



**Governor Ned Lamont
State of Connecticut**



FACT SHEET
2019 Legislative Session

**HOUSE BILL 7149
*AN ACT BOLSTERING MINORITY TEACHER RECRUITMENT***

Summary of Proposal:

This proposal extends the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority's down payment assistance program to teachers who are graduates of educational reform districts, also known as Opportunity Districts, Historically Black Colleges or University, and Hispanic Serving Institutions, and provides new capital authorizations for that program. It also updates reciprocal arrangements and certification processes to streamline teacher recruitment and retention from within Connecticut and across the region.

Reason for Proposal:

The lack of minority representation in the educational field is of concern for urban, suburban, and rural school districts alike. It is important that all children have access to both positive teaching and learning experiences with educators from a variety of backgrounds in order to be successful in an increasingly racially and culturally diverse society. Currently, students of color account for over 40% of Connecticut's student population, while only 8.7% of the state's public school teachers and administrators are people of color. This bill builds upon the State Department of Education's (SDE) important efforts to diversify Connecticut's teacher corps.

Section Details:

Sec. 1 directs SDE to enter into recognition agreements concerning professional reciprocity with our neighboring states including Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, New York, and New Jersey. Additionally, the SDE Commissioner shall submit a progress report regarding any memoranda of understanding and any recommendations for future legislation.

Sec. 2 makes changes to expand eligibility for Connecticut Housing Finance Authority's down payment assistance program to high school graduates from Opportunity Districts who have their initial teacher's certification along with those who have graduated from a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) or Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI).

Sec. 3 expands the current law for retired teachers being reemployed for up to one full school year to the same groups identified in Section 2.

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Sec. 4 provides flexibility for the SDE to accept advanced degrees for the issuance of an initial educator certificate, particularly those not accredited within the United States but that have an equivalent accreditation.

Sec. 5 allows those with a valid teaching certificate, whose certificate has expired, to forego the previous requirement of successfully completing a subject matter assessment in their endorsement area when seeking renewal or advancement of their certificate. This applies if the educator has completed three successful years of teaching within the preceding ten years under a valid teaching certificate, or holds a master's or other advanced degree in the subject matter area for which they are seeking renewal or advancement.

This section also waives the requirement, in the case of a lapsed certification, for an educator to take the current subject matter assessment approved by the State Board of Education, if it is determined by the Commissioner of Education that a satisfactory score was achieved on a prior subject matter assessment that was at least equivalent to the current approved assessment.