



Connecticut Association of Boards of Education

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PRESENTS POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

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In a report published in eSchool News, Laura Ascione identifies a new framework intended to guide the responsible use of AI to enhance learning while also protecting privacy and promoting educational equity. (November 10, 2023) Released in October 2023, the Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA) released Principles for the Future of AI in Education, which is expected to help the ed tech industry support educators' efforts to infuse AI effectively and safely in their classrooms. As boards and superintendents consider adopting and/or updating AI and responsible use policies, these seven principles may provide useful guidance to balance privacy concerns with instructional opportunities:

1. AI technologies in education should address the needs of learners, educators, and families.
2. AI technologies used in education should account for educational equity, inclusion and civil rights as key elements of successful learning environments.
3. AI technologies used in education must protect student privacy and data.
4. AI technologies used in education should strive for transparency to enable the school community to effectively understand and engage with AI tools.
5. Companies building AI tools for education should engage with education institutions and stakeholders to explain and demystify the opportunities and risks of new AI technologies.
6. Education technology companies and AI developers should adopt best practices for accountability, assurance, and ethics, calibrated to mitigate risks and achieve the goals of these principles.
7. The education technology industry should work with the greater education community to identify ways to support AI literacy for students and educators.

Sara Kloek, Vice President, Education and Children's Policy for SIIA, noted, "As the trade organization representing the leading companies in ed tech, it is our mission to advance the responsible use of AI to enhance a learner's educational experiences while at the same time protecting their privacy, promoting educational equity, upholding civil rights, and developing important skills for the future." Not a bad opening line for a responsible use policy.

In January 29's Policy Highlight, I shared CABE's updated policy, which spelling out the board's obligation to submit their district's Educator Diversity Plans to the State Department of Education by March 15th. Policy no. [4111.3](#), Educator Diversity Plan, which replaces the policy previously titled Minority Recruitment Plan, is not a mandated policy.

Boards of Education are not required to have a policy for increasing educator diversity. However, CABE has developed this model policy and regulations to support boards of education and

superintendents as they carry out this multifaceted and critical work. The policy speaks to the board's commitment and recognition that there will need to be a sustainable effort to close the gap between the increasing diversity of our students and the current under-representation among the educator workforce.

The regulations provide a broad overview of the important elements of successful planning. Perhaps more importantly, they include links to excellent resources for the teams developing these plans and leading the work forward.

To lend support for this critical initiative, the legislature passed in 2023 a \$10 million allocation for the Aspiring Educators Diversity Scholarship Program. Available to Connecticut's 16 Priority Districts, students can receive up to \$10,000.00 to pursue a career in education. In a recent Op-Ed piece published in the Hartford Courant (March 12, 2024), a member of the Windsor Board of Education and Chair of the CAFE Board of Directors, Leonard Lockhart, requested the General Assembly "keep its promises." One of those commitments noted in his piece is to "Invest in programs that promote the training, hiring, and retention of educators of diverse backgrounds and increase opportunities for district's and RESC's grow-your-own programs."

While the Educator Diversity Plan calls attention to this important initiative and provides a meaningful and broad framework and useful resources for districts, investing in our young people of color to pursue careers in teaching remains a critical lynchpin in meeting our goal as a State to diversify the educator workforce.

In the CT Mirror article, *CT Urges Students to Apply for \$10K Educator Diversity Scholarship* (Jessika Harkay, March 11, 2024), Senator Doug McCrory, co-chair of the Education Committee, noted about this scholarship program, "It was one of the most important pieces of legislation that passed last year." Calling urgency to the matter of increasing educator diversity, he added, "Right now, about 53% of the children that attend public schools in the state of Connecticut are children of color. Yet, about 11% of the teachers are teachers of color. That has to change."

The second application period for the Aspiring Educators Diversity Scholarship Program closes March 15th, the date districts are required to submit their plans for increasing educator diversity. With the appropriate level of urgency related to initiatives addressing the lack of educator diversity and the overall teacher shortage our State is confronting, perhaps this scholarship opportunity can be extended to students of color in all of our districts.

In a recent update provided to superintendents, the Connecticut State Department of Education is now making available its [CSDE Financial Literacy Course Kit](#), which they describe as a resource "to support the design, development, and implementation of financial literacy and financial management courses or learning experiences to support the accumulation of credit in grades 9-12."

The statement continues, "This unique resource provides guidance for certification, learning models, updating local curricula, access to instructional resources, and alignment to Career and Technical Student Organizations. The CSDE [Personal Financial Management and Financial Literacy \(ct.gov\)](#) webpage has additional resources as well. All inquiries can be sent to Chief Academic Officer Irene Parisi at Irene.Parisi@ct.gov."