Diversifying the Educator Workforce Collaborative

REGIONAL LANDSCAPE SNAPSHOT

MARCH 2022
Understanding Educator Diversification Efforts in New England

A growing body of research demonstrates the positive impacts of teachers of color on short- and long-term academic outcomes of all students. For students of color, the research finds that having just one teacher of color at any point between kindergarten and third grade can boost academic achievement, high school graduation rates, and college enrollment rates (Dee, 2004; Gershenson, 2018). Nationally, students of color represent 50% of total public K-12 enrollment, and by 2060, that number will climb to 66%. Yet, people of color currently make up only 20% of the educator workforce (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). The imperative is clear: A racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse educator workforce is vital to closing the inequitable gaps that persist between students of color and their White peers.

In August 2021, the Great Schools Partnership, with support from the Barr Foundation, launched a new regional effort: the Diversifying the Educator Workforce (DEW) Collaborative, which seeks to translate recommendations detailed in a recent report titled “Increasing the Racial, Ethnic, and Linguistic Diversity of the Educator Workforce.” The DEW Collaborative will use the framework presented in this report, which outlines five key areas necessary to build a more diverse educator workforce across the region: (1) cultivating an interest in becoming an educator, (2) supporting completion of educator preparation program, (3) streamlining certification, (2) recruiting and hiring diverse educators, and (5) supporting, retaining, and promoting diverse educators.

As a critical first step, the DEW Collaborative set out to document the current landscape of the region, including identifying diversification efforts already underway in each of the six New England states, documenting the current policy context, and gathering a range of demographic data metrics about the current educator workforce pipeline. This Regional Landscape Snapshot summarizes key findings from the landscape mapping process and is intended to serve as a resource that can help inform and accelerate efforts to diversify the educator workforce across New England.

How are we defining “educator”?
We are using the most inclusive definition of educator, which includes any school or district staff who are involved in students’ educational experience (e.g., paraprofessionals, teachers, counselors, interventionists, administrators).

Using This Regional Landscape Snapshot

We have designed this Regional Landscape Snapshot to be a resource for state education agencies, nonprofit organizations, districts and schools, educator preparation programs, community organizations, educators, policymakers, foundations, and other stakeholders committed to increasing the diversity of educators in New England. The goal of this snapshot is to:

- Lift up existing programs, initiatives, partnerships, and organizations
- Identify key characteristics of current DEW efforts
- Highlight current DEW-related policies in each of the states
- Summarize potential data metrics that can be used to set and measure goals for the region
- Bring attention to potential areas for growth and high-leverage areas for increasing diversity in the educator workforce pipeline
Ultimately, we hope the information summarized here may encourage connections and collaborations, prompt new questions and areas for investigation, and provide valuable insights to inform the ongoing conversations happening across New England.

It should be noted that this snapshot represents an overview of work underway at a specific moment in time, and the programs, policies, and data related to diversifying the educator workforce in New England are continuing to evolve, change, and expand. That said, we believe this snapshot provides a helpful glimpse into the areas in which energy and interest already exist, which can help inform future initiatives and efforts.

**Mapping the Landscape in New England**

Our landscape mapping process sought to systematically document the wide range of currently-active programs, initiatives, partnerships, and organizations in New England that are focused on any of the five areas of the DEW framework. Our goal was to cast a broad net in our search and to intentionally engage a wide range of stakeholders from schools, districts, local communities, nonprofits, higher education institutions, and state education agencies to help us identify relevant work happening across the region. Specifically, we used a methodology called snowball sampling, where we started with an initial set of contacts—known to be engaging in work related to diversifying the educator workforce—identified by members of the DEW Collaborative project team. These contacts were then asked to identify additional contacts, programs, and organizations engaging in related work. Members of the project team reached out to this additional set of contacts, again requesting referrals to others who were working toward similar goals. This process continued until it reached the point of saturation—that is, the point where referrals repeatedly led back to contacts, programs, and organizations already identified by the project team.

In addition to gathering information about current programs, initiatives, partnerships, and organizations, the project team also documented current state-level policies deliberately focused on increasing the diversity of educators. Between August 2021 and February 2022, we identified and reviewed relevant statutes, rules, and regulations for each of the six New England states. While the New England region generally promotes local district autonomy, there are a few areas where states have exercised their purview by enacting policies that have the potential for diversifying the educator workforce. In most cases, these tend to be statutes enacted by legislatures or policies passed by state boards of education governing specific functions for which the state education agency is responsible for implementation. We also reviewed currently enacted and relevant state statutes as well as current rules and regulations governing the responsibilities of state education agencies and local education agencies (i.e. school districts).

**Defining Our Search Parameters**

To guide our landscape mapping process, our team developed a set of search terms and definitions. The defined search parameters were intended to be inclusive of a wide range of programs, initiatives, partnerships, organizations, and policies while maintaining a clear focus on the outcome of increasing diversity of the educator workforce in New England.

Programs, initiatives, partnerships, and organizations included in our landscape map included those that were active during the time of the landscape mapping (August 2021–February 2022) and had an explicit and named focus on increasing educator diversity in New England. A number of school districts and organizations in the region have broader diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives underway, a precondition necessary to creating a culture and climate in schools to attract and retain a diverse talent pool; however, unless educator diversity was explicitly named, these initiatives were not included in the analysis. See Appendix A for more detailed description of search parameters.
Framing Context: Current Demographics of the Region

What is the current composition of the educator workforce in New England? What is the current composition of the student population?

Across the region, the racial demographics of students look noticeably different from that of the educator workforce. As the student populations across all six New England states have become increasingly racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse, the educator workforce in New England remains predominantly white.

Note: We sought to use the most up-to-date data available for each state. In some cases (CT, MA, RI), data was available through SEA websites; in other cases (ME, NH, VT), we relied on 2017-18 data from the National Center for Educational Statistics.

### Connecticut

- **Students**
  - 5% Asian
  - 13% Black
  - 28% Hispanic/Latino
  - 4% Multiracial
  - 0% Native American
  - 0% Pacific Islander
  - 50% White

- **Teachers**
  - 1% Asian
  - 4% Black
  - 4% Hispanic/Latino
  - 0% Multiracial
  - 0% Native American
  - 0% Pacific Islander
  - 90% White

* *Rounds to 0% or suppressed due to small N*

**Data Sources | Connecticut: Student Data; Educator Data**

### Maine

- **Students**
  - 2% Asian
  - 4% Black
  - 2% Hispanic/Latino
  - 3% Multiracial
  - 1% Native American
  - 0% Pacific Islander
  - 89% White

- **Teachers**
  - 0% Asian
  - 0% Black
  - 0% Hispanic/Latino
  - 2% Multiracial
  - 0% Native American
  - 0% Pacific Islander
  - 96% White

* *Rounds to 0% or suppressed due to small N*

**Data Sources | Maine: Student Data; Educator Data**

### Massachusetts

- **Students**
  - 7% Asian
  - 9% Black
  - 23% Hispanic/Latino
  - 4% Multiracial
  - 0% Native American
  - 0% Pacific Islander
  - 56% White

- **Teachers**
  - 2% Asian
  - 5% Black
  - 5% Hispanic/Latino
  - 1% Multiracial
  - 0% Native American
  - 0% Pacific Islander
  - 88% White

* *Rounds to 0% or suppressed due to small N*

**Data Sources | Massachusetts: Student Data; Educator Data**
DATA SOURCES

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Data Sources | New Hampshire: Student Data; Educator Data

RHODE ISLAND

Data Sources | Rhode Island: Student Data; Educator Data

VERMONT

Data Sources | Vermont: Student Data; Educator Data
Current Landscape of Educator Diversity Efforts in New England

The landscape mapping process identified over 140 programs, initiatives, partnerships, and organizations actively committed to diversifying the educator workforce in New England. Even with a narrowly focused set of search parameters described previously, the mapping process demonstrated growing momentum for efforts at multiple levels—from the state level to individual schools and communities—and across the five areas of the DEW framework to increase the diversity of the educator workforce. The landscape mapping process also revealed substantial variation across the region in terms of the:

- Focus on the work
- Saturation of programming available in different states
- Organizations, entities or individuals leading the work
- Specific audience(s) their efforts are intended to support

Across all states, on which areas of the DEW framework are current programs, initiatives, partnerships, and organizations currently focusing their work?

Each of the programs, initiatives, partnerships, and organizations identified in the landscape mapping process were coded by the DEW Collaborative team based on their alignment to the five DEW framework areas. Nearly sixty percent of programs included a focus on supporting, retaining, and promoting current educators of color, whereas only 6% percent specifically addressed trying to streamline certification processes. Fifty-one percent of the programs, initiatives, or organizations sought to address two or more of the DEW framework areas. The graph below illustrates the percentage of total programs, initiatives, partnerships, and organizations identified in each of the five areas.

Note: Many programs, initiatives, partnerships, and organizations in the region are working to address two or more areas from the DEW framework, and therefore percentages do not sum to 100%. A detailed list of programs identified is included in Appendix B.
How many total programs, initiatives, partnerships, and organizations focused on increasing educator diversity are currently in place in each of the New England states?

Not surprisingly, the total number of programs, initiatives, partnerships, and organizations working in each state varies across the region, with larger total numbers of programs correlating with greater state population density and diversity. The landscape mapping process found that Massachusetts had the highest saturation of programs, initiatives, partnerships, and organizations explicitly engaged in DEW-related work whereas New Hampshire had the fewest programs. That said, for the northern New England states in particular, the total number of programs explicitly focused on the five areas of the DEW framework is not necessarily indicative of a lack of interest or appetite for related work.

Note: A detailed list of active programs, initiatives, partnerships, and organizations with an explicit focus on increasing educator diversity identified through the regional landscape snapshot process is included in Appendix B.

Who administers, leads, or partners in this work?

Across the region, nonprofit organizations, districts and K-12 schools, educator preparation programs, and state education agencies are leading the majority of the work underway. In many cases, the work is led or administered by two or more partner entities working in collaboration—for example, a district working with a higher education educator preparation program. The chart below shows the percentage of current programs and initiatives being administered or led by various entities.

Note: Many programs, initiatives, partnerships, and organizations in the region have multiple groups working together (e.g., district and nonprofit organization) to lead the work, and therefore percentages do not sum to 100%.
Given that nearly half of programs, partnerships, initiatives, and organizations in New England are focused on supporting, retaining, and promoting racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse educators, current teachers and administrators are the most common beneficiaries of DEW-related work. Current school or district employees, including paraprofessionals and ed techs, are also a commonly targeted population for this work; this is reflective of a broader interest regionally in grow-your-own programs focused on cultivating a workforce from within a community.

Which group(s) are the intended beneficiaries for these programs, partnerships, initiatives, or organizations?

Note: Many programs, initiatives, partnerships, and organizations in the region have multiple groups working together (e.g., district and nonprofit organization) to lead the work, and therefore percentages do not sum to 100%.
The strategies and activities currently in place vary widely across programs, organizations, districts, states, and the DEW framework focus areas; however, a number of recurring strategies can be seen across the region.

Of the programs, partnerships, initiatives, and organizations identified:

- **23%** provide scholarships or other financial support to cover the cost of tuition for licensure coursework or offer stipends during student teaching experiences.

- **21%** have established communities of practice, supportive networks, or other networking opportunities for current and potential educators.

- **16%** offer professional development opportunities to current and aspiring educators of color.

- **15%** leverage partnerships with institutions of higher education.

- **11%** include paraprofessional pathways programs and/or grow-your-own programs.

- **10%** include mentoring or coaching supports for current or potential educators of color.
10% provide educators with leadership development and coaching opportunities

10% include affinity group spaces for racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse educators to connect with and support each other

9% include advocacy work focused on creating the conditions to attract, retain, and promote a more diverse educator workforce

9% include opportunities for prospective educators to get hands-on experience working in schools

9% include teacher residency programs, where teacher candidates are paid to work directly in schools under the supervision of an experienced educator as they complete credentialing requirements

7% offer academic support and advising to teacher candidates to help support program completion

Note: Programs, partnerships, initiatives, and organizations frequently use more than one strategy to work toward diversifying the educator workforce, and therefore percentages do not sum to 100%. A detailed table with frequency counts for the strategies and activities in place across the five areas of the DEW framework is included in Appendix C.
A review of relevant statutes, rules, and regulations for each of the six New England states revealed a variety of policies currently in place to deliberately increase the diversity of the educator workforce. Generally speaking, policies with potential influence on DEW tend to address the following areas:

- Collecting and reporting of local district data regarding the demographics of staff members
- Collecting and reporting of data regarding the demographics of educator preparation program candidates and faculty
- Establishing state DEW goals
- Establishing statewide programs and councils explicitly intended to diversify the educator workforce
- Establishing requirements, supports, and alternatives to licensing

Policies across states were categorized into the five DEW Framework areas. While five of the six New England states have enacted at least one policy intended to streamline the certification process, only two states have policies currently in place relevant to supporting, retaining, and promoting diverse educators. A detailed list of policies identified in each of the states is included in Appendix D.

### Number of states with at least one policy:

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<th>Cultivating an interest</th>
<th>Supporting program completion</th>
<th>Streamlining certification</th>
<th>Recruiting &amp; hiring</th>
<th>Supporting, retaining, &amp; promoting</th>
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### State-by-State Breakdown: At Least One State Policy Currently in Place

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Implications for Future Work

Our landscape mapping process sheds light upon the varied and substantial efforts already underway across New England to increase the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of the educator workforce. This snapshot strives to provide a starting point for educators, school and district leaders, higher education institutions, nonprofit organizations, community partners, policy makers, and state education agencies to take stock of the unique opportunities and challenges for the region. By systematically documenting what is, and is not, already happening with efforts to diversify the educator workforce, the DEW Collaborative hopes to position the region to build the structures, systems, and policies that can cultivate an interest in the teaching profession, ensure educators are well prepared and licensed, recruit and hire without bias, and retain and promote teachers and administrators. We hope the data captured in this snapshot serves as a germinator for reflection that both inspires new ideas and strategies and offers potential areas for growth and expansion.

In this spirit, we offer the following questions as possible seeds for future conversations about practices, partnerships, resources, policies, and data we believe are needed to create and sustain system-level change:

- **PRACTICES**: What practices can or must we implement to successfully diversify our workforce? What can we learn from other organizations?
- **PARTNERSHIPS**: What types of partnerships and collaborations does your state, community, district, and/or school need to create or sustain to increase the diversity of the educator workforce?
- **RESOURCES**: To what extent have commitments to diversifying the educator workforce being translated into financial, time, and human resource allocations to implement and sustain the commitment?
- **POLICY**: What policies can you advance and enact in your district or state to ensure that diversifying the educator workforce becomes a priority?
- **DATA MONITORING**: What data would be most helpful for schools, districts, and/or states to track and publish to better understand progress toward building a more diverse educator workforce?
- **EXISTING EFFORTS**: How can current efforts to address educational equity happening in schools, districts and initiatives connect to and help to support the need to diversify the educator workforce?
- **SYSTEMS CHANGE**: How is your state, community, district, school, organization, or institution of higher education addressing efforts to diversify the educator workforce with an eye towards systemic solutions that go beyond short-lived initiatives or the passion and energy of sole champions?
- **LEVERAGING ESSER FUNDING**: How is your district ensuring that it is using its allocation of federal funds such as ESSER to invest in strategies that will diversify its educator workforce?
Acknowledgements

The DEW Collaborative would like to thank the members of the Task Force on Diversifying the Educator Workforce and our state education agency partners for continuing to share their time and expertise through the completion of this landscape mapping. The landscape mapping work was not easy. It required rigorous research, leveraging existing relationships, and building new relationships. We are indebted to the many education and community leaders across the region who answered our call for information and insights. Their perspectives and connections made possible the arduous job of documenting the wide range of currently-active programs, initiatives, partnerships, and organizations in New England working to build a diverse educator workforce. This report would not have been possible without the support of our funder, the Barr Foundation.

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