

Education Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1034

AN ACT CONCERNING MINORITY TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND

Title: RETENTION.

Vote Date: 3/29/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference to Appropriations

PH Date: 3/17/2021

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Education Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

Creates the minority candidate certification, retention or residency year program administered by SDE and under the supervision of a RESC or a private, nonprofit teacher certification program; requires alliance districts to participate in the program and permits non-alliance districts to participate and expands the uses of alliance district funds to include the minority recruitment residency program. The bill also requires SDE, the UConn School of Education, and the CT State Colleges and Universities System to develop a plan to promote the teaching profession to high school students and requires the creation of an implicit bias video training module for employees in the hiring process.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Charlene Russell-Tucker, Acting Commissioner, State Department of Education:

SDE supports the added definition for “residency program” but recommends this avenue be available to all SBE approved certification programs that utilize the Resident Educator Permit in accordance with C.G.S. Section 10-145m. This would better align with SDE's proposed legislation to widen access to the Resident Educator Permit for both candidates and programs. Section 1 should also be clear that while a board may hire a Resident, this language is not intended to change any employment or certification-related requirements for a position in which the Resident is hired. They recommend a funding allocation be tied to Section 3 to support ongoing efforts with Educators Rising and TEACH Connecticut, which are both grant funded. Lastly, they support the creation of the video training model.

Steven Hernández, Executive Director, CWCSEO:

Minority students often perform better on standardized tests, have improved attendance, and are suspended less frequently (which may suggest either different degrees of behavior or different treatment, or both) when they have at least one same-race teacher. The residency program in this bill in collaboration with the grow your own pathway allows students to have the window that they need to become full time teachers in the state of Connecticut.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Robert Angeli, Superintendent, Killingly Public Schools;

Dr. Greg Florio, Executive Director, Capitol Region Education Council;

Tim Sullivan, Superintendent, CREC Magnet Schools;

Marlene Megos Director, CT Teacher Residency Program;

Dr. Scott V. Nicol, Superintendent, Ellington Public Schools;

Sal Pascarella, Superintendent, Danbury Public Schools

As of the 2019-2020 school year, educators of color made up only 9.6% of educators, compared to 39.6% students of color. They recommend several amendments, such as adjusting the funding mechanism to account for districts that are not alliance districts, modifying the definition of "residency program" to maximize the number of qualified candidates who would be eligible, as and providing the funding needed to open 4 new sites this summer, or \$4.5 million to train 60 new teachers of color.

Karline Augustin; Rebecca Banever, Special Ed Paraprofessional; Lillian Bertram;

Monarae Chin; Denise Estemil; Anthony Freeman

Funding for this bill is necessary for me and many others to struggle financially to achieve their dreams. Finance for the CT Teacher Residency Program will help solve the educational inequality. It will also minimize barriers to the traditional certification admission process. Provide hands-on training for underemployed or unemployed adults with a pathway to a lifelong career and economic stability.

Jennifer Barahona, Chief Executive Officer, Norwalk ACTS:

We must work deliberately and with urgency to create a pipeline of teachers to meet the demands in all our communities. Expansion of programs such as Alternative Route to Certification are essential if we are to truly commit to increasing the number of minority teachers and thereby improving outcomes for our young students of color.

Stuart Beckford, 2nd Vice President, Hartford Federation of Teachers; Shellye Davis;

Tycharmell Denny; Linda Joseph; Shannon Marimón, Executive Director, ReadyCT

Ian Leighton, Chair, Writing and Analysis Committee, Fairfield Equity Coalition;

Douglas Mills; Daniel Pearson, State Director, Educators For Excellence-Connecticut

Students of color who experience at least one educator within their academic careers are more likely to successfully complete school in the K through 12 realms. It is also clear the impact that is felt from having role models that look like you with a similar cultural background and awareness helps in many situations but more importantly provides a sense of belonging to a student.

Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc.; Kate Conetta;
Michael T. Conner, Superintendent, Middletown Public Schools;
Pastor William McCullough, Founder, FaithActs for Education; Faith Sweeney, Teacher

We want our students to have the opportunity to learn from educators from a variety of backgrounds, races, and cultures. While progress has been made in increasing the number of educators of color, much work remains to be done. Currently students of color account for over 40% of Connecticut's student population, while only 9.6% of the state public school teachers and administrators are people of color.

Julie Corbett, President, Corbett Education Consulting LLC;
Carol Gale, President, Hartford Federation of Teachers;
ConnCAN: Subira Gordon, Executive Director; Veronica Rosario, Parent Fellow

All the components of this bill are crucial to ensuring that Connecticut has a teaching workforce that resembles the population of the students we serve. The research-base is clear that the impact of having teachers who resemble the students they serve have short and long-term positive impacts, especially for Black/African American males. Additionally, we must give all human resources professionals access to implicit bias training at no cost so school districts can start to address some of the barriers that exist within the system itself that have not allowed for greater diversity.

CT School Counselor Association: Virginia DeLong, Director of School Counseling;
Eileen Melody, Governing Board

This bill needs to go beyond teachers, and should include other school professionals like school counselors, social workers and school psychologists. Students also need professionals in these areas with whom they can relate. We must address the severe lack of school counselors in this state, including inequitable school counseling services for all our students and dismal representation of counselors of color in the profession

Rebecca Good, Founding Dean, Relay Connecticut: In line 7 and line 16 residency programs appear to be reserved for alternate route to certification programs only. They suggest changing the wording in both lines "an alternate route to certification program" to "a certification program". This will allow all minoritized teachers and the districts that seek to recruit and retain minoritized teachers the opportunity to join a teacher residency programs via an alternate route or within a traditional graduate school of education.

Tom Nicholas, Vice President, Connecticut Education Association:

They support innovative teacher preparation programs that attract more aspiring teachers of color into our public schools, particularly when they help those teachers meet high standards of certification and address persistent institutional and financial barriers. In 2019, we discovered that there were roughly 600 certified teachers of color who were not serving in teaching positions. We can assume that many this group are not in the classroom for reasons of biased hiring, cultural, and institutional environments.

Roja Yousuf, Center for Youth Leadership at Brien McMahon High School:

They applaud SDE for working to increase the number of educators of color to ten percent by this year. This bill will help maintain that momentum. They support the creation of a video training model, which is consistent with their call to have school districts train staff in implicit bias and antiracism when hiring. Finally, they suggest the state look at efforts undertaken by local school districts to increase minority teacher hiring, including the partnership between the Danbury district and Western Connecticut State University.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

There are no sources of opposition for this bill.

Reported by: Dallas Emerle

Date: 3/31/2021