

# TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

## EDUCATOR DIVERSITY POLICY

5.700

### Policy Sections

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#### **I. Policy Context and Definitions**

- (1) T.C.A. § 49-1-302(g) requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to adopt a policy to promote educator diversity. This policy outlines the requirements for LEAs to set goal(s) related to educator diversity that take into consideration the diversity of students the LEA serves; providing strategies for LEAs to use in the recruitment and retention of minority educators; and outlining a plan to monitor educator diversity throughout the state.
- (2) LEA goals and strategies to promote educator diversity shall comply with applicable state and federal civil rights law and shall prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and age. These laws include, but are not limited to, Titles VI & VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975. LEAs should work closely with their local board attorneys to ensure plans are in compliance with state and federal law.
- (3) “Minority Educator” includes, but is not limited to, an educator who is Black or African American; Hispanic or Latino; Asian American; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; or American Indian or Alaska Native; or two or more races as reported by the educator in the state licensure database.

#### **II. Educator Diversity Goals**

- (1) Each LEA shall set goal(s) for educator diversity that take into consideration the diversity of the students that the LEA serves.
  - (a) LEAs shall annually submit their educator diversity goal(s) to the Department.
    - 1. To assist in development of the LEA’s educator diversity goals, LEAs are encouraged to conduct an analysis of educator and student diversity data, including the current percentage of minority educators employed in the LEA, and the current percentage of minority students served by the LEA. Other data related to the diversity of the students that the LEA serves (e.g., languages spoken by students, socioeconomic status, immigrant and migrant populations) may also be considered.

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- (b) Educator diversity goal(s) shall include the following:
  - 1. Specific goal(s) outlining how the LEA will address educator diversity, taking into consideration the diversity of the students that the LEA serves; and
  - 2. Strategies the LEA will use in support of the LEA's goal(s) to recruit and retain minority educators. LEAs may utilize strategies outlined in Section III of this policy or other locally generated strategies.
- (c) LEAs shall submit educator diversity goal(s) beginning in the 2021-22 school year. In each subsequent year after initial submission, LEAs must also submit a description of the progress made by the LEA toward meeting educator diversity goals.
- (d) LEAs shall submit required information annually by the deadline established by the Department.
- (e) Each LEA is encouraged to post its goals publicly and share its educator diversity goal(s) with relevant stakeholders, including, but not limited to local school board members, local educator preparation providers, community partners, and others.

### **III. Strategies to Address Educator Diversity**

- (1) Each LEA shall outline strategies that will be used to recruit and retain minority educators and include those strategies in support of the LEA's educator diversity goal(s). The most effective strategies to recruit and retain minority educators will be those that are tailored to local context, informed by data, and involve collaboration between LEAs and Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs).
- (2) LEAs shall adopt strategies to recruit minority educators, which may include but are not limited to:
  - (a) Identifying prospective educators from the local pool of diverse students, paraprofessionals, industry professionals, or other community members and supporting them in seeking educator licensure, including providing information and assistance with enrolling in EPPs.
  - (b) Identifying prospective educators from Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) and providing information on seeking and acquiring educator licensure and assistance with enrolling in EPPs.

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- (c) Partnering with EPPs to create “grow your own” teacher initiatives targeted toward the recruitment and preparation of prospective minority educators.
  - (d) Leveraging state- and national-level teacher pipeline initiatives targeted toward high school students (e.g., “Teaching as a Profession” programming and dual-enrollment courses).
  - (e) Collaborating with EPPs through Primary Partnerships, created pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-5-5618, to inform goals related to educator diversity, including, but not limited to:
    - 1. Sharing and analyzing EPP- and LEA-level data, including candidate diversity data reported in the State Board of Education’s Educator Preparation Report Card and the Department’s EPP Annual Reports, to inform LEA and EPP recruitment strategies and plans.
    - 2. Working with EPP leadership to identify any potential barriers to entry and/or program completion for minority educators and to develop strategies to remove these barriers.
  - (f) Reviewing the district-level recruitment processes, including the diversity of teams involved in recruitment, interviewing, and hiring, and revising these processes as needed.
  - (g) Reviewing recruitment and application materials to eliminate potential barriers to entry for minority educators.
  - (h) Providing information on the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC) Minority Teaching Fellows Program to eligible teacher candidates.
  - (i) Additional strategies for recruitment of minority educators articulated by the LEA.
- (3) LEAs shall adopt strategies to retain minority educators, including both new and veteran educators. Strategies for retention may include but are not limited to:
- (a) Monitoring data on new and veteran minority educators to identify trends in staffing, placement, school conditions, turnover, and other relevant outcomes.
  - (b) Planning induction and support strategies for early-career minority educators.
  - (c) Regular training and support for school and district leaders covering empirical research on retaining minority educators.

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- (d) Establishing mentoring programs for new minority educators to build a support network with experienced minority educators within an LEA or statewide.
- (e) Gathering feedback from educators and students on working/learning conditions, and other perceptual data via surveys, focus groups, or advisory groups and developing a plan for responding to the feedback with timely and actionable steps.
- (f) Additional strategies for retention of minority educators articulated by the LEA.

#### **IV. Monitoring Educator Diversity at the State Level**

- (1) The Department shall develop tools and resources to support LEAs in setting and meeting goals for educator diversity and articulating strategies for recruitment, and retention of minority educators.
- (2) The Department shall monitor educator diversity in Tennessee through implementation of the following:
  - (a) Compiling and reporting annually on its website the percentage of minority educators employed in each LEA and the percentage of minority students attending each LEA.
  - (b) Compiling a biennial report on its website that analyzes the state of educator diversity in Tennessee.
  - (c) Providing technical assistance to educator diversity working groups in Tennessee.
  - (d) Providing technical assistance and grant funding (as available) to help LEAs establish teacher pipeline initiatives, including “grow your own” initiatives, to broaden the prospective talent pool and assist in meeting the LEA’s educator diversity goal(s).