

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner of Education

DATE: October 5, 2016

SUBJECT: An Update on Minority Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Executive Summary

Introduction

In spring 2016 State Board of Education (SBE) members requested a follow up report on Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) efforts to increase our minority teacher recruitment and retention in Connecticut. The CSDE is committed to focused and increased efforts to recruit and retain educators of color to serve in Connecticut schools and districts. During fiscal years 2014, 2015, and 2016, the CSDE committed financial resources from the Talent Office budget to support minority recruitment and retention efforts (Attachment A). This report provides the latest information on the department's efforts since the last board report.

Background

The U.S. Department of Education released *The State of Racial Diversity in the Educator Workforce (2016)* that addresses the need to increase diversity in the nationwide educator workforce. Data from 2012 reports 49 percent of elementary and secondary students were of color while 82 percent of public school teachers were white. The report projects that students of color are expected to comprise 56 percent of the student population by 2024.

Current Minority Teacher Recruitment and Retention Efforts:

- 1. Certification Modernization:** The Talent Office engaged in the LEAN Process and participated in the MTR Task Force. In both of these processes, certification implementation was identified as an area of challenge. The Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification, is now under the direct leadership of Dr. Sarah Barzee, Chief Talent Officer. Under new leadership, the Bureau is actively streamlining internal processes, reducing the complexity of the current system and barriers to both in-state and out-of-state applicants. One of the barriers identified by the task force was that CT did not use the multi-state cut scores for Praxis II. This impeded reciprocity. As of September 1, 2016, our certification office has moved to the recommended multi-state cut scores. This will support recruitment of educators trained in other states, including those from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and those trained in Puerto Rico.
- 2. Innovative Teacher Preparation Programs:** The CSDE both supports and accelerates the program approval process for any enterprise (credit bearing or non-credit bearing) focused on educator preparation that can: (1) demonstrate a commitment to the recruitment of minority teacher

candidates; (2) meet the standards for educator preparation programs; and (3) receives approval by the Office of Higher Education (OHE) to operate in the state of Connecticut. Of note, the Relay Graduate School of Education (GSE) has an innovative, district-based ARC program under review. Relay GSE, collaborating with several Alliance Districts, is developing an accelerated route to certification (ARC) program. Relay GSE specifically recruits paraprofessionals working in urban districts and provides teacher preparation and student teaching program. Of the 70 current applicants, 49 are of color. Relay GSE is currently operating in several states across the country and has demonstrated the ability to recruit and prepare large numbers of racially and ethnically diverse teacher candidates.

3. **Legislative MTR Task Force:** During the 2015-16 academic year, the Department participated in the MTR Task Force pursuant to Section 5 of P.A. 15-108. Dr. Sarah Barzee served as the Commissioner's designee. Outcomes of the task force included the drafting of P.A. 16-41: *An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the MTR Task Force*, which the CSDE was pleased to help draft and support during the 2016 legislative session. The Department plays a significant role in implementing the recommendations of the MTR Task Force as outlined in P.A. 16-41, specifically:
- The CSDE will establish a MTR Policy Oversight Council. The council shall hold quarterly meetings and advise, at least quarterly, the Commissioner of Education, or the Commissioner's designee on the five areas outlined in Section 2 of P.A. 16-41. *CSDE Update: The first Policy Oversight Council Meeting is scheduled for October 18, 2016 and has 14 members from higher education, LEAs, RESC Alliance MTR Committee, and CSDE senior leadership. Of the membership, nine are minority educators or in public service.*
 - The CSDE shall conduct a survey of students participating in MTR programs offered by RESCs or at a public institution of higher education in the state, and report findings of the survey annually to the General Assembly. *CSDE Update: The survey is in development.*
 - Praxis Core is no longer a requirement for certification but rather, is now to be used as a diagnostic tool identifying an applicant's need for remediation in reading, writing, or mathematics during the course of the teacher preparation program. Praxis Core may not be used as an admission requirement. *CSDE Update: The CSDE is developing guidance for educator preparation programs across Connecticut on how this assessment may be used as a diagnostic tool.*
 - The CSDE, not later than July 1, 2017, and annually thereafter, shall submit a report using results-based accountability measures to assess the effectiveness of MTR programs in the state to the General Assembly. *CSDE Update: The results-based accountability measures are being identified and the report will be drafted near the end of the 2016-17 school year.*
 - The SBE, upon receipt of a proper application, shall issue to a teacher from another state, territory or possession of the United States, the District of Columbia or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, who has received at least two satisfactory performance evaluations while teaching in such state, territory or possession, a provisional educator certificate. *CSDE Update: Fully implemented.*
 - The CSDE will no longer require an out-of-state applicant for certification to complete a course in special education. *CSDE Update: Fully implemented.*
 - The Commissioner of Education, if unable to establish or join an interstate agreement with another state, may create or make available a recognition statement that specifies the state's

assessments and educator preparation programs that the Commissioner will recognize for purposes of issuing a professional certification. *CSDE Update: Fully implemented.*

4. **MTR Implementation Grants:** In 2015-16, four LEAs were awarded \$50,000 MTR Implementation Grants to support their minority teacher recruitment efforts. This followed MTR Planning Grants in 2014-15. Districts selected included Bridgeport, CREC, Hartford, and Waterbury. These four LEAs submitted a mid-year and end-of-year report by June 30, 2016. A brief description of the goals, objectives, and indicators for each LEA's plan is attached (Attachment B).

5. **Support and Collaboration with Other Organizations on MTR:** The CSDE has actively collaborated with several other organizations to diversify the educator workforce in the state.
 - **Connecticut National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (Connecticut NAACP):** In December 2016, Dr. Sarah Barzee will present at the 2nd Annual Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) Summit. This convening was designed to establish partnerships between Connecticut superintendents and the deans of several HBCUs from across the country.

 - **Yancy Forums LLC:** The CSDE has a collaborative relationship with Mr. Earl Yancy, the founder of Yancy Forums, LLC. Yancy Forums are designed to create an opportunity for teacher leaders and school leaders of color and others to develop and enhance their leadership skills.

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**Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)
Talent Office Budget Expenditures to Support MTR Initiatives**

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Legacy Foundation \$19,500	Scholarships to Students Enrolled in Education Preparation Program \$100,000	MTR Implementation Grants to Districts \$200,000 (4 x \$50,000)
Today's Students Tomorrow's Teachers \$19,400	MTR Planning Grants to Districts \$200,000 (8 x \$25,000)	
Western Connecticut State University Danbury \$25,000	NAACP Sponsorship for Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Symposium \$2,500	
High School Teaching Fellows Program (SERC) \$72,000	SERC MTR Programming \$43,654	
Greater Hartford Young Men's Leader Program (SERC) \$11,985		
\$147,885	\$346,154	

RESC MTR Alliance

RESC MTR Alliance receives a direct allocation of \$300,000 annually, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-66j, to enhance statewide minority recruitment efforts. This allocation is not part of the Talent Office budget.

Bridgeport Public Schools - MTR Planning and Implementation Grants		
Outcomes	Activities	Status
Record the influx of district paraprofessionals interested in the program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email non-certified district employees. • Meet with AFSCME union. • Conduct in-person informational sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three e-mail blasts were sent to over three hundred non-certified district employees to inform them about the program. • The program team met with fifty employees of the AFSCME union at its year-end union meeting. • The program team conducted three in-person informational sessions, which drew fifteen employees to hear more about the program. The informational sessions and in-house surveys proved to be beneficial in determining the level of interest in the program.
Collect and analyze the data generated from applicant responses.	Gather information on paraprofessionals interested in the program.	In total, one hundred and fifty paraprofessionals showed interest in the program. Fifty-four later submitted their school transcripts to help determine their eligibility for the program.
Record and evaluate all applicants in order to choose five candidates for the initial cohort.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate an application template inclusive of submission requirements and deadlines. • Review and weigh submitted applications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In total, twenty completed applications were received, with thirteen deemed to be compliant with the program’s entrance requirements. • Out of the thirteen, nine paraprofessionals were chosen to be interviewed.
Gather data on cohort entrance/exit date(s).	Conduct entrance and exit interviews.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On 12/9/15, the program team granted initial interviews to all nine viable candidates. Candidates interviewed were scored based on their experience as a paraprofessional, essay explaining why they should be accepted into the program, how close they are to receiving their teaching certification and their commitment to the program. A five-person cohort was selected to begin the program. • A meeting of the program team, mentees and mentors was held on 12/22 to provide an outlet for everyone to get to know all involved. • General recap/exit meeting was held for the full cohort (mentors and mentees) on 6/6/16. Mentees found the experience enlightening and discussed the hope to continue with the program.

<p>Gather data on mentor entrance/exit date(s).</p>	<p>Conduct entrance and exit interviews.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On 12/15/15, the program team interviewed eleven potential mentors. An essential requirement of the role was that they were paraprofessionals prior to receiving teaching certification. Ultimately, five were selected and paired with the cohort. The mentors and paraprofessionals were paired based on prior employment as paraprofessionals, certification areas, fields of study, personalities, and interest. On 6/6/16 a final mentor/mentee debrief was held to discuss the program. Mentors provided copies of their meeting/phone logs with their mentees. They found that the experience was invigorating as it brought them back to their years as a paraprofessional, but it was also educational, as they learned more about how to interact with former peers. 																													
<p>Collect data on commencement/termination of classes, and examination results.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete transcript evaluation and course placement. Track course performance. Track examination results. 	<p>The University of Bridgeport evaluated cohort candidate transcripts and completion of testing requirements (e.g. Praxis I/II or Foundations of Reading). Students took all courses during the Spring 2016 semester.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Three cohort members attended the Saturday EDMM 621 Foundations of Reading/ELA Review course. The other two members did not attend this course because they were preparing for PRAXIS. Two cohort members took Praxis II- one did not pass, the other is awaiting results. Two cohort members registered for Foundations of Reading. One is expecting results; the other is due to sit the exam. All cohort members took classes at the University of Bridgeport, based on their pursued specialty. <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Course Attempted</th> <th colspan="5">Cohort Initials/Grade</th> </tr> <tr> <th>DD</th> <th>DR</th> <th>EM</th> <th>ES</th> <th>VP</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>EDUC 511 Statutory Requirement</td> <td colspan="5">All Passed, No Grade Given</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EDUC 573 Early Childhood Literacy</td> <td>A</td> <td>*</td> <td>A</td> <td>*</td> <td>*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EDUC 574 Dev. Reading Elem</td> <td>A-</td> <td>*</td> <td>A</td> <td>*</td> <td>*</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>*Information pending the receipt of a transcript from the school.</i></p>	Course Attempted	Cohort Initials/Grade					DD	DR	EM	ES	VP	EDUC 511 Statutory Requirement	All Passed, No Grade Given					EDUC 573 Early Childhood Literacy	A	*	A	*	*	EDUC 574 Dev. Reading Elem	A-	*	A	*	*
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<p>Gather data on support and guidance provided to paraprofessionals.</p>	<p>Mentors and mentees will attend various professional development courses aimed to assist with items ranging from diversity awareness to classroom management.</p>	<p>The program provided meaningful support and guidance to the cohort. Mentors and paraprofessionals participated in professional development workshops every month.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Feb. 2016</td> <td>Stress Management</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mar. 2016</td> <td>Cultural Diversity</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mar. 2016</td> <td>Bloom's Taxonomy and Depth of Knowledge</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May 2016</td> <td>Lesson Design: Gradual Release of Responsibility and Writing Student Learning Objectives</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May 2016</td> <td>Lesson Planning: Across the Content Areas</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 2016</td> <td>Questioning to Facilitate Student Discourse</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 2016</td> <td>Classroom Management 1 & 2 – Building a Positive Classroom Culture (2 days)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 2016</td> <td>Strengths Finder – Building on who you are and focusing on natural talents</td> </tr> </table> <p>The cohort was in constant contact with the program team in order to access needed program support assistance. The mentees and their corresponding mentors had weekly meetings. The mentors proved to be a very valuable asset to the program as they helped to impart more confidence in the paraprofessionals. Additionally, the cohort formulated a support group, which included daily interactions via email and phone calls to each other.</p>	Feb. 2016	Stress Management	Mar. 2016	Cultural Diversity	Mar. 2016	Bloom's Taxonomy and Depth of Knowledge	May 2016	Lesson Design: Gradual Release of Responsibility and Writing Student Learning Objectives	May 2016	Lesson Planning: Across the Content Areas	June 2016	Questioning to Facilitate Student Discourse	June 2016	Classroom Management 1 & 2 – Building a Positive Classroom Culture (2 days)	June 2016	Strengths Finder – Building on who you are and focusing on natural talents
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Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) – MTR Planning and Implementation Grants		
Goals	Objectives	Indicators
Increase the number of CREC middle and high school students interested in pursuing a career in education.	Expose Medical Professions and Teacher Preparation Academy (MPTPA) students to diverse career options within the field of education through a variety of methods, including hands-on, interactive experiences, college visits, and career fairs.	90% of Grade 8-10 students are exposed to a variety of career options related to the field of education; 20% of Grade 8-10 students shadow an upperclassman during his/her internship; 95% of Grade 10 students visit the various CCSU education departments.
	Connect CCSU education students to MPTPA middle and high school students.	CCSU class held at MPTPA; 30 hours of field experience work conducted with middle and high school students.
	Expand and enhance extracurricular activities related to the education professions.	CCSU Education Club and Honors Society meet with Future Teachers Club (Educators Rising) monthly; Bulkeley High School and MPTPA Educators Rising collaborate for special events three times per year; MPTPA Future Teacher Club members engage in two national competitions and/or conferences per year.
Increase CREC's candidate pool of Black and Latino educators.	Support Black and Latino teacher candidates through a CREC/CCSU minority MAT cohort.	5 students participating in the cohort in Year 1; 8 students participating in the cohort in Year 2; monthly mentor meetings between CREC staff and CCSU students; quarterly CREC led seminar series for CCSU cohort students; CCSU students placed in CREC schools for in-service and student teaching.
	Advertise teacher vacancies in Black and Latino networks.	At least five Black and Latino venues identified to advertise vacancies; vacancies advertised in Spanish and English.
Increase the number of Black and Latino educators in CREC Schools.	Review and enhance hiring process and recruitment strategies to ensure culturally responsive practices.	Review conducted; culturally responsive practices and strategies addressed in CREC Schools' hiring guide.
	Employ CREC/CCSU cohort members in CREC schools or the CREC region.	100% cohort members employed in school districts in the following school year.

Hartford Public Schools - MTR Planning and Implementation Grants		
Goals	Objective	Indicators
Increase awareness and interest, specifically motivating and reaching the Black and Latino population, to pursue education in the city of Hartford as a viable, long-lasting, and rewarding career.	With support from district leadership, work with Communications Department to re-shape external and internal marketing approach to a “call to action” style while highlighting the cultural communities within Hartford.	Increased interest through linguistically appropriate communications and informative multimedia.
	Target current HPS Bachelor-educated minority non-certified staff who would like to pursue a career in teaching by providing assistance in the completion of teacher preparation programs and passing required certification exams.	Increased number of non-certified staff eligible to apply to certified teaching positions within HPS.
	Target middle/secondary students through the use of communications, information sessions, targeted career fairs and expos, networking events, and multimedia.	Increased number of HPS students enrolling in college educator preparation programs.
	Outreach: Host and attend recruiting events and info sessions that target Black and Latino educators and young professionals who may not have considered a career in education until after college graduation and entrance into the professional workforce.	Increased Number of Black and Latino educator candidates.
	Advocate that higher education partners include a call to action in their programs and encourage early urban field exposure.	Increase the number of college students and graduates prepared for and seeking an education career within Hartford Public Schools.

Waterbury Public Schools		
Goal	Objective	Indicators
Increase awareness and interest in education careers.	To expose students to the field of education as a career option.	Surveys, course development, planned activities, student enrollment and program evaluation.
Increase the number of Black & Latino Teachers eligible to be hired.	Build capacity within the district for retention and elevation to leadership positions.	Surveys, Critical Conversations and Professional Development with feedback, Diversity training, Yancy Forum.
Increase the number of Black & Latino candidates recruited and hired.	Rebrand Waterbury Public Schools marketing, recruitment and retention strategies.	Marketing materials, website, diverse recruitment team, partner development with Institutions of Higher Education, new hiring process, mentoring.