



PENNSYLVANIA EDUCATOR DIVERSITY CONSORTIUM POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS 2021-2022

Research shows that teachers of color are good for all students, helping close opportunity gaps for students of color and earning high ratings from students of all races. However, in Pennsylvania, the lack of racial and ethnic diversity in the teacher workforce and deficits in educators' cultural competence are dire issues. Only 6% of Pennsylvania's teachers are people of color, while 36% of Pennsylvania's students are people of color. This teacher-student diversity gap is one of the worst in the nation, and it continues to worsen as Pennsylvania's student population diversifies much more rapidly than the teacher workforce.

Recognizing the urgent need for a racially diverse educator workforce, Pennsylvania was one of six states to codify its commitment to educator diversity into its Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan. In 2019, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) launched Aspiring to Educate, a pilot program in southeastern Pennsylvania to grow and diversify the educator pipeline. The pilot – which is the first of its kind in the nation – was a partnership between the School District of Philadelphia, six institutions of higher education, and local education and youth organizations to

support the recruitment, retention, and mentorship of Black and Latinx educators and the expansion of pathways into teacher education programs.

The Pennsylvania Educator Diversity Consortium (PEDC) is an outgrowth of the Aspiring to Educate pilot program and now consists of over 40 organizations representing school districts, charter school operators, teacher preparation programs, institutions of higher education, non-profits, educational organizations, and government entities across Pennsylvania. PEDC has developed Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Education competencies to guide educator training and support, developed toolkits on recruitment, retention, and mentorship of educators of color, and hosted virtual summits to spread awareness and best practices around educator diversity and cultural competency.

PEDC has developed the following recommendations for statewide policy changes to support our goals of promoting teacher diversity and cultural competency across Pennsylvania's educator workforce.

01

IMPROVE DATA COLLECTION AND TRANSPARENCY AROUND TEACHER DIVERSITY

- Publish on an annual basis existing teacher diversity data:
 - Teacher racial demographic data at the school, district, and state level
 - Demographic data for enrolled teacher candidates and teacher program graduates for in-state teacher preparation programs.
- Collect and publish data on:
 - Teacher certification test takers and pass rates by race
 - Teaching certificates granted by race
 - New teacher applicants and hires by race at the school, district, and state levels
 - Teacher retention by race at the school, district, and state levels

CREATE AN OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION WITHIN PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

02

- Articulate clear goals around teacher diversity for the state.
- Conduct research on the teacher pipeline within Pennsylvania and best practices from other states to diversify the pipeline.
- Develop a strategic plan for promoting teacher diversity.
- Ensure prioritization of DEI across all P-16 PDE initiatives and departments, including professional development for educators and leaders.

03

ELEVATE AND PROVIDE SUPPORT AROUND THE CULTURALLY RELEVANT AND SUSTAINING EDUCATION (CR-SE) COMPETENCIES

- Include the CR-SE competencies, developed by the Pennsylvania Educator Diversity Consortium, into the revised Chapter 49 requirements for educator preparation programs.
- Leverage state and federal dollars to provide technical assistance grants to districts and educator preparation programs to support incorporating CR-SE competencies into teacher development.



04 INVEST IN A DIVERSE TEACHER PIPELINE

- Designate K-12 teachers as High-Priority Occupations (HPOs) across Pennsylvania with a focus on teacher diversity.
- Provide funding to districts for high school students to take dual enrollment courses in education with PA educator preparation programs.
- Provide funding and authorization for a CTE pathway in teaching.
- Provide funding for scholarships and/or loan forgiveness for teachers of color committing to teach in Pennsylvania.
- Increase funding for teacher residency programs and other innovative teacher preparation models that attract and prepare diverse teacher candidates.
- Provide clear guidance for districts on what policies and practices are needed to ensure they are certifying, recruiting, hiring and supporting teachers with diversity and equity in mind.



REMOVE BARRIERS FROM PENNSYLVANIA'S TEACHER PREPARATION AND CERTIFICATION PROCESSES.

05

- Require in-state teacher preparation programs to develop articulation agreements with community colleges to accept credit for education coursework from transfer students.
- Allow DACA recipients and green card holders to apply for certification.
- Develop reciprocity agreements with other states to allow out-of-state educators to more easily become certified in PA.
- Study disparities in certification test passing rates and recommend alternatives or next steps for achieving equity in certification approval.