



STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Murphy Administration Announces Grants to Encourage Teacher Diversity

Trenton, NJ – Two universities will expand recruitment and training opportunities for teachers of color in high-needs school districts through a \$750,000 grant, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) announced today.

The NJDOE's "Diversifying the Teacher Pipeline" grants will be awarded to Montclair State University, which will partner with the Newark Public Schools, and Rutgers University's Center for Effective School Practices, which will partner with a consortium of Passaic County charter schools.

Teachers of color represent 16 percent of New Jersey's teachers, although 56 percent of the state's nearly 1.4 million students are children of color, according to NJDOE data.

"Research tells us that a diverse teaching workforce benefits *all* students," said Education Commissioner Lamont O. Repollet. "Teachers of color foster positive perceptions among children, which helps prepare them for success in a diverse society."

The grant projects may result in targeted recruitment efforts such as exposing high school students to the teaching profession; developing programs that allows students to earn college credits toward a teaching degree while still in high school; providing assistance for entrance exams into college programs; mentoring; and creating alternate pathways for those considering a career change to enter the teaching profession. Successful projects would serve as a model for other educator preparation programs, the state, and possibly the nation.

"It's our obligation to open doors that encourage diversity among New Jersey educators," said Commissioner Repollet, noting that studies have found that students of color taught by at least one teacher of color in grades K-5 have increased graduation rates and improved standardized test scores. "We owe it not only to aspiring teachers, but to the children we serve," he added.

The Diversifying the Teacher Pipeline grants are one part of an overall initiative in which the NDJOE is committed to working with stakeholders to collectively build strategies to diversify the education workforce.

For instance, the NJDOE partnered with college and university educator-preparation programs across the state to host the Diversifying the Teacher Workforce Convening in October. The convening raised awareness of this issue among stakeholders and showcased promising practices to increase diversity in educator preparation programs.

In addition, New Jersey is the 10th state to join the Council of Chief State School Officers' (CCSSO) Diverse and Learner-Ready Teachers Initiative, which aims to diversify the education workforce and support future and current educators in teaching students of different cultural backgrounds.

“The Diverse and Learner-Ready Teachers Initiative has the twin goals of diversifying the education workforce while supporting all educators to be culturally responsive,” said CCSSO Executive Director Carissa Moffat Miller. “While New Jersey is a new addition to the initiative, its commitment to this work is not new, as evidenced by the statewide summit they recently hosted focused on diversifying the teacher workforce. The work New Jersey is doing in this area is an example of how states can lead with equity.”