

Diverse K-12 Educator Workforce Report

Representative James Coleman & Senator Rhonda Fields

Purpose:

This bill creates a workgroup to investigate barriers to preparation, retention, and recruitment of a diverse educator workforce. The workgroup will produce a report that will identify barriers and strategies for developing and maintaining a diverse educator workforce. This bill will also increase transparency in teacher preparation programs by making information on graduation rates, post-graduate outcomes, and first-attempt passage rates from educator preparation programs, disaggregated by gender, race, and ethnicity, easily available to candidates.

Background:

Currently in Colorado, 76% of teachers are women and 67% of teachers identify as White women; this is not reflective of the increasingly diverse demographics of Colorado students. Only 46% of elementary school teachers pass the certifying test the first time, and even after graduating from an accredited teacher preparation programs, only 38% of Black teaching candidates, 54% of Hispanic candidates, and 75% of White candidates pass the licensing test. Having high quality teachers is the most important factor for increasing student achievement, but recent research shows that students also greatly benefit from having diverse educators.

Bill Action:

The bill directs the Departments of Education and Higher Education to convene a workgroup to investigate barriers to preparation, retention, and recruitment of a diverse educator workforce. The workgroup will include a variety of diverse perspectives to develop a report that considers data and recommendations from the report *Keeping Up with the Kids*, strategies to build a strong local pipeline for diverse students who are or may consider becoming educators, the efficacy of educator preparation programs, effective strategies to assist non-certified educators engaged in the profession but not licensed due to financial difficulties or difficulty in passing the state certification tests, whether creating partnerships between districts and programs serving aspiring minority educators will increase educator diversity, strategies to retain existing diverse educators, and any other relevant possibilities. This bill augments transparency in teacher development and preparation by requiring data on graduation rates, post-graduate outcomes, first-attempt passage rates, performance on assessments for licensure, and other data from teacher preparation programs be disaggregated by gender, race, and ethnicity and available online so people of all backgrounds can easily determine the best route to becoming a licensed educator.

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