

Prioritizing an Integrated Approach to Educator Shortages and Workforce Diversity, Part 2

Innovative Strategies and Examples Across the
Talent Development Continuum

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A Note on Terminology

This report includes a number of terms that may be challenging to the reader. In general, we are navigating the complexity of language by using the terms “racially marginalized and minoritized” to refer to educators, teachers, students, and other populations of focus here (1) to call into question the inaccurate assignment of the inferior social status associated with group-specific characteristics or so-called “deficiencies” linked to certain individuals and groups; and (2) to push against the [mis]use of the term “minority” as something other than an indication of numerical representation or something that attempts to normalize the collective stigmatization and subjugation of particular individuals and groups. We further recognize the limitations of this language and would like to highlight that specific racialized groups and the individuals therein are rich in history, culture, and pride and have been racially marginalized and minoritized by White supremacy.

In some circumstances, we use the language of the research community as defined within their studies. For example, the National Center for Education Statistics uses the term “students of color” and we use this terminology in this report when referring to their data sets. That said, we recognize that “educators/teachers of color” and “students of color” both have value and are also inappropriate for reasons noted by a number of leading scholars.^{1,2} The authors recognize, with their apologies, that these terms may be offensive to some due to the lack of centering around the systemic racism that continues to oppress, invalidate, and deeply affect the lives of Black and Indigenous people in ways that other people who are racially marginalized and minoritized may experience differently. Furthermore, we would like to note that the language herein is problematic for federally recognized tribes (i.e., those of American Indian and Alaska Native descent) who possess a distinct, legal political status from other groups who are racialized in the United States. As the language evolves, we will continue to pursue better options.

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Introduction

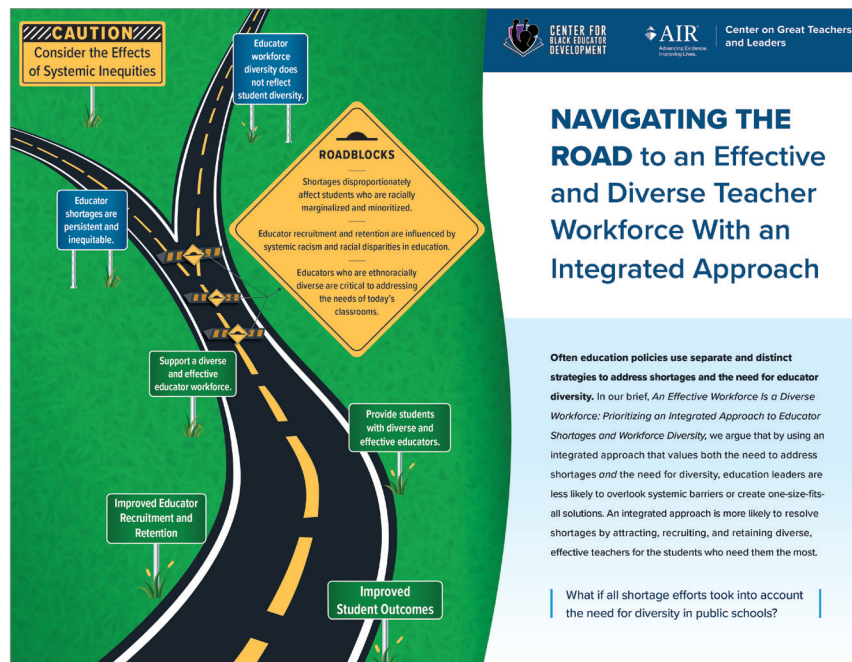
Prioritizing an Integrated Approach to Educator Shortages and Workforce Diversity, Part 1: An Effective Workforce Is a Diverse Workforce makes the case for integrating policies, programs, and practices that address teacher shortages and those that aim to diversify the teacher workforce. Three critical realities illustrate the ways in which educator shortages and workforce diversity are inextricably linked:

- **Reality #1** | Shortages disproportionately affect students who are racially marginalized and minoritized.
- **Reality #2** | Educator recruitment and retention are influenced by systemic racism and racial disparities in education.
- **Reality #3** | Educators who are ethnoracially diverse are critical to addressing the needs of today's classrooms.

Innovative Strategies and Examples Across the Talent Development Continuum

This brief is the first in a two-part series. Part 1 can be found here: [Prioritizing an Integrated Approach to Educator Shortages and Workforce Diversity, Part 1: An Effective Workforce Is a Diverse Workforce](#).

For a quick visual of the content covered here, check out the related infographic by clicking [here](#).



This paper presents strategies and examples for states, districts, and educator preparation programs (EPPs) that want to approach both educator shortage and diversity efforts with an integrated perspective that addresses all points of the talent development continuum. Based on the GTL Center’s [Talent Development Framework](#) (see Exhibit 1), the strategies and examples are organized by the major phases in the teacher career continuum—*attract, prepare, and develop, support, and retain*. Determining which strategies make sense for a specific context requires honest, data-driven conversations about historic racial inequities and the systemic racism inherent in the education system. Although it is challenging, this work is necessary to better increase student access to effective educators overall and specifically, their access to racially underrepresented teachers. The following strategies and examples aim to address shortages and increase diversity by creating greater access to the profession through programs, policies, and practices that:

- Expand access to high-quality and affordable preparation programs;
- Improve quality and diversity within EPPs;
- Revise state licensure requirements;
- Address biases in recruitment, selection, and hiring;
- Provide inclusive mentoring, induction, and job-embedded professional learning;
- Address financial strain with increased compensation and benefits;
- Build culturally affirming workplaces; and
- Promote equitable pathways to promotion, career advancement, and leadership opportunities.

Exhibit 1. The GTL Center’s Talent Development Framework



Attract

Addressing educator shortages and educator diversity requires a multifaceted, strategic approach to ensure that diverse and qualified candidates are attracted into teaching through a variety of pathways. The following section outlines several strategies that states, districts, and EPPs can use to attract potential teacher candidates along with specific examples of the work in practice. These examples provide a vision for encouraging students, parents, paraprofessionals, and other interested individuals to pursue teaching through grow-your-own (GYO) programs, community college partnerships, and teacher apprenticeships—all of which, importantly, can reduce financial burdens on those who have historically been impacted disproportionately as they enter the profession. Finally, this section highlights recruitment and selection initiatives that may reduce bias and emphasize a commitment to racial equity, justice, and culturally responsive practices while valuing the unique skills that teachers who are racially marginalized and minoritized offer the profession.

Encourage current students, staff, and community members to become teachers.

GYO programs focus on recruiting high school students, career changers, paraprofessionals, nonteaching school faculty, and community members into a structured, nontraditional career pathway to becoming a teacher. Research suggests that teachers prefer to live and work close to where they attended high school. In fact, more than 60% of U.S. teachers work within 20 miles of where they went to high school.³ States, districts, and EPPs can take advantage of this finding (that the teaching workforce is highly localized) by recruiting candidates from the local community who are more likely to share the same racial and cultural background as the student populations they serve.⁴ GYO strategies can include encouraging opportunities, like co-teaching and tutoring that attract students, parents, paraprofessionals, and other interested individuals who have likely experienced bias and inequity in the education system. GYO programs can create opportunities for students to observe underrepresented teachers as they lead classrooms in similar contexts to those that exist where the candidate would like to work while providing financial supports for their time.

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO ADDRESSING SHORTAGES AND DIVERSITY THROUGH TEACHER RESIDENCIES

The National Center for Teacher Residencies' [Black Educators Initiative](#) has taken a strategy that was initially designed to address educator shortages—teacher residencies—and is working to ensure that the program prioritizes the recruitment, development, and retention of Black educators. The Black Educators Initiative makes investments in the following:

- Scholarships, stipends, and other incentives to support the full participation of Black teacher residents in essential clinical experiences;
- Partnerships with organizations like the Black Teacher Project that provide consulting and training for mentors of Black residents;
- Increased induction support, including job search assistance, alumni networks, and professional development for graduates;
- Memberships in professional development and networking organizations;
- Increased mentor stipends to attract experienced and effective teachers to serve as mentors to Black residents; and
- Mental health and social-emotional learning support, including contracting with Black therapists.

Examples:

- The Center for Black Educator Development's [Black Teacher Pipeline Project](#) addresses teacher shortages in [Pennsylvania](#), [New Jersey](#), [Michigan](#), and [Tennessee](#)—all states that have gaps in racial parity between students and teachers.^{5,6,7,8} The project supports Black teachers' pathway to teaching over a 12-year period from ninth grade through the fourth year of teaching. This program leverages the Center's existing foundational programs, Freedom Schools Literacy Academy (FSLA) and Liberation Academy (LA).

Starting in ninth grade, “FSLA integrates a culturally responsive, affirming, and sustaining early literacy curriculum, engaging elementary students in rigorous learning, offering older students a preliminary experience with the revolutionary act of teaching, and reinforcing positive racial identity in all participants.” The program currently has 388 teacher apprentices in five sites in 13 states. Students attending the program have seen improved outcomes in several growth categories, including Interest in Teaching and Higher Education, Understanding of Course Content, Positive Racial Identity, Academic Self-Efficacy, and Social-Justice Orientation.⁹

- The [Recruiting Washington Teachers—Bilingual Educators Initiative](#) is a teacher academy program that is intended to recruit, prepare, and mentor bilingual students to become future teachers. The goal of the program is to build a teaching corps that is more aligned with the state’s growing Latinx and immigrant student populations. Washington state has faced a growing teacher shortage for years, particularly in bilingual education.¹⁰ The state education agency noticed the racial disparity between Latinx students and teachers and created a GYO project specifically targeted to increasing the diversity of the teacher workforce while simultaneously recruiting more teachers into the profession.
- In Montana, state leaders are developing a GYO career pathway program to attract Native American/American Indian high school students to teach in the schools and communities where they live. For high school students who want to become licensed or endorsed in an educator shortage area or who want to teach for 3 or more years in a school facing a serious educator shortage, the state will fund a dual enrollment pathway that offers grants to support postsecondary teacher preparation coursework. Campuses in the Montana University System are engaging with tribal colleges in the state to support and expand [GYO programs](#) for American Indian teachers. Support includes face-to-face and online coursework, increased hiring of American Indian staff at the universities to promote enrollment in GYO, financial support to candidates completing courses and clinical work, and 2 years of mentoring and induction support in rural or reservation schools.
- [Pathways2Teaching](#)[®] is a national GYO program specifically designed to motivate racially underrepresented students to consider teaching as an act of social justice. The program created partnerships between school districts and local institutions of higher education. These partnerships allow students to take three courses (9 college credits) that seamlessly transfer to undergraduate teacher preparation programs in their state. Students also earn a paraprofessional certificate with an emphasis on training for special education and English learner paraprofessional roles. This certificate allows students to work in their home district after they graduate from high school. The Pathways2Teaching program focuses on both academic knowledge and workforce readiness through a rigorous curriculum that emphasizes academic writing, conducting research, and reading and interpreting the works of racially underrepresented scholars. The program explicitly stipulates that there should be no GPA requirement or other barrier to enroll in the program.

Establish partnerships with community colleges. Community colleges have higher percentages of Black and Latinx students than most 4-year institutions, and as such are a source of potential teachers from racially marginalized and minoritized backgrounds.^{11,12} Although most of the programs offered at community colleges do not lead directly to teacher licensure, many community colleges offer associate degrees and certificates that prepare students with the foundational aspects of teaching. These offerings enable students to transfer to 4-year institutions prepared to complete their coursework and work toward obtaining a teaching license.¹³

Examples:

- In Mississippi, more than one third of school districts are designated as critical shortage areas.¹⁴ To address the growing concern about having an “empty pipeline,” a partnership between Hinds Community College and Delta State University offers the [2 Plus 2 Child Development Partnership program](#) in which candidates complete their first 2 years of higher education at a local community college and then transfer to a 4-year EPP. In Mississippi, 40% of students enrolled in community colleges represent groups that have historically been racially marginalized and minoritized; therefore, these partnerships have the potential to improve racial parity in Mississippi public schools.
- Arizona has documented significant teacher vacancies in classrooms across the state for years. (In 2022, there was a 26.6% vacancy rate with more than 41.7% of vacancies filled by uncertified teachers.)¹⁵ In 2021, the governor of Arizona signed legislation that allows community colleges to offer 4-year degrees.¹⁶ Although many community colleges are still in the exploration and initial program approval stages,¹⁷ many continue to partner with other 4-year colleges by offering associate degrees with guaranteed admission into educator prep programs after graduation (e.g., [Maricopa Community Colleges](#)). They also offer options for alternative licensure through the [Arizona Teachers Academy](#), which provides multiple pathways for licensure and study. Students who receive funding through the program are only required to fulfill a year of teaching service in Arizona after completing the program.
- University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC) offers [subsidized tuition](#) to students who have completed an associate degree from a Maryland community college, which helps them to complete their degree at a more affordable price. This is also intended to increase the number and diversity of teacher candidates in the pipeline. In addition, UMGC allows students to complete some of the coursework for the Master of Arts in Teaching degree in their undergraduate coursework through a [Vertical Pathway program](#). These pathways help future educators become prepared to teach while spending less time and money completing their teaching degree.

Build out educator apprenticeship programs with a focus on candidates who have historically been racially marginalized and minoritized. Apprenticeships are a recent and creative solution to teacher shortages.^{18,19} Although new to the U.S. education field, other occupations have used apprenticeships for decades. Beyond addressing teacher shortages, teacher apprenticeship programs could help to diversify the K–12 teacher workforce if designed with intention. Apprenticeships provide critical supports—financial and otherwise—that may reduce the burdens outlined earlier while providing the foundational skills so important to teacher satisfaction and retention. Although most current programs may not focus on diversity specifically, states, districts, and EPPs engaging in this work can take the following considerations into account and integrate their efforts to include both shortages and diversity.

Examples:

- Freedom Schools Literacy Academy (FSLA) is the Center for Black Educator Development's flagship program for rebuilding the Black teacher pipeline. FSLA is an afterschool and 5-week summer program that merges the philosophy of the [Freedom Schools](#) model designed by Dr. Charles Cobb Jr. as part of the 1964 Freedom Summer, and the Children's Defense Fund (CDF) model—with its focus on Black pedagogy, positive racial identity, and intergenerational support—with the science of teaching literacy. Through FSLA, the Center leverages well-documented research that Black students are best positioned for success when they are taught in a context of cultural understanding by people who can serve as mirrors, and not just windows, to their world.²⁰ The Center furthers the racial parity model by matching Black college and high school students who are interested in teaching with experienced Black educators, who serve as their mentors. A faculty of dedicated Black teachers mentor and support the professional development and student-teacher experiences of Black high school and college students who are interested in teaching careers. The Black “teacher apprentices,” in turn, provide early literacy instruction to young Black scholars. Results for high school and college teacher apprentices consistently show a growing interest in teaching and teaching skills as well as increases in positive racial identity, academic self-advocacy, and social justice orientation. Elementary scholars benefit from increases in literacy skills and positive racial identity. In partnership with the National Center for Grow Your Own, FSLA is applying to become an official Registered Apprenticeship Program in Tennessee, Pennsylvania, and Michigan.

SHORTAGES AND DIVERSITY IN TEACHER APPRENTICESHIP MODELS

A brief from the Region 1 Comprehensive Center highlights two considerations for entities developing new [Teacher Apprenticeship Programs](#) using an integrated approach: (a) “Leverage education preparation programs as partners and work with minority-serving institutions (e.g., Historically Black Colleges and Universities [HBCUs], tribal colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Asian American and Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions), or other educator preparation programs with high enrollments of [racially marginalized and minoritized candidates]”; (b) Support candidates by “mak[ing] sure the apprenticeship [model] includes the population with the most diverse candidates in [the states] pipeline (e.g., paraprofessionals, high school student population) and supports communities and schools that have greater teacher diversity gaps.”²¹

Create (or revise) recruitment initiatives that focus on diversity. States, districts, and EPPs can address both educator workforce shortages and the need for educator diversity by intentionally recruiting candidates from diverse backgrounds. Furthermore, they can revamp interviewing processes to reduce bias, emphasize a commitment to racial equity and justice, and highlight the unique skills that racially underrepresented educators offer the profession.²² The examples that follow illustrate the value that programs can place on prospective educators’ experiences and expertise.

Examples:

- According to the [2021 Biennial Report: Supply and Demand of Teachers in Minnesota](#), a majority of school districts in Minnesota (84%) have reported being “somewhat significantly” or “very significantly” impacted by the teacher shortage. Early in 2022, the state of Minnesota passed an omnibus bill that included millions in funding for programs aimed at recruiting teachers who are racially marginalized and minoritized or Native American/American Indian. Funding will support new high school programs for students looking to start their educator prep coursework early; additional financial aid for American Indian students enrolled in Minnesota teacher preparation programs; support for GYO programs; funding for Black Men Teach, a professional support program whose mission is to recruit and retain Black male teachers; a targeted statewide campaign designed to recruit new teachers who have historically been racially marginalized and minoritized; and recruitment bonuses (between \$2,500 and \$8,000) for out-of-state teachers who are racially marginalized and minoritized or Native American/American Indian to relocate to and live and teach in designated economic development regions of Minnesota.
- The [Pennsylvania Educator Diversity Consortium](#) is a grassroots organization of PK–12, higher education, nonprofit, and government leaders striving to increase the number of teachers who are racially marginalized and minoritized and the number of culturally responsive and sustaining educators in Pennsylvania. Since 2021, consortium members have collaborated with the GTL Center to co-develop *The Pennsylvania Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Education Competencies* toolkits, which describe various efforts to recruit, retain, and mentor teachers who are racially marginalized and

minoritized. This collaboration included creating a set of policy recommendations for the state and hosting 2-day public virtual summits during which individuals around the commonwealth met to learn, share, and strategize about challenges and opportunities. The work also led to this toolkit: [Diversifying the Teacher Pipeline: A Toolkit for Recruiting More High School Students of Color into Pennsylvania Teacher Prep Programs and Schools](#).

- The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s [guidebook for teacher diversity](#) outlines a talent diversification strategy focused on reevaluating and revising current recruitment practices and selection processes. It aims to create a more inclusive culture by developing districts’ cultural proficiency and talent to identify promising recruitment strategies designed to attract a diverse set of candidates. The four-step process to building and implementing a talent diversification strategy entails understanding the importance of racial and ethnic diversity, examining talent management practices, setting goals to change talent management practices, and ensuring that strategies will address diversity over the long term.
- The Connecticut Department of Education, with support from the GTL Center, created a guide that is designed to improve diversity in district hiring and selection practices: [Creating a District Plan to Increase the Racial, Ethnic, and Linguistic Diversity of Your Educator Workforce: A Guidebook for Hiring and Selection](#). The guide is intended to support school districts in their efforts to increase the diversity of their workforce by exploring, interrupting, and ameliorating the potential for bias in the hiring and selection process. Additional [action planning resources](#) that complement the guide can support district and school leaders in sustaining these efforts.

Prepare

The following examples provide a vision for how access to and financial support for high-quality preparation may (a) improve teacher retention and (b) widen access to the crucial knowledge and skills for racially underrepresented educators to support student learning and cultivate culturally responsive and sustaining practices. The examples encourage practices that increase diversity in the faculty of EPPs, embed culturally responsive practices in EPP curricula, reduce barriers to licensure, and support more effective and financially viable alternative pathways for prospective teaching candidates from racially marginalized and minoritized backgrounds.



Increase the number of underrepresented professors teaching in educator prep programs (EPPs). EPPs are tasked with instructing future teachers on how to address the needs of a diverse student body. One way that EPPs can accomplish this goal is by recruiting and retaining

professors who are racially marginalized and minoritized. Racially underrepresented faculty can help students who are racially marginalized and minoritized to feel represented and connected, while also assisting White students in shifting their perspectives on racial identities and culturally responsive practices in teaching.²³ Racially underrepresented professors can help future teachers develop confidence in their abilities to meet the challenges of today’s multicultural classrooms, support them in finding an affinity for the profession, and provide tested methods for supporting a diverse student population.

Examples:

- Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) has provided guidelines so that each phase of the hiring process reflects an intentional approach tailored to racially underrepresented professors. VCU’s strategy—highlighted in [Strategies for Successfully Recruiting a Diverse Faculty](#)—applies to all fields in academia but can be applied to professors in EPPs as well. Some example strategies include ensuring that underrepresented professors are on the hiring committee, acknowledging barriers to publication in prestigious journals for scholars who are racially marginalized and minoritized, and using racial affinity groups to circulate job postings.
- Western Washington University attracts racially underrepresented professors by providing funding for these faculty to conduct research projects. The university also uses cluster hiring, where it hires more than one racially marginalized and minoritized person at a time, to build a support network to minimize feelings of isolation. This strategy is often accompanied by strong mentoring programs for new faculty. These examples can be applied to faculty at EPPs and are discussed in [Best Practices: Recruiting & Retaining Faculty and Staff of Color](#).

Embed culturally responsive practices in educator preparation. The use of culturally responsive practices by faculty may enable students in EPPs to retain content easily, shift their perspectives on diversity, and improve their performance on licensure tests and exams. According to Teach Plus and the Center for Black Educator Development, a culturally responsive curriculum can validate the struggles of Black teachers, dismantle systemic racism in education, and accurately portray the history of Black educators.²⁴ Equipping all teachers—including teachers who are racially marginalized and minoritized and their White counterparts—with the capacity to implement culturally responsive pedagogy can help these teachers meet the needs of their students.

Examples:

- The [Culturally Sustaining Teaching Certificate](#) is a program offered by the Urban Education Collaborative at Charlotte University that aims to prepare teachers to be culturally responsive educators. The program offers a comprehensive approach to embedding culturally responsive practices in teacher preparation. Through a combination of online coursework and in-person learning experiences, the program provides teachers with the knowledge and skills needed to create inclusive learning environments that respect

and honor the cultural backgrounds of their students. The program emphasizes the importance of developing relationships with students, families, and communities to better understand and incorporate their cultural identities and experiences into classroom instruction.

- The [Center for Black Educator Development](#) has created a series of e-learning modules on cultural competency that are designed for pre-service teachers. Current modules address cultural identity, implicit bias, and microaggression. Modules that address relationships with students and families are in development. The modules are designed to enable teachers who do not share the same cultural backgrounds as their students to demonstrate high levels of expertise in culturally responsive practices and anti-discriminatory mindsets and habits. Results from a pilot with more than 400 college students from nine universities across the nation found statistically significant increases in culturally competent attitudes and mindsets after completing the modules. Students in field placement as well as first- and second-year students showed the most improvement. Faculty found the modules easy to implement in their courses, and 90% of students agreed or strongly agreed that they had acquired a deeper understanding of culturally proficient teaching and that the information was meaningful in their role as a future teacher.
- The Connecticut State Department of Education focuses on the integration of culturally responsive pedagogy into EPPs. To do so, the agency hosted several statewide institutes to help EPP faculty embed culturally responsive practices into their coursework. For example, Central Connecticut State University added a new course [on intensive English learner and language acquisition strategies](#) and requires first semester clinical experiences to include tutoring experience with English learners.²⁵
- The New York State Education Department created a [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](#). The framework is designed to support the integration of inclusive and culturally responsive practices into teacher and leadership preparation programs through stand-alone classes and by embedding the content into existing coursework and field experiences. The framework includes curriculum audits to help identify bias in existing resources. The framework can also help relevant teams select resources that are culturally responsive and determine the extent to which faculty have the capacity to apply culturally responsive practices within their courses.
- The [Pennsylvania Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Education Competencies](#), which were developed in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Pennsylvania Educator Diversity Consortium (a wide array of universities, organizations, and partners across Pennsylvania), and the U.S. Department of Education's Region 4 Comprehensive Center, are agreed-upon standards that all educators are to be accountable for when working with learners, colleagues, and families. Building on the 50-state survey of culturally responsive standards completed by New America, these competencies were developed over a year and a half. The competencies take the form of behavioral expectations and are accompanied by actionable indicators and reflexive

questions that ground the expectations in practice. The reflexive questions are designed to allow educators to think deeper about the practical application of each competency and its indicators—now and in the future.

Address barriers to licensure that disproportionately impact students who are racially marginalized and minoritized. Candidates are often required to pass licensure tests to enter the profession, and though entry exams are often not associated with effective teaching (e.g., Praxis),²⁶ they often serve as an unnecessary barrier and cost in both time and money for candidates who are racially marginalized and minoritized.¹¹ Eliminating licensure tests or developing alternative pathways to licensure can support diversity efforts.²⁷ For example, some states are eliminating licensure testing requirements and employing alternative, low-cost methods that ensure teachers have the basic skills needed for teaching (e.g., grade point average, scores on tests like the SAT, GRE, and others) in lieu of requiring teachers to take the Praxis.²⁸ The following examples highlight ways that states and EPPs are eliminating barriers to licensure that disproportionately impact students who are racially marginalized and minoritized.

Examples:

- In response to more than 3,000 educator vacancies in the state of Louisiana, [House Bill 546](#) was signed into law. The bill eliminates the Praxis Core exam as a requirement for entry into a teacher preparation program. Individuals with a bachelor’s degree who are interested in teaching can instead take a content test before enrolling in their preparation program of choice.
- Georgia eliminated its licensing test, the edTPA, noting that it was a barrier to entry, especially for candidates who are racially marginalized and minoritized. It cost \$300 per test and often required multiple attempts to earn a passing grade.²⁹ In its place, Georgia has created the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE) program, which helps to ensure that candidates have the knowledge and skills needed to serve as educators.
- The edTPA was also eliminated in New Jersey through [Bill S896](#), which was signed by Governor Murphy in 2022 because, [according to critics](#), it served as a “financial, linguistic, and cultural barrier” to the profession. The legislation streamlined licensure requirements and empowered EPPs with the authority to appropriately assess their candidates.

Ensure alternative pathways are effective and financially viable for candidates who have historically been racially marginalized and minoritized. While some alternative pathways offer less expensive and faster routes into the profession, research has shown that those programs often lead to higher rates of teacher turnover.³⁰ Teacher residency programs and affinity groups have also been introduced to give aspiring teachers classroom experience and connect them with supportive peers and future colleagues as they finish their coursework

and complete licensure requirements.³¹ Residency models provide financial incentives that can draw racially underrepresented teachers into affordable programs that often include financial incentives, training, and the support of a mentor.³² The following examples highlight ways that educator preparation can be enhanced to support equitable outcomes for underrepresented candidates.

Examples:

- In 2019, the National Center for Teacher Residencies used a \$20 million grant to launch the [Black Educators Initiative](#), a teacher residency program designed to prepare Black educators for the profession. (See callout box on page 3 for more details.)
- Rowan University's [Project IMPACT](#), which stands for Increasing Male Practitioners and Classroom Teachers, provides young men from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds with a financial incentive of \$4,000 to support tuition and housing while they earn a degree in education. Participants must be enrolled in an urban education program and pursue a major in early childhood education or elementary education or obtain a master's in teaching degree in English or social studies or a master's degree in STEM education.
- The [Oregon Teacher Scholars Program \(OTSP\)](#) supports aspiring teacher candidates who are ethnically diverse or Heritage Speakers of a language other than English. The program provides scholarships to individuals pursuing teaching careers in high-demand subjects and shortage areas. It offers financial assistance to help students cover the costs of their teacher education programs, including tuition, fees, and other related expenses. Through this program, Oregon aims to attract and retain highly qualified educators who can meet the diverse needs of students across the state, particularly in underserved communities and subjects such as science, mathematics, special education, and bilingual education.

Invest in and partner with minority-serving institutions. Investing time, resources, and energy into developing relationships with HBCUs, TCUs, or MSIs can have a positive effect on the teacher pipeline. These entities have a long history of preparing educators to teach diverse student populations.¹⁵ As safe learning environments for people from marginalized and minoritized communities, HBCUs, TCUs, and MSIs provide districts with access to a more diverse teacher pool.³³ Through alternative pathways and housing incentives that build on partnerships with HBCUs, TCUs and MSIs, programs can help to reduce financial barriers specifically for candidates who are racially marginalized and minoritized.³⁴ Such incentives help to retain teachers in the classroom and ensure that these valued pathways can continue to have an impact.

RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT: WHICH COLLEGES ARE HELPING CREATE A DIVERSE TEACHER WORKFORCE?

MSIs already produce more than their fair share of teachers who are racially marginalized and minoritized. This [tool](#) provided by the Urban Institute sheds light on the efforts of colleges and universities to create a diverse teacher workforce. By analyzing data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), the tool allows users to explore and compare the demographics of teacher education programs across different institutions. It provides information on the racial and ethnic composition of teacher candidates, highlighting the institutions that are successfully recruiting and graduating diverse cohorts of aspiring teachers. The overarching point is that engaging with MSIs is a valuable way to prepare more racially underrepresented teachers as education leaders continue to build the teacher pipeline and grow capacity to support and engage underrepresented candidates across all EPPs.

Examples:

- In 2020, the governor of Virginia proposed to use state funding for a program to increase pathways for students at two HBCUs, Virginia State University and Norfolk State University, to become STEM educators. This program allows STEM majors to earn a secondary school certification through a partnership with UTeach Institute. This example illustrates how an alternative pathway can be used to address teacher shortages in critical subject areas while preparing teachers who are racially marginalized and minoritized at MSIs.³⁵
- The Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) focuses on teachers who are graduates of HBCUs with a pathway to home ownership by offering them lower interest rates on their home loans.³⁶ Under this program, underrepresented teachers who graduated from an HBCU qualify for even lower rates on their loans.
- Branch Alliance for Educator Diversity (BranchEd) is a collective of EPP leaders that amplifies the impact of educator preparation at MSIs. Through partnerships, BranchEd and MSIs advance long-range goals of both diversifying the teaching profession and intentionally addressing critical issues of educational equity for all students. BranchEd's [Framework for the Quality Preparation of Educators](#) outlines a roadmap to support EPPs in building an equity orientation that prepares educators to reflect, respect, and reify the value of the diversity of America's PK–12 school children.
- There are many additional [examples of successful partnerships](#) supported by the Hawkins Program, a program run by the U.S. Department of Education that is designed to support centers of excellence at institutions of higher education (IHEs). Centers of excellence aim to help increase the number of well-prepared teachers, including teachers who are racially marginalized and minoritized, resulting in a more diverse teacher workforce that is ready to teach in schools. The centers all function at established HBCUs, TCUs, or MSIs, such as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), with a state-accredited teacher preparation program. The Hawkins Program focuses on the various aspects of the teacher preparation pipeline, including the recruitment, preparation, support, placement, and retention of teachers in high-need local education agencies (LEAs), to support racially underrepresented students.

Develop, Support, and Retain

Retaining teachers who are racially marginalized and minoritized is a high-leverage strategy for improving student outcomes. Teaching experience is associated with higher test scores and improvements in student behavior, including absenteeism.³⁷ Yet teachers who are racially marginalized and minoritized leave the profession at higher rates than their White colleagues, often because of racial/ethnic isolation, poor working conditions (e.g., microaggressions, a heightened sense of responsibility), and lack of support.^{38,39,40,41} This section describes

strategies and examples that support teachers with inclusive mentoring and induction programs, increased compensation, and culturally affirming and healthy workplaces. Education leaders can support underrepresented teachers by assessing well-being and working conditions through surveys and pulse checks; prioritizing culturally responsive, anti-racist, and equitable practices in professional learning; and establishing viable pathways to promotion, leadership, and principalship.



Create culturally affirming and healthy workplaces for teachers who have historically been racially marginalized and minoritized. Culturally affirming workplaces are important for racially underrepresented educators.¹⁶ Teachers may feel that they are unable to be themselves at work, which affects the way they present themselves to their students.¹⁶ Teaching also can have added stressors for educators who are racially marginalized and minoritized. Salary alone cannot overcome bad working conditions when it comes to retention. Schools often add additional responsibilities to the workload of racially underrepresented educators in addition to tackling their regular responsibilities, these educators may be expected to lead student affinity groups, assist in recruiting diverse teachers, and become the voice of their racial demographic.³⁸ Creating culturally affirming and healthy workspaces enables underrepresented educators to bring their authentic selves to the work of teaching as they instruct a diverse student population.

Examples:

- The Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest (REL Midwest) created several videos that explore why Black teachers leave the teaching profession and the best practices for retaining Black teachers, including avoiding isolating racial experiences, which make these teachers feel like they cannot be themselves. The first video focuses on [Creating Inclusive Workspaces for Black Teachers](#). It includes a [video viewing guide](#). The second video, [Confronting Bias and Building Trust: Strategies to Create Inclusive Environments for Black Teachers](#), examines the value of recruiting and retaining Black teachers and the barriers involved. It also discusses strategies for creating a culturally inclusive workplace.

- Teacher affinity groups and professional learning communities can be used to improve the retention of educators who are racially marginalized and minoritized. Such groups can combat the isolation that many underrepresented educators feel.³⁸ For example, the [Black Male Educators Alliance](#) works with local, state, and national education organizations to reduce the isolation of Black teachers by promoting effective strategies that will encourage the recruitment, engagement, and retention of Black male educators.
- The Center for Black Educator Development developed [Respecting Educator Activists of Color: The Anti-Racist Guide to Teacher Retention](#), which is specifically designed to assist districts and schools in cultivating highly qualified teaching faculties that genuinely reflect the racial identities, cultural backgrounds, life experiences, and perspectives of their students. While reviewing existing teacher retention materials, the center's staff observed a concerning trend: most resources focused solely on retaining White teachers within White school cultures and adopted a misleading race-neutral approach. Lamenting the lack of widely shared anti-racist materials that intentionally address educational inequities and social oppression, the guide was created to compile insights shared by educators who are racially marginalized and minoritized, educator activists, thought leaders, and researchers. It presents user-friendly ideas and initiatives that can be easily implemented to support teacher retention efforts.
- Annually, the Center for Black Educator Development hosts the [Black Men in Education Convening \(BMEC\)](#). Participants are welcomed in a communal, empathetic space to discuss the deep emotional, intellectual, and trajectory-altering work that revolutionary Black male educators do on a daily basis. The vision of BMEC includes distinguished speakers, panel discussions, and workshops to inform, inspire, and activate Black male educators and others in the education ecosystem to continue changing the outcomes for both students and educators. In 2022, approximately 870 educators from 31 states and Germany and the Virgin Islands attended the convening. Eighty-seven percent of participants were Black, and 72% were Black male educators. Ratings for all sessions were high. Participants reported that they felt a sense of brotherhood and enjoyed the opportunity for networking and fellowship brought about by being with so many other Black male educators. In particular, they cited the inspirational speakers from keynote sessions and panels; the knowledge gained from the presentations; a sense of motivation and renewed energy for the work; the environment and energy in the room; a feeling of love and acceptance; and Black excellence as the major themes.

Establish inclusive mentoring and induction programs. Supporting beginning teachers through mentoring and induction programs has been shown to enhance teacher retention rates, boost student achievement, and potentially increase teacher satisfaction.⁴² Additionally, educators who are racially marginalized and minoritized stand to gain significant advantages when mentored by individuals who share similar backgrounds and possess a shared dedication to educational equity.⁴³ By providing training and compensation to all mentors and by supporting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds, districts can effectively promote staff diversity and bolster the retention of diverse teachers.⁴⁴

Examples:

- Hawaii's State Department of Education provides new teachers with 3 years of induction, including 2 years of mentoring. Mentors are selected using a defined process and criteria and receive ongoing training and support. This program has led to a decrease in teacher turnover and improved teacher performance and has helped new teachers feel better prepared to teach.⁴⁵ The program focuses on inducting new teachers into the unique culture of Hawai'i.
- The Region 8 Comprehensive Center, in partnership with the GTL Center and the Ohio Department of Education, developed a guide on [The Power of Teacher Diversity: Fostering Inclusive Conversations Through Mentoring](#). Recognizing that using mentoring and induction is an effective way to improve teacher effectiveness and teacher retention, this guide helps experienced instructors to mentor new teachers from diverse backgrounds by having authentic conversations about the intersection of personal and professional identities. The guide can be a tool for self-reflection or a structure for initiating critical conversations with new teachers either individually or in small groups.
- In 2016, the Cleveland Metropolitan School District began recruiting teachers from HBCUs to address the challenges the district was facing in recruiting Black male teachers in a city with a history of racialized policing. As a result, one group, called Males of Color sHaping Academics, or [MOCHA](#), was formed to help the district recruit and retain male teachers who are racially marginalized and minoritized. The program emphasizes the value of connection among mentors and mentees.

Increase compensation and benefits for teachers. Compensation and benefits are often driving forces when selecting employment, and teachers are no exception. Former teachers indicated that an increase in pay may have convinced them to stay in the classroom.⁴⁶ Compensation and benefits are especially important when considering the needs of teachers who are racially marginalized and minoritized, who often have a higher probability of experiencing financial strain and stress due to systemic racial wealth gaps.⁴⁷ Other benefits such as paid time off, bonuses, and loan forgiveness also can factor into teachers' decision-making process as they consider staying in the teaching profession or exploring other careers.¹¹

COMPENSATION MATTERS: RAISING THE BAR ON TEACHER PAY

States and districts play the most significant role in ensuring teacher salaries are competitive. [Raising the Bar on Teacher Pay](#) presents national research on current teacher salaries, summarizing recent commitments to increase teacher pay made by state governors and outlining state-by-state data and guidance for considering teacher salary increases. This brief provides a starting place for discussions among state and district leaders and their constituents that will lead to the investments in teachers that are needed to deliver a high-quality education for all students.

Examples:

- In Kentucky, the Department of Education established the Kentucky Academy for Equity in Teaching, which is a loan forgiveness program focused on diversifying the educator workforce.⁴⁸ To qualify for loan forgiveness under this program, an applicant must be a member of a minoritized group or [meet another set of criteria](#) such as being a first-generation college student or a U.S. military veteran.³³
- In many states, teacher salaries are increasing, and some teachers are receiving bonuses in addition to their regular salaries.⁴⁹ For example, in Oklahoma, the Teacher Excellence Fund will create new teacher pathways and provide avenues for teachers to be promoted with substantial salary increases while remaining in the classroom. Top tier teachers could exceed \$100,000 in annual pay from combined district pay and matching funds from the state. In 2022, New Mexico passed a 20% teacher salary increase, pushing the state-required minimum salaries to \$50,000, \$60,000, and \$70,000 for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 of the state's tiered licensure system. These increases represent a 35% increase. Although it is too soon to see their impact on teacher retention, these increases may encourage teachers to stay in the profession longer and ease their concerns about their jobs.³⁶

Assessing working conditions by examining the unique perspectives of teachers from groups that have historically been racially marginalized and minoritized. All teachers currently face significant challenges to their well-being and the [quality of their working conditions](#). Many states and districts use surveys of working conditions to better understand the supports needed to help teachers address the new technical, pedagogical, and instructional demands they face. Unfortunately, many working condition surveys fail to consider the unique perspectives of racially underrepresented educators. Researchers at AIR are trying to change that through the use of [more targeted working condition surveys](#). Recent research outlines new statistical techniques and approaches that can support school leaders in improving working conditions in response to the concerns of staff from unique professional pathways and differing demographic backgrounds.⁵⁰ These new measures, along with “pulse checks”—quick response surveys—can assess teachers’ experiences as they implement new models of instruction, address student learning loss, and consider the growing needs of students related to social and emotional supports.

Example:

- To create greater diversity in the teaching profession, educational leaders must address the important questions of what affirming school conditions look like and what they can do to create those conditions, particularly for Black teachers. [To Be Who We Are: Black Teachers on Creating Affirming School Cultures](#), a report from the Center for Black Educator Development and Teach Plus, looks directly at what Black teachers need to thrive in schools.

Prioritize culturally responsive practices, anti-racist practices, and equity in professional learning. Teachers who use culturally responsive teaching practices value students' cultural and linguistic knowledge, previous knowledge, and learning styles and view these factors as a way to increase academic achievement rather than as a barrier to success.⁵¹ High-quality professional learning also emphasizes how educators' backgrounds, identities, and awareness affect their professional practice. Culture and equity should be at the forefront of professional learning. As noted in *Equity Is a Standard of Practice*, which highlights the new Standards for Professional Learning offered by Learning Forward, "There is no more important conversation to be had in schools today [than equity], and there is no better way to have productive conversations than high-quality professional learning."⁵²

FEATURED RESOURCE: A RE-SET FOR EDUCATION

A [video featuring Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings](#) offers an entreaty to create a diverse, culturally competent workforce. Dr. Ladson-Billings discusses why it is essential for our nation's educators and policymakers to understand and respond to the needs of today's youth through a new lens and renewed purpose. Among the [resources](#) developed by the National Comprehensive Center is a video of a student panel that can be used in professional learning to engage teachers in students' perspectives. The video illustrates the need for serious examination and action to ensure that school policies and systems truly work for all students.

Examples:

- As noted earlier, the New York State Education Department developed a [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](#) that focuses on the ways that educators can foster student-centered learning in schools. The framework discusses the specific steps that school leaders can take to foster inclusive environments for both students and teachers. Suggested steps include providing a safe space for teachers and staff to determine how to address students and parents after major social and political events, using high-quality instructional materials that highlight a diverse curriculum, and providing opportunities for teachers to be trained on issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.⁵³
- The [Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education](#) also developed a set of materials to support professional development on culturally responsive teaching and learning. These materials include a culturally responsive schools and classrooms profile series that highlights programs, schools, and districts that are leading efforts in Massachusetts to establish culturally responsive schools and classrooms.
- In 2022, the Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board approved [eight new standards for effective practice](#). These standards will require new teacher candidates to "reflect on their biases, understand systems of oppression, and affirm students' gender identities and sexual orientation, among other changes."⁵⁴

- The Center for Black Educator Development provides [professional learning experiences](#) and services to support educators in continuously cultivating, strengthening, and refining their mindsets, dispositions, and practices to reflect that of anti-racist, anti-bias, and equity-driven educational leaders. The Center offers workshops and coaching on 16 topics including cultural identity, high expectations, and communicating with students and families. An integral part of the center’s training and coaching process considers the skill, will, and mindset. Participants engage in several cycles of practice and feedback. Facilitators offer feedback to participants based on criteria that has been shared with participants. Participants have an opportunity to give feedback to one another and set corresponding action items.

Establish viable pathways to promotion, leadership, and principalship. Pathways to leadership are critical to teacher retention. Yet when interviewed, racially underrepresented educators note that they are often overlooked for leadership positions, which can contribute to their attrition.³¹ Establishing viable career pathways to promotion, leadership, and principalship for educators who are racially marginalized and minoritized may create opportunities that leverage their expertise in new ways, ultimately benefiting the students they serve.

Examples:

- The California Teachers Association (CTA), the UCLA National Board Project, and the National Board Resource Center (NBRC) at Stanford University are partnering to increase diversity among National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT) and help develop new educator-leaders in California communities. The partnership is supporting educators who are Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) in deepening their teaching practice and positioning them to make change in public schools. Selected educators receive full funding for all certification support services offered by the Stanford NBRC along with BIPOC cohort and individualized support. The program also provides support in accessing funding sources to cover the direct costs of certification, including the California National Board Certification Incentive Program.
- The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) invites teachers to apply for the [InSPIRED Fellowship](#), which stands for “In-Service Professionals who are committed to Increasing the Racial and Ethnic Diversity of [the] teacher workforce.”⁵⁵ Fellows in this program are committed to increasing diversity in the Massachusetts teacher workforce by drawing on past experiences to understand the impact of teachers who are racially marginalized and minoritized. DESE provides licensure support and builds interest in the profession through a variety of events and engagements, including an affinity group for racially underrepresented teachers. The department also launched the [Influence 100](#) program to increase diversity in the superintendent pool. Superintendent fellows and school committees participate in monthly professional development and ongoing support from DESE in the key

aspects of the superintendency, with a particular focus on equity. Fellows in the first three cohorts reported positive impacts on equity mindset, sense of personal efficacy as equity-focused leaders, knowledge and understanding of the superintendent role, and connection to their peers in the program.

Thank you for investing your time and energy in this important topic. For additional support, questions, or comments, please reach out to us at the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders at gtlcenter@air.org or the Center for Black Educator Development at info@thecenterforblacked.org.

THE CENTER ON GREAT TEACHERS & LEADERS

The Center on Great Teachers & Leaders at the American Institutes for Research is currently leading state teams through a national collaborative, [Accelerating Data-Driven Policy and Practice to Address Educator Shortages and Educator Diversity](#). As a result of this collaborative, cross-functional state teams are doing the following:

- Creating policies, practices, and plans that are data driven, equity focused, and built for sustainability;
- Engaging essential partners in critical decisions throughout the process;
- Prioritizing evidence-based strategies that are designed to address the root causes of shortages and gaps in each context; and, ultimately,
- Strengthening and diversifying the educator workforce in underserved school communities in their states.

If your state, district, or EPP would like to join the collaborative, please contact the GTL Center: gtlcenter@air.org.

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