

## FOCUS ON TEACHER DIVERSITY

ABOUT 73% OF TEXAS STUDENTS ARE CHILDREN OF COLOR. However, only 41% of teachers are people of color. Research shows that all students, regardless of race or ethnicity, [benefit](#) socially, emotionally, and academically from a strong, diverse teacher workforce. Yet, Black and Latino students are more likely to attend schools with greater numbers of [novice teachers](#) than their White peers. Despite the challenges that teachers of color [experience](#), Black and Latino teachers in Texas are [significantly more likely to stay in the profession](#) than their White peers.

Amid rising efforts to turn classrooms into political battlegrounds, teacher shortages, and declines in enrollment to teacher preparation programs across the country, state leaders must find effective ways to diversify their educator workforce and boost student outcomes by recruiting, supporting, and retaining more educators of color.

### 5 State Policies

To increase the racial diversity of the educator workforce, state leaders must create the right policy conditions to support educator preparation programs, districts, and schools in their efforts to recruit and retain teachers of color. The following shows Texas' ratings in the five policy recommendations from Ed Trust's [Policy Scan Report](#) to diversify the teacher workforce:

- 1.** Make educator diversity data visible and actionable to stakeholders
- 2.** Set clear goals at the state and district level to increase student access to diverse educators
- 3.** Invest in educator preparation programs to increase enrollment and improve the preparation of teachers of color
- 4.** Target resources to districts and schools to support efforts to intentionally recruit and hire a diverse teaching workforce
- 5.** Invest in efforts to retain teachers of color include improving working conditions and providing opportunities for personal and professional growth for teachers of color

#### RATING SCALE



Meets all or most of the requirements within the goal



Meets some of the requirements within the goal



Meets one or no requirements within the goal

### State Context

Texas' [Ed Trust Educator Diversity Profile](#) highlights the following data from the 2018-19 school year, revealing challenges that existed before the pandemic:

- Latino students make up 53% of the student population while Latino teachers make up only 28% of the teacher workforce
- For Black students across the state, 6% attend schools where there are no Black teachers on record
- More than 1 in 3 Black students in Texas attend a school in which more than 20% of teachers are considered novice. This is also the case for 29% of Latino students in Texas
- Black students (11%) in Texas are nearly twice as likely as non-Black students (6%) to attend a school in which more than 10% of teachers are uncertified

With [new census data](#) now showing Hispanic Texans as the state's largest demographic group, the need to diversify the teacher workforce in Texas to meet the changing demographics of the state has never been more necessary. According to the Texas Education Agency, of the classroom teachers employed in the 2021-22 school year, nearly 12% left the profession that same year, up from about 10% in recent years. To make matters more urgent, that same year, the number of uncertified new teachers nearly [doubled](#) (from 4,652 to 8,435), accounting for nearly 1 in 5 new hires statewide. Given the unfinished

learning that has resulted from the pandemic, students need more high-quality teachers. Now is the time to address this crisis by embracing the teachers who stay despite the challenges: teachers of color.

## State Action Plan

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When creating and implementing policies that affect classrooms, it's imperative that teachers have a seat at the decision-making table. A team of Texas educators of color developed the policy recommendations outlined below:

### **STRATEGY 1: Invest in efforts to retain teachers of color that improve working conditions and provide opportunities for personal and professional growth**

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#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Expand strategic staffing models that promote paid leadership roles for highly effective teachers, including mentorship and coaching
- Establish a statewide system, similar to the Teacher Incentive Allotment, to help attract and retain highly effective principals at traditionally hard-to-staff schools
- Improve access to high-quality instructional materials that are culturally relevant and accelerate student learning

**Example:** [Colorado](#) provides a three-year induction and mentoring program for new teachers and developed a mentor teacher endorsement introduced in 2020.

### **STRATEGY 2: Invest in educator preparation programs to increase enrollment and improve the preparation of teachers of color**

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#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Incentivize high-quality preparation routes by making them accessible and affordable for diverse candidates through residency stipends, registered apprenticeships, and targeted financial aid
- Establish and incentivize articulated Grow Your Own pathways from dual credit, community colleges, and four-year institutions to shorten time to degree and certification and value work-based credentials, including those held by educational aides

**Example:** Florida [developed a fund specifically for teachers of color](#) to receive annual scholarships of \$4,000 in their junior or senior years who are enrolled in a teacher education program at one of the state's participating institutions.

### **STRATEGY 3: Set clear goals at the state, district, and preparation level to increase educator diversity**

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#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Create statewide goals to strengthen the teacher workforce, similar to the state's 60X30TX plan for postsecondary attainment, that include targets by ethnicity, language, gender, and geography needed to reach them

**Example:** [Arkansas](#) posted a clear, numeric goal to increase the number of teachers of color in public schools by 25% by 2025 on its state website and requires all districts to create and post a Teacher and Administrator Recruitment and Retention plan to increase the diversity of the teacher workforce.

***To access more promising actions for advancing educator quality and diversity, see [this guidebook](#) created by the Alliance for Resource Equity.***