

Increasing Educator Diversity Policy Council

December 5, 2024

9 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance:

Ryan Donlon, LEARN

Faith Sweeney, CEA

Terrell Hill, Windsor

Werner Oyanadel, CGA

Patrice McCarthy, CABA

Rebecca Good, RELAY

Sal Escobales, Manchester

Steven Hernandez, ConnCAN

CSDE:

Dr. Shuana Tucker, CSDE

Mary Glassman, CSDE

Dr. Jessica Ocasio, CSDE

1. Welcome and introductions – Dr. Shuana Tucker, Chief Talent Officer convened the meeting at 9:03 a.m. and noted two additional Council members have been added: Nancy Sudhoff, Human Resources Director for Waterford Public Schools and President of the Connecticut Association of School Personnel Administrators and Aynsley Diamond, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs for the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities System.
2. Increasing Educator Diversity Plan Update – Dr. Jessica Ocasio, CSDE Consultant reviewed the legislative requirement that all school districts must file an Increasing Educator Diversity plan required to be submitted to CSDE by April 15, 2024. Dr. Ocasio reported that 164 plans were submitted (with 23 districts not submitting plans). Of the total, 24 district plans were approved and 131 district plans were conditionally approved requiring additional revisions.
 - a. Dr. Ocasio reviewed the support documents on the CSDE website to assist districts.
 - b. Mr. Hernandez thanked the department for the support given to the districts. He asked what follow up is required for the 23 districts that did not submit plans. Dr. Ocasio said the legislation does not specify penalties.

- c. Dr. Good asked if the list of districts who complied and did not comply could be listed on the CSDE website. Dr. Ocasio said the district plans that are approved are on the website but not districts that did not submit. Dr. Good would like the transparency of including that information.
 - d. **Ms. Sweeney made a motion that the Increasing Educator Diversity Policy Council supports the transparency of adding a list of districts who complied and didn't comply on the CSDE website. Mr. Hernandez seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**
- 3. Connecticut Educator Preparation and Certification Board Update – Dr. Rebecca Good, IED Policy Oversight Council representative presented an overview of the Board's first meeting and said the goal is to create a more efficient way to recruit and retain educators of color. She invited members to reach out if they have any suggestions.
- 4. Enhanced Reciprocity Update – Dr. Tucker reviewed the enhanced reciprocity process since April 2022 which includes 22 participating states and Puerto Rico. The program resulted in 3,200 content-specific teaching, administrative and/or special service endorsements issued to 2,394 educators, including 473 educators of color. Of the total, there are 1,371 new educators (including 295 educators of color) working in 187 Connecticut public and school districts and approved private special education programs.
 - a. Dr. Good asked if CSDE is looking to add innovative states like Colorado and coastal states like Seattle. Dr. Tucker said CSDE is looking at a Phase B to include other states like Colorado.
- 5. Aspiring Educator Diversity Scholarship Update – Ms. Glassman gave an overview of the Aspiring Educator Diversity Scholarship program and said CSDE is now accepting applications from diverse students who graduated from an Alliance District high school and enrolled in a state educator preparation program. The deadline is February 1, 2025 and the scholarship offers \$5,000 per semester.
 - a. **Ms. Sweeney asked if Open Choice students could be included in the scholarship. Ms. Glassman said that is something CSDE can discuss with legislators.**
- 6. The Connecticut Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program – Dr. Tucker provided an overview of the program launched by CSDE and the Connecticut Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship. She reviewed the process of allocating \$1.2 million in ARPA funds to districts and educator preparation programs that will support 54 apprentices.
- 7. Proposed pilot programs to support the teacher pipeline – Dr. Tucker provided information on pilot programs the CSDE will offer using ARPA funds including a PRAXIS Prep Academy, a PAraPro Preparation Academy and an Educators Rising "Grow Your Own" Summer leadership academy. She said more information will be shared when it is available.
 - a. **Mr. Donlon asked if the ParaPro Academy can be shared once it is developed because the RESCs receive a lot of requests from districts for support paraprofessionals and hopes the idea can be replicated.**

2025 Legislative Session Proposals – Ms. Glassman and Dr. Tucker reviewed the Talent Office legislative agenda noting the session begins on January 8, 2024 and adjourns on June 4, 2025. The department has requested a total of \$.3 million for two years to fund the following initiatives: TEACH Connecticut; the Connecticut Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program;

Certification software implementation, maintenance, and upgrades; Connecticut Educators Rising Program expansion; Talent Education and Mentoring Program (TEAM) stipend; Talent Office Increasing Educator Diversity Support. Dr. Tucker asked council members for their assistance and support in advocating for the legislative initiatives.

8. Questions – There were no questions.
9. Next Meeting Dates – The next meeting dates are Thursday, January 23, 2025; Thursday, March 27, 2025, and Wednesday, June 18, 2025.
10. Adjourn – Dr. Tucker adjourned the meeting at 9:54 a.m.