer.



### Think of recruitment more as marketing.

70% of schools say competition in attracting qualified candidates is their biggest recruitment challenge. With more options available to candidates than ever before, schools need to think (and act) like marketers to capture their candidates' attention.



### Review and optimize your recruitment spending.

89% of the schools we surveyed said they have trouble finding qualified candidates, yet only 53% of these schools are currently tracking the success of their recruitment efforts. Paying attention to a few simple metrics can make your recruitment more cost-effective and efficient, helping you better compete for top teaching talent.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

As we conclude our third annual International Education Recruitment Report, we hope that our insights have given you a solid foundation for improving your recruitment practices, based not only on the survey responses of more than 16,000 teacher candidates, but also your peers.

We now understand that the main challenge schools are facing is attracting enough of the right candidates. This is not unique to any single school. Rather, it's the result of an industry struggling to adapt to a new reality.

As international education recruitment increasingly becomes a candidate-driven market, we now see candidates comfortably in the driver's seat. As a result, schools need to find innovative ways to adjust their practices to better meet their prospective teachers' needs in order to stay competitive and overcome their obstacles. A good place to start would be to ensure your school's recruitment practices are aligned with how today's candidates are searching for jobs, and apply your understanding of candidate motivations and preferences – as outlined in this report – to help your school better appeal to candidates.

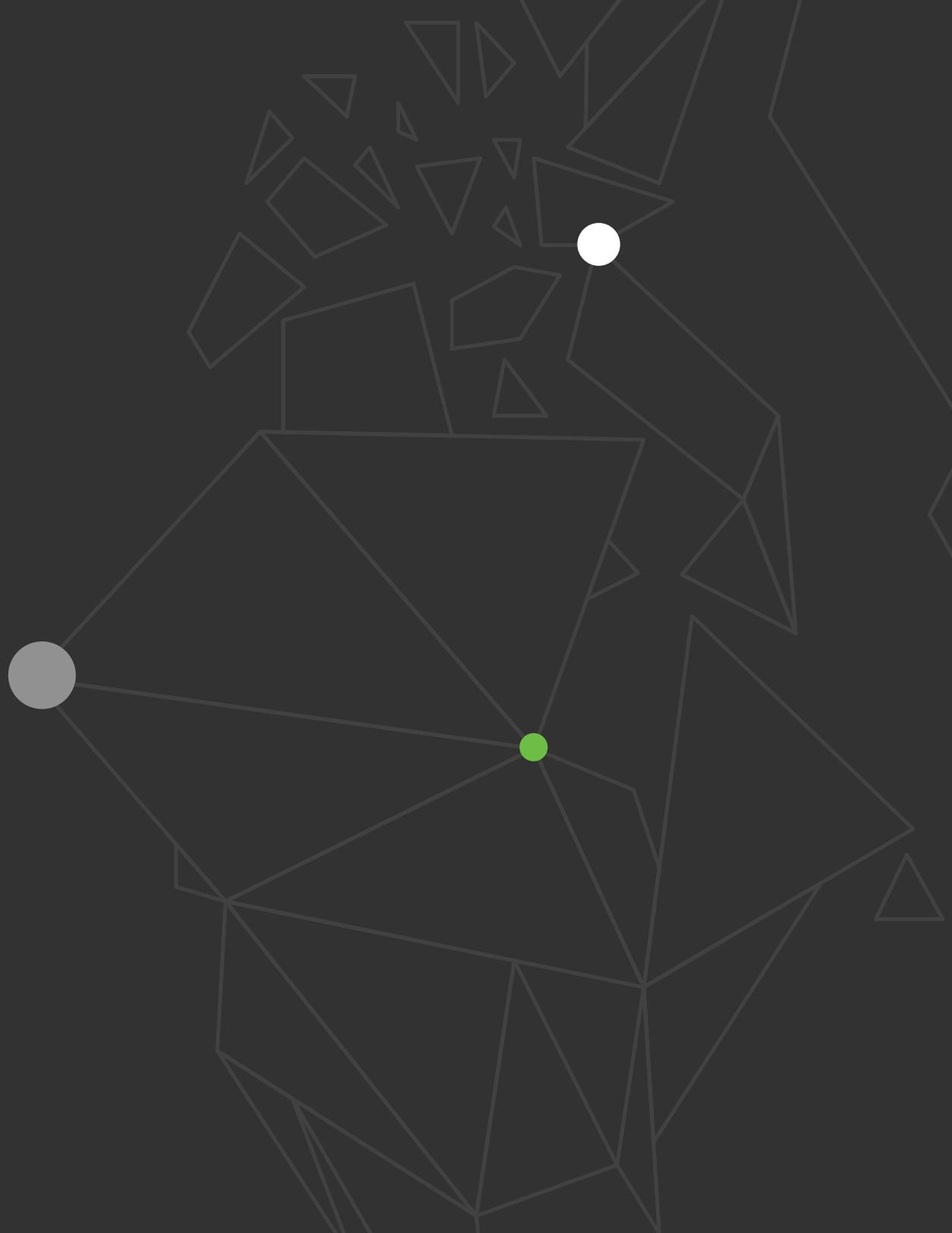
With more than 15 years of experience working alongside hundreds of schools around the world, Teach Away created this report with the sole purpose of helping schools to better understand today's candidates and their job search journey. We know that change can be difficult. However, as more and more schools enter this competitive global market, and an increasing number of teachers is needed to keep up with demand, we're here to help schools evolve to stay ahead and come out on top.

[www.teachaway.com/recruitment](http://www.teachaway.com/recruitment)

# APPENDIX

**70** | Methodology

**71** | Who We Surveyed



# METHODOLOGY

The results presented in this report are based on online surveys conducted by Teach Away.

We received responses from 16,023 international education professionals to questions regarding their job preferences and behaviors. In addition, 63 international school leaders completed a survey regarding their recruitment practices.

The responses were sourced via email and were collected between July 1 and August 31, 2019. In addition to the survey, we also analyzed the behavior of visitors to the Teach Away website.

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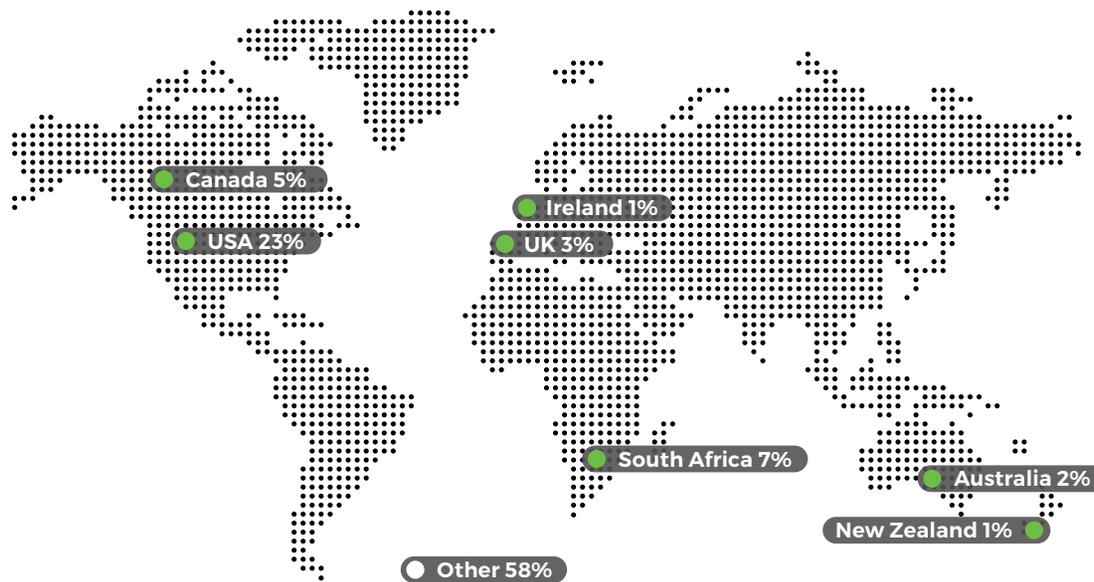
# WHO WE SURVEYED

## TEACHER SURVEY RESPONDENTS



**16,023**  
teachers surveyed

### Country of citizenship

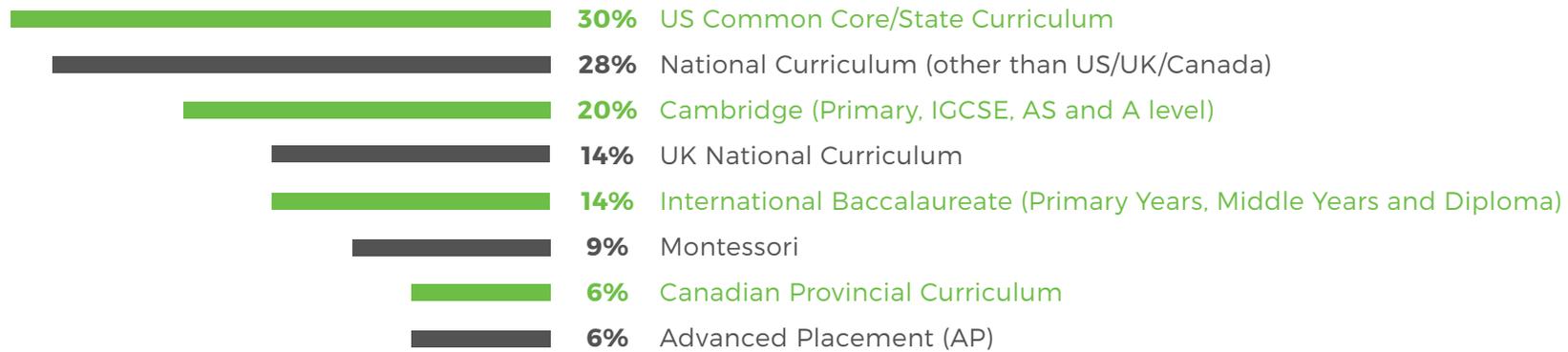


### Years of teaching experience



## 72 Who We Surveyed

### Curriculum experience



### Experience teaching abroad



**35%**

of the respondents have experience teaching abroad

### Currently seeking a teaching job abroad

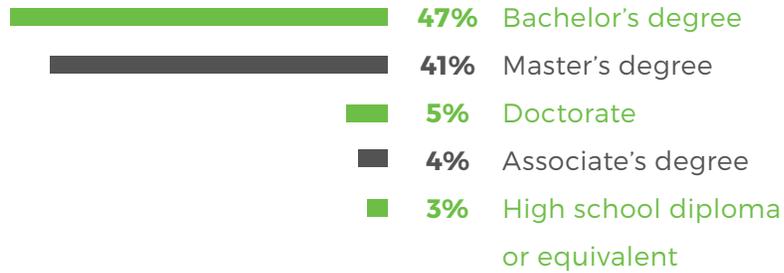


**74%**

of the respondents are currently seeking a teaching job abroad

## 73 Who We Surveyed

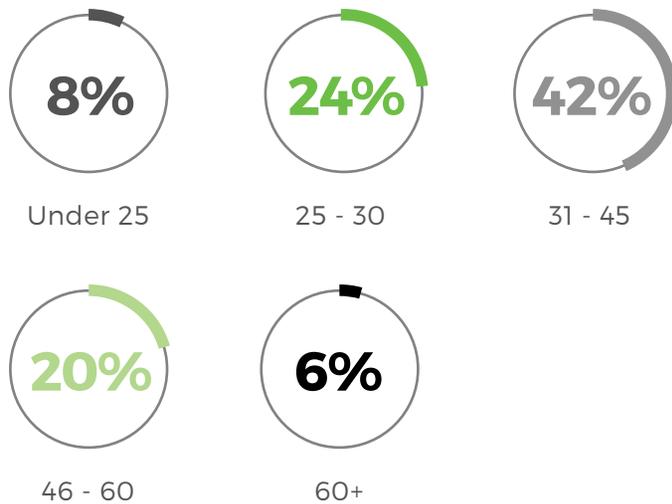
### Education



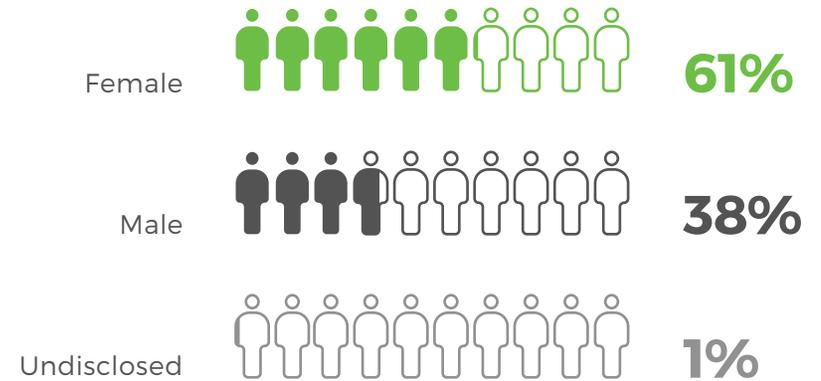
### Currently employed as a teacher



### Age



### Gender



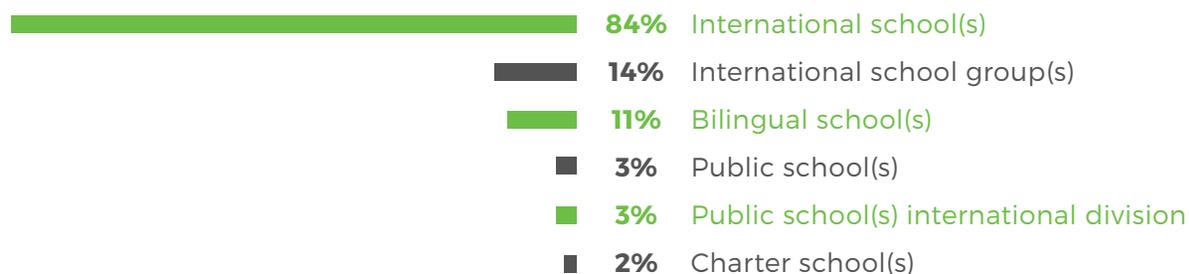
## SCHOOL SURVEY RESPONDENTS



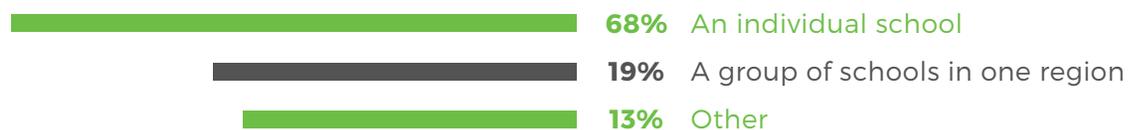
63

School leaders surveyed

### School or institution types

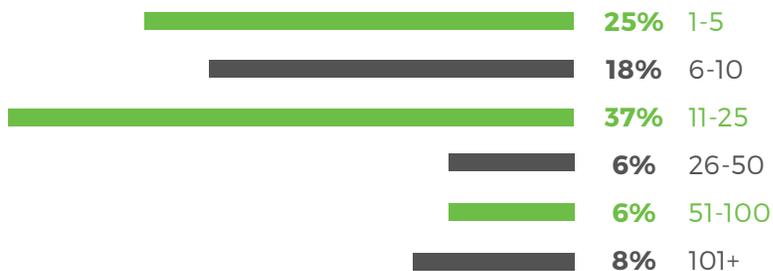


### Hiring responsibility

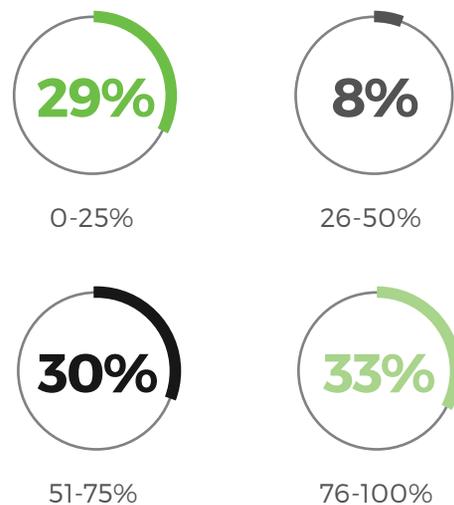


## 75 Who We Surveyed

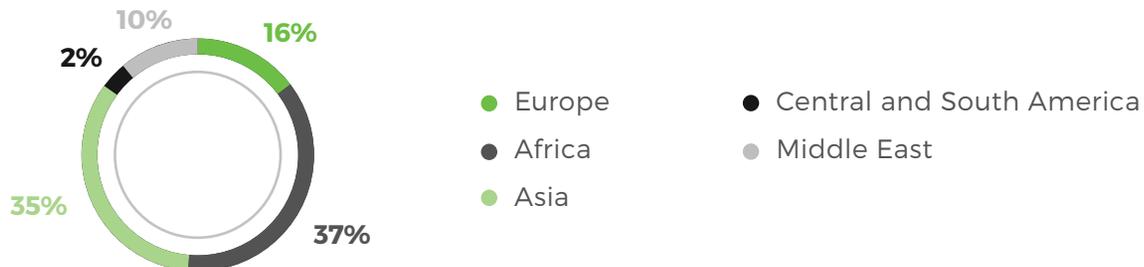
### Number of teachers hired per year



### Percentage of staff who are international hires

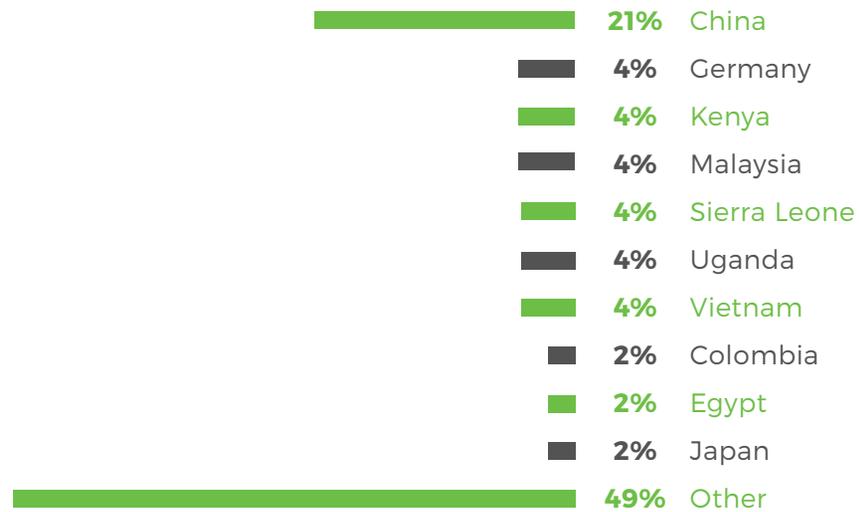


### Region the school is located in



## 76 Who We Surveyed

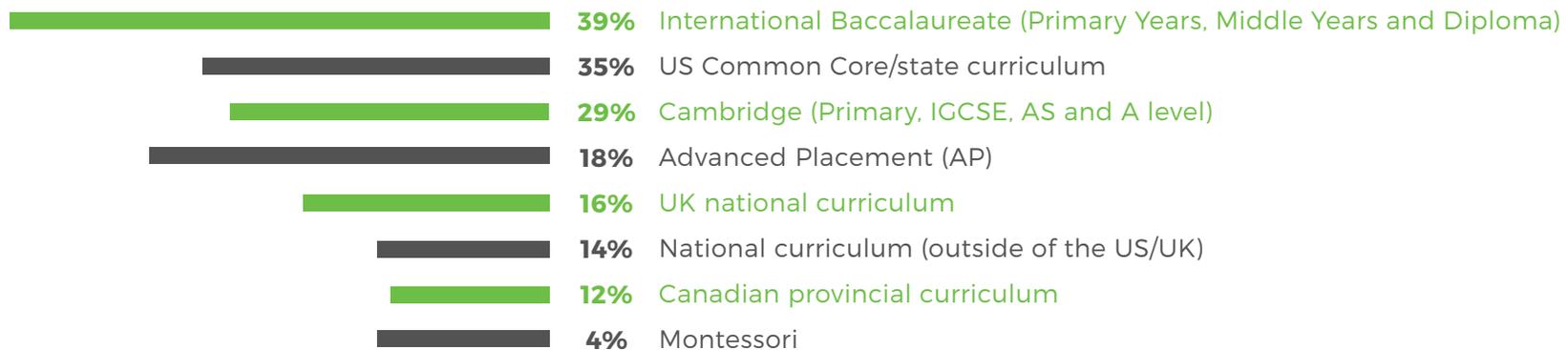
### Country

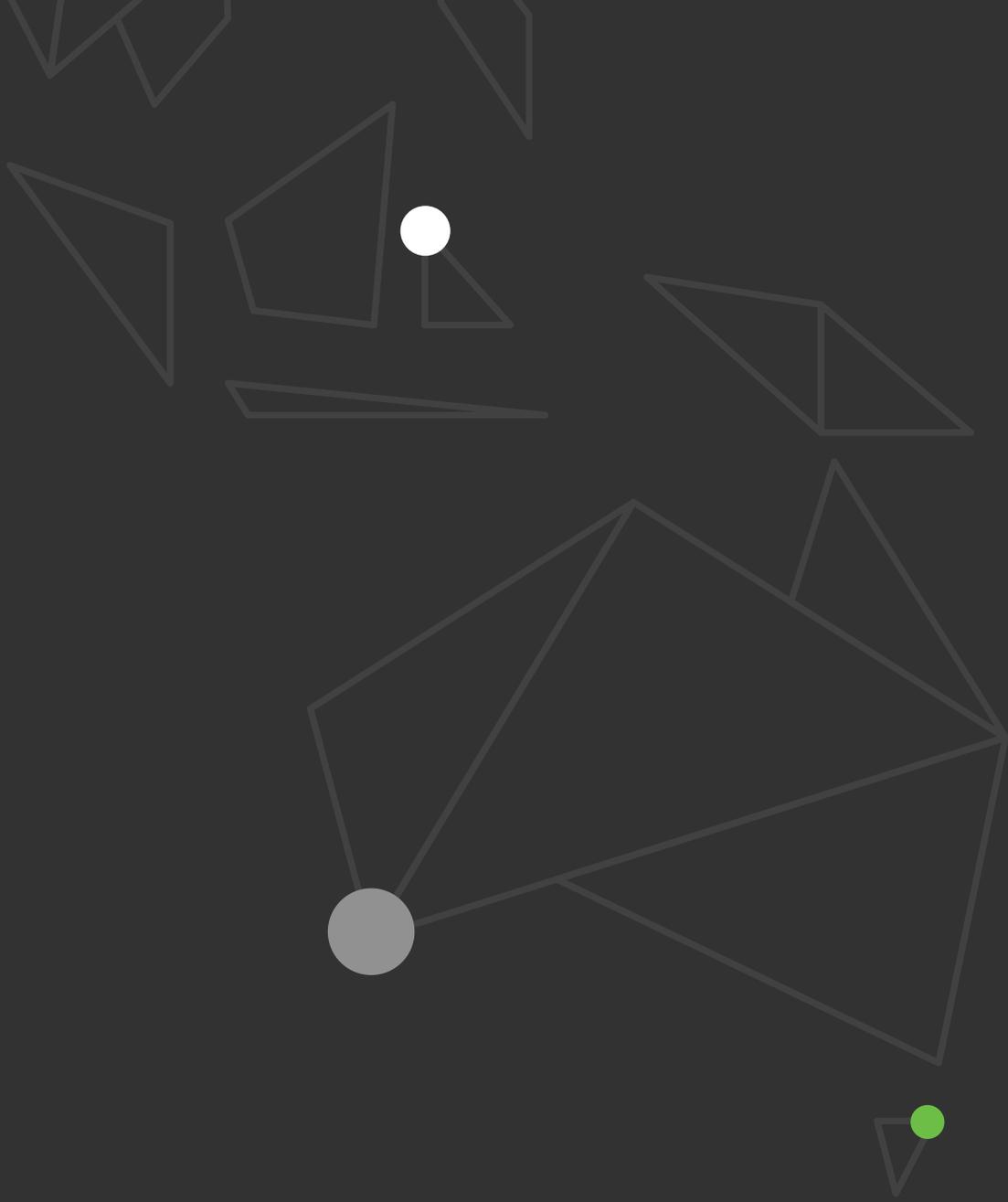


### School setting



### Curricula taught at the school





More than a million education professionals and aspiring international teachers visit Teach Away each year to develop new teaching skills, find job opportunities and build their careers. We know that hiring teachers is hard, and as the world's most trusted resource for international educators, we aim to make it easier.

## WE CAN HELP YOU:

### UNDERSTAND

everything about international educators, inside your school and out.

### BUILD

your school's employer brand and hiring strategy in a way that will resonate with teachers.

### SOURCE

the right teachers on the platform they trust the most.

### OPTIMIZE

your hiring efforts from start to finish with our flexible, easy-to-use recruiting solutions.

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