



Supporting, Retaining, and Promoting Diverse Educators

Supporting racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse educators of color means ensuring that new teachers of color are assigned to and within schools equitably, and that schools and districts create effective systems to onboard, mentor, and support those teachers. States, schools, and districts must attend to inequitable pay and under-resourced schools, provide clear pathways for career advancement, and evaluate and promote educators equitably.

People of color disproportionately leave teaching. Inequitable pay, assignment to under-resourced schools, and working conditions that place additional burdens and responsibilities on teachers of color all play a role in retention. Black male teachers may find themselves assigned to discipline Black boys or shunted into assistant principal roles assigned to manage discipline. Other teachers of color on predominantly White teaching staffs may find themselves expected to speak for all people of color, join multiple committees to increase diversity, or advise clubs that involve students of color. Simultaneously, some teachers of color may feel pressure to take on leadership roles when they would prefer to focus on their classrooms, exacerbating the lack of teacher diversity, while teachers who do want to move into administration find pathways for career advancement to be unclear, unsupported, or limited to specific roles. When administrators of color do move into senior leadership roles, they may find themselves in charge of struggling districts and schools in which they are expected to achieve unrealistic goals in a short period of time, are evaluated harshly if they fail to meet those goals, and lose future opportunities as a result.

Strategies to address retention and advancement of racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse teachers include local, home-grown affinity groups that provide support, a sense of community, and mentorship. Similarly, states and districts can create and support programs that target the unique needs of administrators of color.

Promising Practices

- [EduLeaders of Color RI](#): “EduLeaders of Color Rhode Island is a people-centered initiative focused on education, working at the intersection of all fields to unite, support and empower people of color.”
- [Influence 100](#): A program from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education that “includes a fellowship program for qualified educators who desire to move into the superintendent role in the next five years, and support for school districts to become more culturally responsive and to engage in intentional strategy development and execution around diversifying their educator workforce.”
- [Black Leaders and Administrators Consortium Inc.](#) (BLAC): BLAC’s mission is to “promote and advocate for the career progression of Black leaders by providing training, mentoring, and networking opportunities. Which in turn will increase the number of Black leaders, the social capital of Black leaders, and create a community through which Black leaders can share best practices.”
- [Connecticut Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents](#): This association supports the promotion and retention of Latino educators through their mission, which is “to foster quality and equitable public education for Latino Connecticut students as we seek to inspire, cultivate, develop, and support Hispanic/Latino educational leaders and

talent. Acting with urgency, we are committed to supporting the professional growth of Hispanic/Latino talent through professional learning and networking opportunities.”

- [Latinos for Education](#): “The first Latino-founded and led national organization solely dedicated to creating leadership pathways for Latinos in education. Our community of Latinos inside and outside of the education sector is being positioned to increase their influence and impact to serve Latino students and families.”
- [The Black Teacher Project](#): A program of the National Equity Project located in Oakland, California. The site includes a bibliography and links to research and resources.
- [Educators of Color Leadership Community](#): A project of the Puget Sound Educational Service District that gathers, trains, and mentors educators of color to create supportive environments in schools.
- [Educolor](#): A collective of advocates for equity in public education. Their website includes general [resource links](#), [higher education resource links](#), a newsletter, and monthly chat groups.
- [Where Are All the Teachers of Color?](#): A Harvard Ed. Magazine article about the barriers to keeping teachers of color in the profession.
- [Do Districts Really Want Black Male Teachers?](#): An article from Education Week that argues hiring but not supporting Black male teachers means schools don’t actually want them.
- [Through Our Eyes: Perspectives and Reflections From Black Teachers](#): A 2016 report summarizing findings and themes from focus groups with Black teachers.
- [If you listen, we will stay: Why teachers of color leave and how to disrupt teacher turnover](#): An Ed Trust and Teach+Plus September 2019 study outlining five challenges, five solutions, and what school, district, and state leaders can do.
- [Building Our Network of Diversity \(BOND\) Project](#): An organization “committed to advancing efforts to recruit, develop, support, and retain male educators of color at all grade levels within Montgomery County (MD) Public Schools.” The BOND Project provides professional enrichment, mentoring, scholarship, and fellowship activities in both their districts and across the country.

Strategies to consider

The strategies listed here are applicable to all stakeholders. For role or system-specific recommendations, please turn to page 20.

1. Pass specific legislation with concrete goals for hiring superintendents of color with concrete accountability mechanisms.
2. Create mentorship programs for aspiring educators and leaders of color.
3. Examine the role that salary discrepancy plays in the recruitment, hiring, retention, and advancement of educators of color.
4. Build the capacity of leaders to support, enhance, and create culture change, which creates buildings and communities where people want to work and want to stay.
5. Require best practices (like affinity groups) through state or district policy.

6. Build a website that serves as a hub for the region—such as Teach Connecticut—that provides personalized guidance for prospective educators, curates resources, connects educators, and promotes the spread of best practices across New England.
7. Require induction and mentoring programs for educators of color and report annually on the participation of such programs by district.
8. Launch a social media campaign that recognizes and celebrates the stories of racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse educators. These could include personal essays and video vignettes that explore the reasons for becoming a teacher or the journey to becoming one.
9. Support the design and implementation of community engagement series to encourage reflecting on the past, voicing needs and concerns, informing action steps, etc.
10. Establish a student voice or statewide student council to connect existing groups of students and bring all student school board members together in one convening, as a possible policy entry point.