

11 WAYS

CSDE is Leading Educator Recruitment & Diversification Efforts



Since 2017, school districts in Connecticut have hired **more than 1,900** educators of color, exceeding the goal set by the State Board of Education to increase the number of educators of color to 10% — approximately 1,000 positions — by 2021. A wide range of evidence supports the benefits of a diverse educator workforce, including improved outcomes such as reduced dropout rates, increased college admissions, and achievement gains. Despite exceeding our goal, the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) multi-pronged approach continues, and some key initiatives are outlined below.

- 1** [Creating a District Plan to Increase the Racial, Ethnic and Linguistic Diversity of Your Educator Workforce: A Guidebook for Hiring and Selection](#) provides direct support and guidance to districts in schools across Connecticut to increase the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of their educator workforce. The CSDE partnership with the [REL-NEI](#) and [WestEd](#) continues to support the ongoing pilot of resources and supports within the Guidebook across Connecticut districts and the development of a companion toolkit.
- 2** **An Enhanced Educator Certification Reciprocity Policy** has been newly developed by the CSDE for identified states within the Northeastern Region, going beyond the current [National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification \(NASDTEC\) Interstate Agreement](#), to streamline the processing of Connecticut certifications for educators who hold valid and active out-of-state certifications. This will expedite Connecticut districts and schools recruiting diverse, high-quality educators from Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Virginia.
- 3** [NextGen Educators](#) provides undergraduate educator candidates the opportunity to work in school districts to gain valuable experience *and* provide districts with immediate access to new talent to ease pressures on current educators and address staffing shortages. NextGen Educators has grown to include four Connecticut educator preparation programs (EPPs) and has placed more than 112 candidates as substitute teachers during the 2021-22 school year.
- 4** [Educators Rising](#), launched statewide in 2020, introduces middle and high school students to careers in education, based on research showing that pre-college engagement allows districts to invest in current students of color while also cultivating future educators. Currently, the program has 491 students enrolled in clubs and courses across 22 schools in 19 districts.
- 5** **The Male Educator Network (MEN)** initiative, a subset of Educators Rising, focuses solely on males of color with an interest in education and is being piloted with 11 young men in two districts during the 2021-22 school year.

- 6** [TEACH Connecticut](#) supports aspiring educators with free 1-on-1 support, financial aid resources, information on EPPs, and more. Since its launch in October 2018, TEACH Connecticut has supported more than 900 EPP applicants. In year three of the partnership alone, TEACH CT supported over 500 applicants, 41% whom identify as people of color and 39% of whom are endeavoring to teach in [a subject shortage area](#).
- 7** [Connecticut Troops to Teachers](#) aims to address teacher shortage areas, increase the number of male teachers of color, and reduce veteran unemployment. The program has supported over 150 new service members or veterans interested in learning more about the teaching profession. Communities of Practice are hosted in partner districts to provide an overview of the requirements to become a teacher and opportunities to network.
- 8** [The Minority Teacher Recruitment Policy Oversight Council](#) was established within the CSDE in 2017 to strategize ways to increase the diversity of Connecticut's educator workforce by attracting middle and high school students, encouraging students of color at higher education institutions to enroll in EPPs, and recruiting educators from other states to teach in Connecticut, and more.
- 9** **Virtual Career Fairs** are held in [partnership with our Regional Educational Service Centers](#) (RESCs). In 2021, invitations were sent to certified teachers of color that were not appearing in our employment data system, as well as recent graduates of Connecticut EPPs, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and Hispanic Serving Institutions on the East Coast. The fair attracted 63 districts to create virtual booths and 99 job-seeking candidates.
- 10** **RESC Regional Consortia** comprised of diverse local educators convene to develop workforce diversity plans that address attracting, recruiting, hiring, supporting, and retaining educators. Each of the six RESC groups also had the opportunity to apply for a grant to implement a project to meet an identified diversification goal.
- 11** [The EdKnowledge Online Repository](#) hosts promising practices and models of success to attract, support, develop, and retain educators of color. Leadership and faculty at EPPs and local school districts can access the repository to seek potential ideas for replication across the stages of the educator continuum.