

Increasing Educator Diversity Policy Oversight Council (formerly the Minority Teacher Recruitment Policy Oversight Council) Meeting Minutes

Meeting #3 (Virtual)

April 9, 2024

9:00-10:00 a.m.

In attendance:

Ryan Donlon, LEARN

Faith Sweeney, CEA

Hamish MacPhail, ConnCAN

Steven Hernandez, ConnCAN

Kevin Walton, ACES

Noha Abdel-Hady, Windsor Public Schools

Werner Oyanadel, Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity

Patrice McCarthy, CABA

Rebecca Good, RELAY Graduate School of Education

Sal Escobales, Manchester Public Schools

Samuel Galloway

CSDE:

Dr. Shuana Tucker, Chief Talent Officer

Mary Glassman, Educator Diversity Coordinator

Patricia Wilson, Bureau of Standards and Certification

1. Welcome and Introductions – Dr. Shuana Tucker, CSDE Chief Talent Officer convened the meeting at 9:03 a.m. She welcomed the Council members and thanked them for their time.
2. Review of Diversity Initiatives
 - a. Aspiring Educators Diversity Scholarship Program – Mary Glassman provided an update on the Aspiring Educators Diversity Scholarship Program which was approved by the legislature and effective as of July 1, 2023, and open to high school graduates of a priority school district attending a state approved educator preparation program (EPP). She said there were 29 recipients for the Fall 2023 semester. Applications for the Spring 2024 semester are currently under review.
 1. Dr. Tucker said CSDE wants to award as many scholarships as possible and would like to see the program expanded to Alliance Districts. She said she expects more applicants as communication about the program increases. She also said high school seniors will be eligible to apply for the

Fall 2024 semester so that will increase numbers. CSDE must verify each student with the EPP and the financial aid office which has added another layer to processing.

2. Hamish McPhail commented that the expansion of the program must happen this legislative session and asked what Council members can do to help support expansion. He also said he is concerned that the legislature rolled back some of the funding for the second year of the program. Dr. Tucker said members can contact the co-chairs of the Education Committee which CSDE is doing.
- b. Connecticut Educators Rising Professional Development – May 29, 2024, at University of St. Joseph, 1678 Asylum St., West Hartford, CT - Mary Glassman invited Council members to attend the Ed Rising program to learn about the work that the school districts are doing to increase student’s interest in teaching. She said Sen. Doug McCrory will be among the keynote speakers. To expand the program, she said mini grants will be available for the fall 2024 year for school districts to start or expand Educators Rising Program are available until April 15, 2024. The grants have helped expand the program to 22 school districts. Dr. Tucker said almost 50 students will attend the National Competition in June in Washington, D.C.
 - c. Enhanced Reciprocity Initiatives – Patty Wilson said ten additional midwestern and southern states have been added to the current pathway for educators to obtain certification through the enhanced reciprocity agreement. Since implementing the enhanced reciprocity agreement, she said 2,217 endorsements have been issued by CSDE to 1,666 educators who hold valid certification in Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Virginia. Of the endorsements issued, 968 certified educators are currently employed in a Connecticut public school district.
 1. Dr. Tucker said the work is ongoing and that WestEd assists in reviewing the qualifications in other states that align with Connecticut’s requirements.
 2. Kevin Walton asked if the department collects race or gender information for the applicants. Ms. Wilson said she will have to check with legal to see if that is an option. Dr. Tucker said that data is collected when teachers are employed in a district but it is her understanding that the information can’t be collected earlier. Mr. Walton asked if districts are aware of the program. Ms. Wilson said CSDE did a direct correspondence to superintendents. Dr. Tucker said the information was also sent to talent and human resources directors as well as other educational organizations.

3. Dr. Rebecca Good said the demographic breakdown is important to collect. Ms. Wilson said she will check with the legal department to determine whether the data could be collected.
- d. Educator Certification System – Ms. Wilson said CSDE is working with 12 states to implement an online certification system that would streamline the teacher certification process. She said it would reduce the review time from three months to two weeks which would expedite the process. Dr. Tucker said the department has funds to purchase the system but will need legislative funding to maintain the system annually.
 1. Hamish MacPhail asked if the system would have the capability to centralize professional development requirements. Ms. Wilson said it is a nice option that would be available down the line.
 2. Werner Oyanadel said the lack of detailed racial data collected in the enhanced reciprocity program is a problem. He suggested the Council could recommend a change in legislation if the data cannot be collected.
- e. Connecticut Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program – Mary Glassman reviewed the program which was approved by the state Department of Labor in March. She said there is \$1.5 million to fund the start of the program by funding tuition, mentor stipends and other costs for teacher apprentices. The program has two pilot programs in New Britain and Waterbury but is available to any school district and any educator preparation program.
 1. Dr. Good said the residency pathway is less complicated with less hoops to jump through so she questioned if the program is worth the investment. Ms. Glassman said there is legislative funding to seed the program and there have been discussions of additional federal funding targeted to the program. She said it is an option for student teachers to get paid who are not in residency programs.
3. 2024 Legislative Agenda – Dr. Tucker said this is a short session ending in May so CSDE will have more requests during the regular session next year. She thanked the members for their advocacy during the session.
 - a. Dr. Good requested that the Council’s website be updated so others know of the good work being done.

The next meeting date was announced for Thursday, June 13, 2024

The meeting adjourned at 10 a.m.