

Minority Teacher Recruitment Policy Oversight Council
Minutes
April 22, 2021

Present: George Coleman
Sal Escobales
Sam Galloway
Rebecca Good
Jason Irizarry
Sheila Kearney
Gladis Kersaint
Robert Radar
Werner Oyanadel
Terrell Hill
Madeline Negrón
Elsa Nunez

Absent: Lauren Anderson
Katherine Atkins
Arlene Arias
Mia Dimbo
Jane Gates

CSDE Staff: Shuana Tucker
Christopher Todd
Cynthia Cassada
Madison Csejkc for Charlene Russell-Tucker

Meeting came to order at 9:00 am 4/22/21

Dr. Shuana Tucker, Chief Talent Officer, opened the meeting with a warm welcome to all and reviewed the robust agenda. Dr. Tucker shared the great news with the Council. Last year, the October 2019 reporting data indicates that 9.6% of educators actively employed in CT were educators of color. Dr. Tucker reported that the current data indicates that 10% of educators are actively employed in CT schools. The CSDE set and met the goal of 10% for 2021.

<http://edsight.ct.gov/SASPortal/main.do>.

Educator Evaluation Council Feedback

Dr. Rebecca Good shared a Google survey to request feedback from the Council [Recommendation of Flexibilities for Educator Evaluation and Support for 2021-22 School Year](#). Dr. Good posed three questions to the Council; 1) What current educator evaluation flexibilities are effective and should continue? 2) What current educator evaluation flexibilities are ineffective or less effective and should not continue? 3) What current flexibilities need to be revised or what new flexibilities should be considered? Dr. Good requested 15 minutes for an overview of the Educator Evaluation Flexibilities and feedback.

Next-Generation Educators

Dr. Tucker provided the Next-Generation Educators Initiative update. The purpose is to commit to student success and student-focused teaching and learning. The program's goal is to enhance teaching innovation and teaching quality. Moreover, to bring together a cohort of outstanding Teaching Fellows to foster excellence and rigor in the next generation of teachers while supporting K-12 student learning in Connecticut. Currently, 55 students are participating in Next-Gen. Bristol, the pilot district, has 18 students, while Western Connecticut State University has placed 23 students in Danbury schools. We are currently collaborating with EPP's such as USJ, WSCU, SCSU, and UCONN. Partnering districts include Danbury, Cromwell, New Britain, Newington, Waterbury, and Windsor. Student assignments are based on availability. Dr. Tucker announced that SCSU has confirmed to place Next-Gen students in summer programming to address summer learning loss. Students will work 4 to 5 days a week at the rate of \$95.00 to \$110.00 per day.

Dr. Tucker thanked Dr. Madeline Negrón Colon for her ongoing support from the CALAS Organization to provide mentors to NextGen students.

Educator's Rising Statewide Conference

Cynthia Cassada, Educational Consultant, presented the first statewide Educators Rising Conference results, held on March 31, 2021. Cynthia thanked the Council members who attended the Conference. She also thanked and acknowledged CCSU and HB Live Productions for providing the platform and technical assistance during the Conference. Cynthia shared the link to the Conference and provided an overview of guest speakers during the welcoming remarks of the Conference as follows: Dr. Zulma Toro, President, CCSU, Dr. Miguel A. Cardona, Secretary, US Secretary of Education, Charlene Russell-Tucker, Acting Commissioner of Education, CSDE, Charlene Russell-Tucker, Acting Commissioner of Education, CSDE, Ned Lamont, Connecticut Governor, Dr. Jane Gates, Interim President of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, Senator Doug McCrory, Representative, Bobby Sanchez, Johanna Hayes, Congresswoman 5th District of Connecticut, and Rochelle Brown, CT Teacher of the Year 2021.

Cynthia also provided an overview of the Conference program: there were 581 Conference participants, breakout sessions included-Next-Gen, Aspiring Educators, EdRising, Meet the Deans, Teach CT & ETS overview Kahoot sessions, panel discussions-CCSU, UCONN, Quinnipiac University, AFT, CT Teacher of Year, PDK, EdRising Teacher Leaders, Former EdRising Student, Student Competitions-Children's Literature Pre-k & K-3, Ethical Dilemma, Job Interview, Researching Learning Challenges & Educator's Rising Moment, and 10 Students will participate in the Educator's Rising National Conference. Cynthia also thanked the sponsors CCSU, CAFE, AFT, CEA, NB-AFT, ETS-Praxis, for their support.

During the Conference, TEACH CT participated in a breakout session and asked students to participate in a scavenger hunt and a quick poll. TEACH CT posed three questions to students: What do you want to teach? What will be most helpful to you? And I teach because I want to. The results were as follows: 35% of students are interested in teaching elementary PreK/K and 35% are also interested in teaching ELA, History, and World Languages, while the remaining 30% are interested in pursuing other content areas such as Science, Math, Fine Arts, Media, and PE. 6% of students, are undecided. Cynthia has recommended to TEACH CT to include shortage areas in the poll for next year's Conference.

Educator's Rising Pre-survey Data

Cynthia provided an overview of the EdRising Spring Pre-survey data collection. One hundred seventy students participated in the pre-survey. Cynthia reviewed the number and percentages of Grades, Gender, High needs, ELs, Special Education, and Race. She also discussed three data points highlighted. Males, EL's and Black or African Americans are our focus groups. The data supports the continued work and highlights the focus areas for program planning for the next school year.

Dr. Tucker shared that only 2% of candidates nationwide are of color, and Connecticut is not much better. The focus for next school year will be to attract more males, EL's and students of color. She shared that she had developed a focus group comprising of males of color for input and feedback to create pathways for these subgroups. Currently, the CSDE is in the process of applying for funding through the Buck Foundation in partnership with Phi Delta Kappa to expand EdRising to these groups in pilot districts next school year.

C-Bob Rader stated he had not heard of the 2% nationwide data.

Q-Dr. Coleman asked how EdRising relates to Perkins Funding.

R-Dr. Tucker responded that she had had several meetings with CSDE colleagues. EdRising must be recognized as a nationwide CTSO. Dr. Tucker has also recommended participating EdRising districts that receive Alliance Funding to set aside funding for the next school year.

C-Dr. Coleman, advises the Commissioner address the desired, positive, and most significant potential of this initiative during her Back to School messaging. EdRising represents the best opportunity to cultivate ethnic minorities with support and discipline to become a professional. Funding obstacles should be presented to the legislation as an obligation to recognize and extend efficacy to develop a Grow Your Own. Expand this project to a more public source.

R-Dr. Tucker, funding is on her CSDE Talent Department wish list to support initiatives.

Problem of Practice

- What can we do with the information from Educator's Rising participants?
- In what areas can your organization help, support, or partner in the work?

C-Dr. Coleman- encourage students to pursue math and Science

C-Dr. Irizarry- we need to provide the frame for the data

C-Dr. Good-provide examples, highlight males/females of color in those positions

C-Dr. Coleman-what do students see as more critical to them? How can we enlist our teacher unions to accept part of the particular burden? We need to personalize, stimulate interest in the teaching subjects.

C-Dr. Irizarry representation is essential. Familiarity extends discussions, but skills correlate to academics.

C-Dr. Coleman-what can non-minority educators do? Students are seeking support no matter the profession.

C-Dr. Galloway- how do you bring people to this profession? What if we could tap freshman and sophomore students who are currently not enrolled in a teaching program, like a political science major. We could be an entry point. We need to tap into these students.

C-Dr. Coleman-Developing Tomorrow's Teachers are current college students who provide mentorship to high school students. College students are currently not necessarily enrolled in an educator pathway. There is a level of indecision. This program is an opportunity to recruit students into the profession. The expectation that all schools will participate even if they do not have any current openings. This work is a high priority.

Initiative #1 MTR Recruitment Fair

Cynthia reviewed the results of the Brazen platform for the Virtual Career Fair held on April 7, 2021. The survey results from Brazen are as follows:

- 63 School Districts/RECS's Participated
- 99 Candidates Attended
- 165 Representatives
- 580 Chats

Cynthia stated she was disappointed that only 63 school districts had participated in the Virtual Career Fair since there are 169 school districts in CT.

C-Dr. Good- reminded the Council that last school year, everything was virtual. This year, candidates may be suffering from variants of zoom fatigue which could explain depressing participation. For the 2020-2021 school year, there has been a combination of fully remote to hybrid to in-person learning. Candidates are trying to manage the changes and account for less participation in the virtual fair this year.

Q-Oyandel Werner-How long did the RESC Alliance advertise? What was the timeframe? Was it sent in various languages? I did like the timeframe of 2:30–6:30 pm to allow time for participants after the school day.

C-Dr. Coleman-There should be a more significant number of school districts participating. What is the justification for not participating at no cost to the districts? George recommended that there be fidelity in participation in the event and an expectation that all schools will participate in the Back to School message from the Commissioner. This initiative is a high priority.

C-Oyandel Werner- what are the positions are being offered?

C-Dr. Coleman- who were the districts, how many were urban, suburban, rural, and how they own this problem? We should make appeals to districts.

MTR Initiative #3 Regional SEED Funding

Cynthia provides an overview of the RESC Alliance Funding proposals, percentage of proposals submitted and funded and not funded. The RESC Alliance received 34 proposals. The RESC Alliance funded 68% of proposals. Project proposals focus areas are as follows:

- Recruit persons of color with a bachelor's degree to participate in the CREC Teacher Residency
- Program and become a certified teacher within their district (CREC, LEARN, and EdAdvance),
- Grow Your Own Programs
- Equity/Cultural Competency Training for district leadership, teachers, and paraeducators
- RELAY Program and training related to hiring practices.

MTR Initiative # 4 Scholarships and Assessment Certification Reimbursement

A sub-committee from the RESC Alliance met to develop a scholarship and Assessment Certification Reimbursement form and rubric in February of 2021. Based on the allocation in this initiative, the committee determined that we provide 22 scholarships at \$2,000 each and 50

certification assessment reimbursement fees at \$200.00 each. Candidates are welcomed to apply for both the scholarship and reimbursement. These are non-competitive scholarships and reimbursement fees. It is on a first-come/first-served basis.

Problem of Practice

- Are there areas where your organizations can help with scholarship, licensure, fee reimbursement, or advocate for additional funding?

C-Oyandel Werner- we have distributed \$200,000 in scholarships. Scholarship funds are impactful to Latino and black students. We have recently provided an additional \$1,000 in recognition scholarships. Funding could offer fellowship opportunities for Latino and Black students.

C-Dr. Coleman, the Commissioner, needs to bring to the legislation the need to provide full scholarship programs. It would be a dual proposal. The issue to request a certain number of full scholarships and request from EPP's support to support the CSDE with more scholarships.

C-Dr. Irizarry- provide full financial aid package and in return ask for three years minimum service. This generation is expected to have five different careers in their lifetime.

C-Dr. Coleman-CSDE and MTR Advisory Council develop a task force for continuous support and secure financing for those who have financial obstacles, primarily teaching CT.

R-Dr. Tucker-fully supports that if we help you, then you, in turn, would have to commit to teaching in CT for three years.

C-Dr. Coleman-not offer a job, instead offer a job commitment.

C-Dr. Good- opportunities for financial are easily accessible. All financial information should in one place, Teach.org I could not find the MTR scholarship and reimbursement fee application. There should be one place where students and candidates could go to find all financial information. Students and candidates need mobile accessibility.

C-Terrell Hill-we can't put the burden on urban districts solely to do the work. Suburbs have to take responsibility for hiring candidates of color. We have jobs in CT. There are more than 100 positions every year. There is no reason why candidates of color would not find a job in a suburb.

C-Dr. Coleman-WCSU has a Baccalaureate program. WCSU is a large, diverse state university. Why an institution this large does not elect to be part of the solution. We require a response; re-engage in the role they play for diversifying the educator pipeline.

C- districts need to invest in candidates of color, develop professional leaders and teachers in the areas of equity.

C-Terrell Hill-we need actual actions-breakdown doors, ground culture. Folks of color are scared to apply to suburbs, white districts.

Creating a District Plan to Increase the Racial, Ethnic, and Linguistic Diversity of Your Workforce

Cynthia Cassada provided an update on the work to support districts and LEAs. The Talent Office has partnered with numerous statewide, regional, and national education organizations to develop needed resources to help districts and LEAs. Specifically attracting, recruiting, hiring, and retaining a diverse educator workforce.

The Talent Office is partnering with REL/NEI Pilot Project to develop Workforce Diversity Plans. The CSDE Talent Office and eight district partners have been engaged in a four-part series to develop workforce diversity plans. Work continues with these seven districts. We engaged a second cohort in 2020-21. The following districts, Colchester, Greenwich, Hamden, and Waterbury, Cohort #2 have participated in three coaching series and are scheduled to participate in the fourth session on Monday, April 26, 2021. Most districts continue to work on the demographic data analysis, to discover root causes of problems to identify appropriate solutions. Participating districts are expected to come to the next session with their vision, theory of action, and 2-3 smart goals.

We have also invited cohorts #1 and #2 to participate in The Leadership Academy. The cohorts are participating in six-two-hour sessions focused on Coaching for Culturally Responsive Leadership.

Problem of Practice

- How can your organizations' support district work?

C-Dr. Galloway-superintendents make it a priority. We all know what the issue is, hiring practices.

R-Dr. Tucker- we must have support from the superintendents to create and develop a fair process. I have worked in various districts. In my previous district, we centralized hiring, included the principal. The principal does not have the autonomy to interview and make recommendations. Screening happens at the central office, and then candidate information is given to principals. Districts must embrace change.

C-Bob Rader- as you know, we are trying to talk to Boards of Education. We can continue to have these conversations about what we discussed today and push Boards of Education to push superintendents.

C-Dr. Coleman- there also must be community conversations with superintendents on efficacy. CAPS/CABE should lead community conversations. With the requirement by the legislation for school districts to teach African/Latino History districts should consider this an opportunity. Previously school districts felt excused.

C-Bob Rader- I know there are currently two districts setting up for positions of equity. Glastonbury and Plainville are presently working on attaining these positions.

C-Terrell Hill-organization, like CAPS, has the opportunity for weekly meetings-use this time, strike while the iron is hot. Regular meetings with Superintendents help with equity effort. You must be brave and savvy to do this kind of work.

C-Christopher Todd, Bureau Chief, Talent Office - the Council can charge the department and hold districts accountable for reporting. We have some sample templates. We make recommendations to hold direct accountable-have Performance Office include information in EdSight. Happy to engage in conversations with CAPS/CABE use accountability measures in place.

C-Bob Rader-we must think through the accountability measures.

C-Dr. Coleman- May 4, CES has a zoom workshop on minority recruitment organizations supporting school vacancies. I will share the information with the Council

.

Meeting adjourned at 10:44 am.

Next Meeting: June 17, 2021