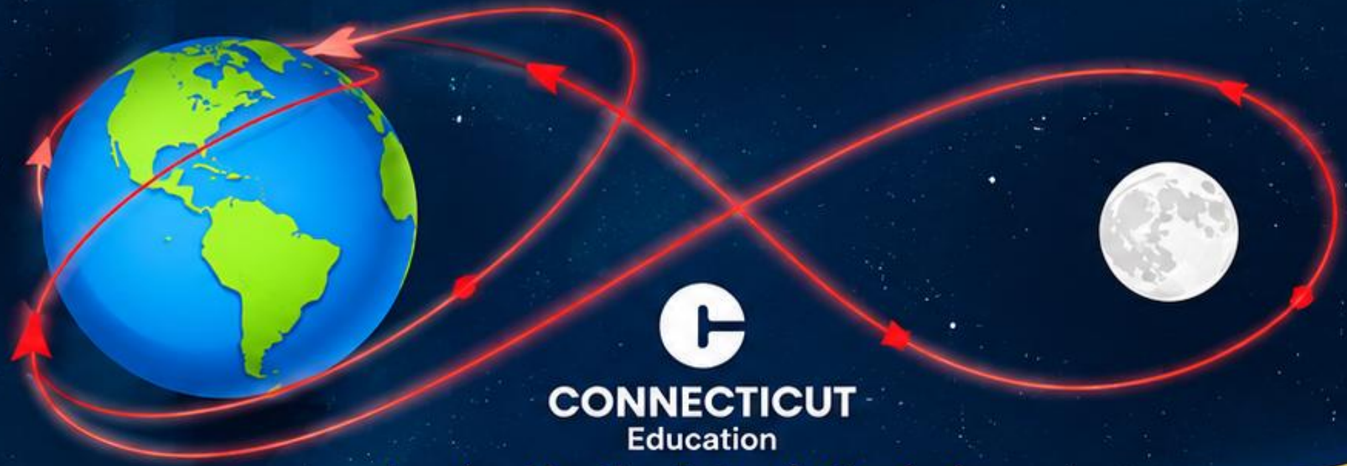
Connecticut's Mission: Empower Every Learner's Journey

State and District Alignment



CONNECTICUT
Education

*Inspired by the **Artemis II mission**,*

CONNECTICUT
Education

Norwich Public Schools

Welcome and Introductions



Dr. Shuana Tucker,
CSDE, Chief Talent Officer



Dr. Jade Gopie,
CSDE, Bureau Chief



Susan Lessard, Superintendent
Norwich Public Schools



Raissa Mosher,
Executive Director of
Talent & HR
Norwich Public Schools

Agenda

From Advocacy to Action: Advancing Educator Diversity and Retention

- Why It Matters
- CSDE Vision and Commitment
- Strategies that Work
- District Spotlight: Norwich Public Schools
- Proven Strategies
- Next Steps, Tools and Resources
- Questions and Answers



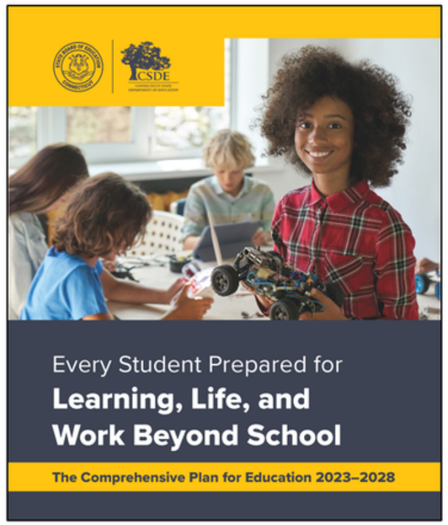
Connecticut State Department of Education: Strategic Focus Areas

Every Student Prepared for Learning, Life, and Work Beyond School

- Expand our Educator Workforce
- Support Safe and Healthy Learning Environments
- Ensure Students are Present and Engaged
- Elevate and Support High Quality Instructional Materials
- Modernize and Expand Post-Secondary Pathways
- Improve Outcomes for All Students, including Students with Varying Abilities
- Strengthen and Promote School, Family, and Community Partnerships

Connecticut State Board of Education: Comprehensive Plan (2023–2028)

Every Student Prepared for Learning, Life, and Work Beyond School: State Board of Education Comprehensive Plan (2023-2028)



Ensure Equitable Access to Education

All learners are supported, including those with high needs, and have equitable access to education regardless of background or advantage, including access to great teachers and leaders, and a diverse educational workforce.

Ensure Safe and Healthy Learning Environments

Learning spaces are safe, compassionate, and culturally responsive. They are designed to support the academic, physical, and social-emotional well-being of all learners, including learners of color, multilingual learners, those with a disability, learners experiencing food and housing insecurities, learners coming from low-income families, and those who identify as LGBTQ.

Elevate Curriculum Frameworks

Elevate Connecticut's curriculum frameworks to provide support for the development of rigorous, engaging instruction and the reliable assessment of universally required skills for life beyond school and a lifelong love of learning.

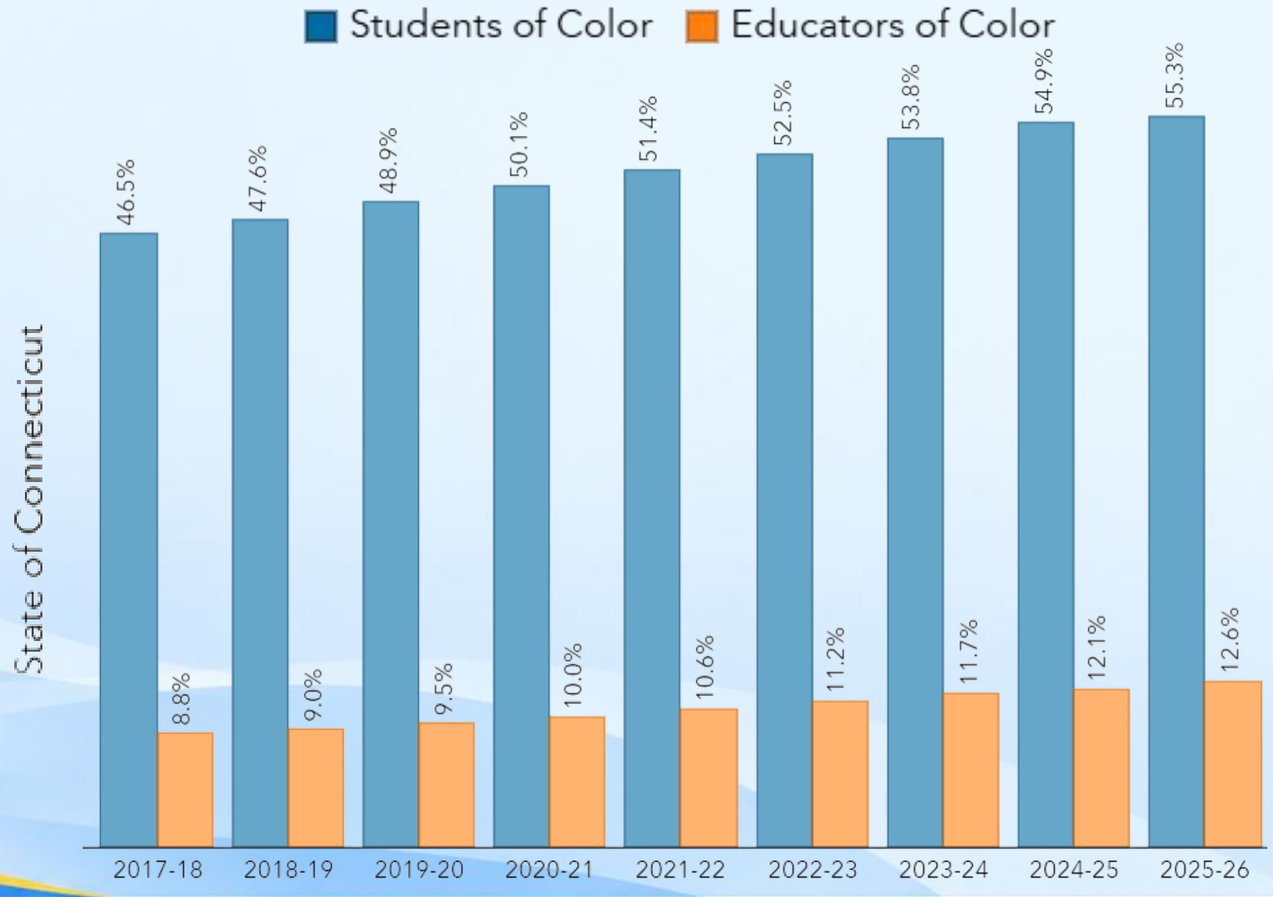
Create Multiple Career Pathways

Create opportunities for all students to explore multiple career pathways through coordinated and rigorous programs that are developed in partnership with institutions of higher education and local/regional employers, and that align to economic opportunity and advance students in careers of their choice.

Why It Matters

Connecticut's Reality

Comparison of Educator and Student Diversity, Trend



EdSight Educator Diversity Dashboard

Why Teacher Diversity Matters:
What the Research Tells Us

Teachers of color have a positive impact on *all* students' academic outcomes, regardless of the students' race.

The impact of a diverse teacher workforce:

- Higher reading and math test scores for *all* students
- Increased enrollment in and passage rates of advanced coursework for *all* students
- Improved attendance, increased sense of belonging, and lower rates of discipline
- Increase likelihood of high school graduation, college enrollment and completion

When educators share the ethno-racial identities of their students, they are likely to hold their students to high academic expectations, while also nurturning a positive and caring classroom environment.

National Council on Teacher Quality, 2024

Proven Strategies

Educator 6-16 Pathway





Educators Rising

- Clinical learning opportunities with experienced teachers
- Dual-enrollment coursework or CTE courses

Para Preparation Academy

- Entry point into paid district roles right out of high school
- Build immediate classroom experience for early-career educators
- Bridges high school graduation directly to long-term certified teaching pathway

Pre-Service Classroom Opportunities

- Sophomore & Junior Year of Bachelor's Level Educator Preparation Program
- On-the-job learning with substitute pay and an experienced mentor teacher

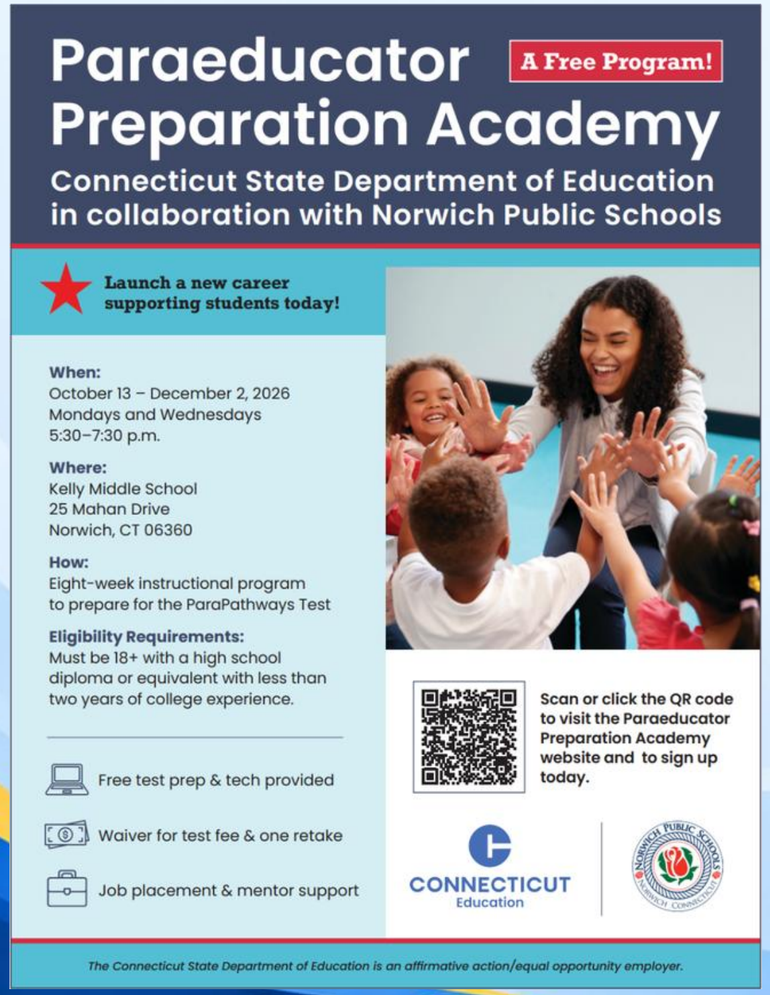
Teacher Registered Apprenticeship

- Senior Year of Bachelor's Level Educator Preparation Program; or,
- Master's Level Teacher Residency Program
- On-the-job learning with progressive pay and an experienced mentor teacher for **one full school year**.

Certified Teacher of Record in CT

- Continued employment in district
- Enrollment in CT's teacher induction and mentoring program

Expand the Paraeducator Workforce



Supports Connecticut's efforts to address:

- Special education workforce pipeline
- Statewide paraeducator shortage
- Prepares aspiring candidates for:
  - ParaPathways Assessment
  - Employment as a Paraeducator
  - On the job support through mentorship

Additional preparation sessions offered this fall and spring at various locations statewide, including adult education programs.

Teacher Registered Apprenticeships in Connecticut
T-RAP

1

Build sustainable pipelines

Establish homegrown talent pipelines that fill local teacher vacancies today and for years to come.

2

Respond to local needs

The T-RAP model can help districts navigate and respond to their own workforce needs and hard-to-staff content areas.

3

Pair preparation with practice

Blend high-quality CT educator preparation with meaningful, paid, and extended on-the-job classroom training experience.

What is a Teacher Registered Apprenticeship?

Apprenticeship provides structured, paid pathways for candidates to earn an initial teaching certificate.

Apprenticeship IS...

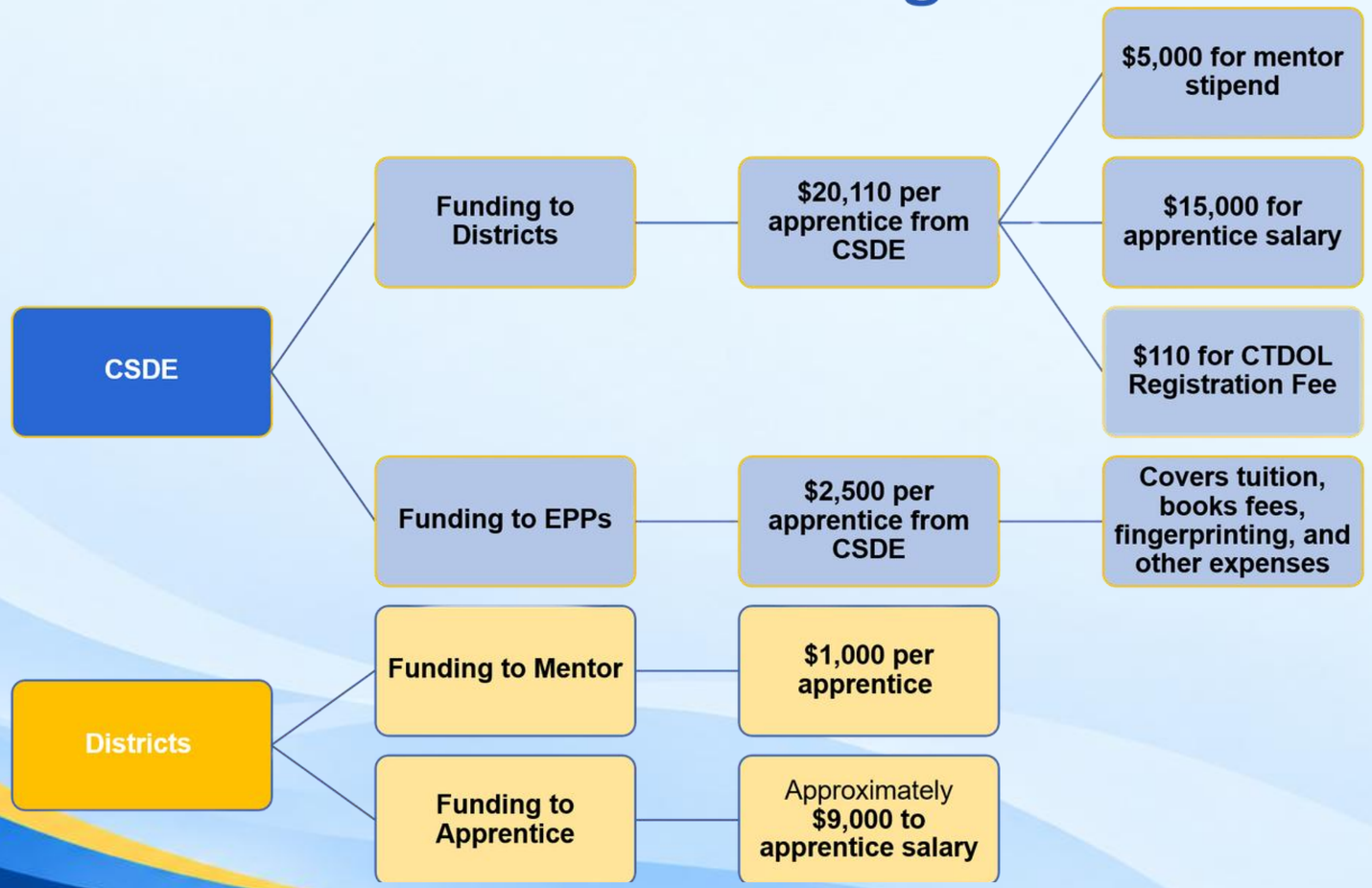
- A paid, on-the-job training experience in a CT classroom under the guidance of a mentor teacher.
    - Apprentices must serve in a paid role as a Teacher Apprentice within a CT public school district.
- A structured route to an initial teaching certificate that allows for a minimum of 1 school year of training and clinical experience.
- A district "grow your own" strategy built to meet local staffing needs.

Apprenticeship is NOT...

- **A program where candidates serve as the teacher of record** — apprentices always work under a qualified mentor teacher as they complete their training.
- A short, unpaid student-teaching placement.
- An internship, paraeducator role, or substitute teaching assignment.
- A lowering of preparation or certification standards.
- A one-size-fits-all model.

Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program
T-RAP

Investing in the Future



CSDE Contribution:
$22,610 per apprentice
Apprentice salary $15,000
Mentor stipend $5,000
DOL Registration Fee $110
EPP allocation $2,500

District Investment:
$10,000 per apprentice
Apprentice Salary ~ $9,000
Mentor Stipend $1,000

**Apprentice salary must be the equivalent to at least minimum wage.*

Current Teacher Apprentice Partners

Districts

- Bridgeport
- **Cheshire**
- Danbury
- East Haven
- **Meriden**
- New Britian
- **Torrington**
- Waterbury

Educator Preparation Programs

- Central CT State University
- Quinnipiac University
- Southern CT State University
- University of Bridgeport
- **University of Hartford**
- **University of Saint Joseph**
- Western CT State University

T-RAP: Next Steps for LEA Partners

1

Confirm interest and submit your intake form

Complete your full intake form asap.

District T-RAP intake form: https://forms.cloud.microsoft/g/BJLtSLStKT

2

Attend a technical assistance session

If needed, sign up for **Technical Assistance** for additional support. Get hands-on support launching or expanding a Teacher Registered Apprenticeship in Connecticut.

3

Collaborate with CSDE, NCGYO, and your local partners to launch your program

Once your interest is confirmed, you will work closely with CSDE, our partners at the National Center for Grow Your Own, and your EPP and union partners to finalize required paperwork and launch your program by Fall.

Teacher Registered Apprentice Experience
William Gordon

How has the Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program (T-RAP) prepared you for the classroom?

- Extensive hands-on training
- Classroom culture and climate
- Adjusting, modifying lessons in real time



Western CT State University

Enhanced Reciprocity States & Territories

Alabama	Massachusetts	Puerto Rico
Delaware	Michigan	Rhode Island
District of Columbia	New Hampshire	South Carolina
Georgia	New Jersey	Tennessee
Illinois	New York	Vermont
Indiana	North Carolina	Virginia
Maine	Ohio	Wisconsin
Maryland	Pennsylvania	

Streamlines the process for out-of-state educators to obtain CT certifications.

- **21 states**
- **Washington D.C. & Puerto Rico**

Enhanced Reciprocity Impact

5,698
content specific teaching, administrative, and/or special service endorsements

Issued to

4,267
educators through Enhanced Reciprocity

2,462
newly hired educators
(including **806** educators of color hired)

Working in

221
Connecticut public school districts and approved private special education programs

Aspiring Educators Scholarship Program

Purpose

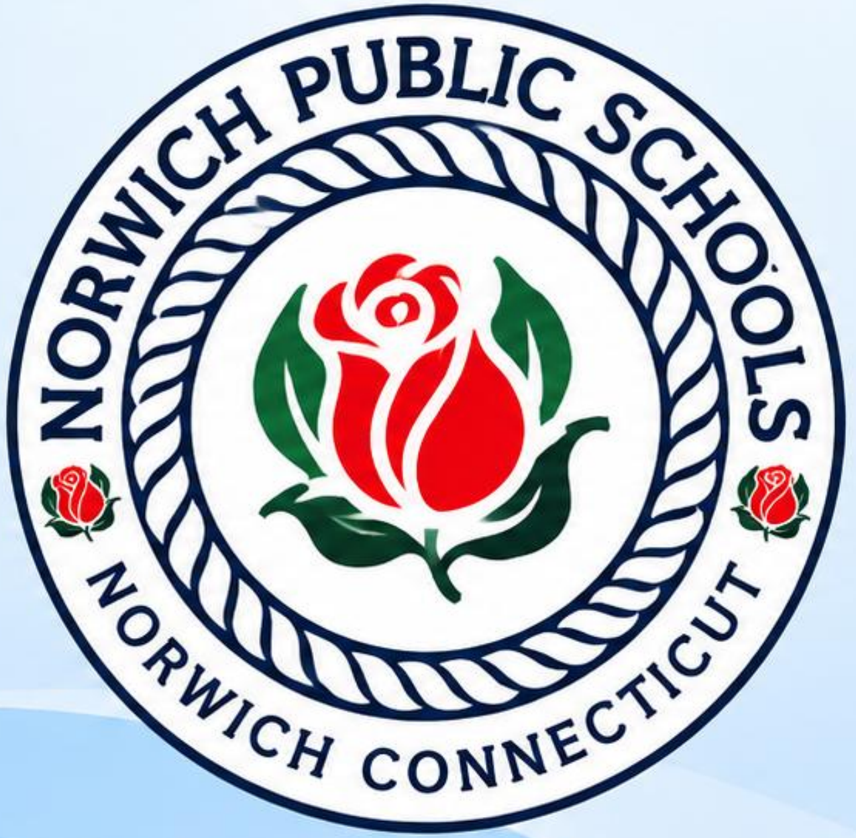
- Increase educator workforce
- Reduce financial barriers

Impact

- Established in 2024
- Over $2Million Awarded



District Spotlight:
Norwich Public Schools



Investing in Our Own:
The Teacher Residency Pathway

How does the Teacher Residency Pathway strengthen Norwich Public Schools?

Key Takeaways:

- Longtime Norwich Public Schools employee
- A welcoming and supportive community that embraces me
- An opportunity to give back to my diverse community
- Encouragement and support from the school district to pursue a teaching career



Investing in Our Own:
The Teacher Residency Pathway

How does the Teacher Residency Pathway strengthen Norwich Public Schools?

Key Takeaways:

- Many diffrent roles at NPS over the years
- District support-best fit
- Collabration Central Office, Building Administrators, and Collegues
- Meet the challenges of our city and community
- Hard, but rewarding work



RECRUITMENT: How Norwich Builds a Strong & Diverse Talent Pipeline

Strategic Recruitment Systems

- Proactive recruitment aligned to district priorities (Math, Science, Special Education, and early childhood)
- Alternative Route Programs to Certification leveraged as key pipelines: TRP, UConn, ECSU, and ARCTEL

Expanding Internal Pathways

- District-run recruiting fairs for noncertified staff (paraeducators, substitutes, and other support roles)
- Clear pathways for internal candidates to pursue certification, endorsements, and advancement (quarterly emails with information regarding alternative paths to certification).
- Team approach with central office, building adminstrators, and teachers to proactively identify future educators from within our workforce

Partnerships That Strengthen the Pipeline

- Collaborations with universities and community organizations

District Support

- Budgeting to support these programs
- HR and Superintendent Relations



RETENTION: Keeping Great Educators in Norwich



Creating Conditions Where Staff Thrive

- Strong mentoring and support systems
- Clear onboarding systems that ensure staff feel welcomed, prepared, and supported
- Instructional coaches



Investing in People

- Leadership development for teachers
- Personalized support from HR for licensure, cross-endorsements, and career advancement

Culture & Climate Focus

- Principals use data from surveys, attendance, and stay interviews to identify needs
- Celebrations, recognition programs, and family engagement contribute to a sense of belonging
- Strong partnership between HR, union leaders, and school administrators to problem-solve early
  and keep communication open



You're Invited!

New Teacher Connection

CONNECTICUT'S MISSION: EMPOWER EVERY LEARNER'S JOURNEY

CONNECTICUT Education

YOUR 30-MINUTE CHECK-IN

A conversation about your experience, your questions, and what you need to feel successful in your new role.

This 30-minute conversation is an opportunity to:

- **Share** how your transition into your new role is going.
- **Talk about** what's working well.
- **Identify** any questions or additional support you may need.
- **Share** your experiences and feedback.
- **Connect** with HR and ask any questions you may have.

I'm looking forward to seeing you!

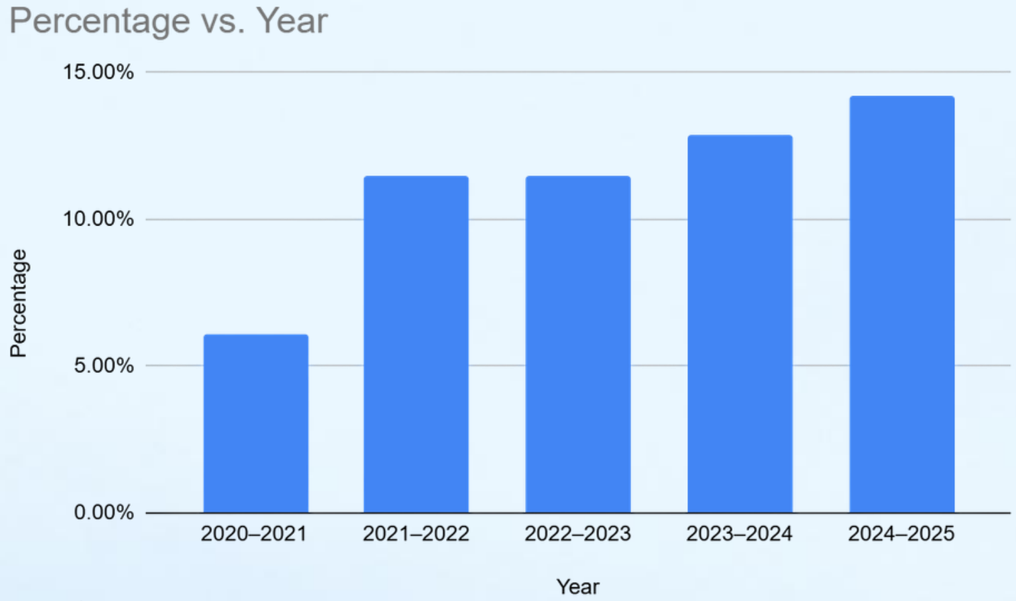
Raissa

Norwich's Increasing Educator Diversity: Five-Year Trend

Certified Staff Diversity Growth (BIPOC Educators%)

- 2020–2021: 6.1%
- 2021–2022: 11.5%
- 2022–2023: 11.5%
- 2023–2024: 12.9%
- 2024–2025: 14.2%
- 2025–2026: 14.9%

State Average (2025–2026): 12.6%



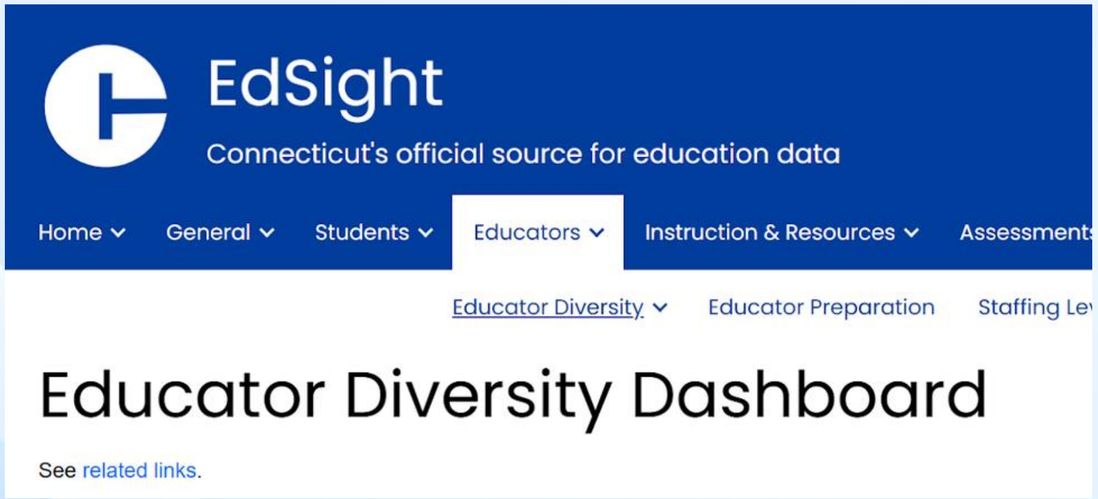
What This Shows

- Norwich has more than doubled its percentage of diverse educators since 2020–21
- Sustained gains over five years reflect intentional hiring systems, partnerships, and district-wide commitment
- Norwich is now above the Connecticut state average, demonstrating that coordinated recruitment, training, and retention strategies are making a measurable impact

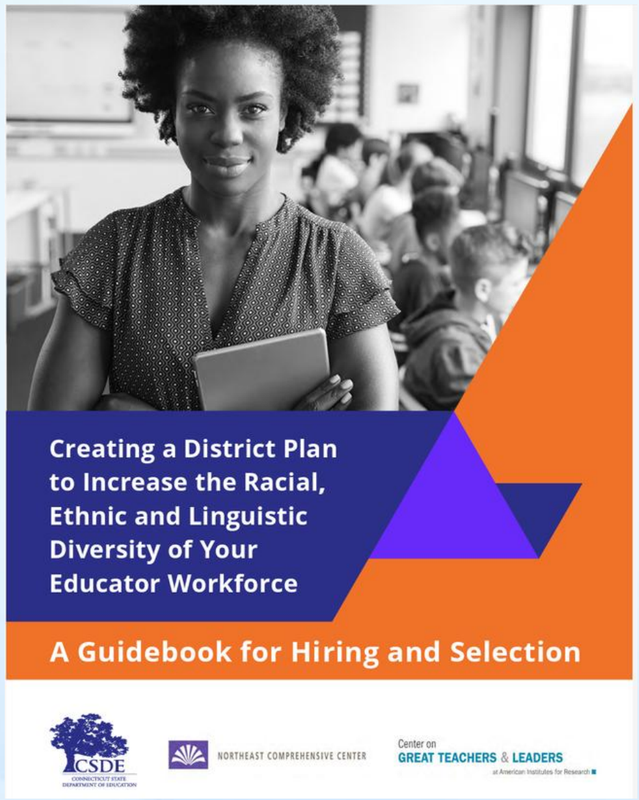
What's Next?

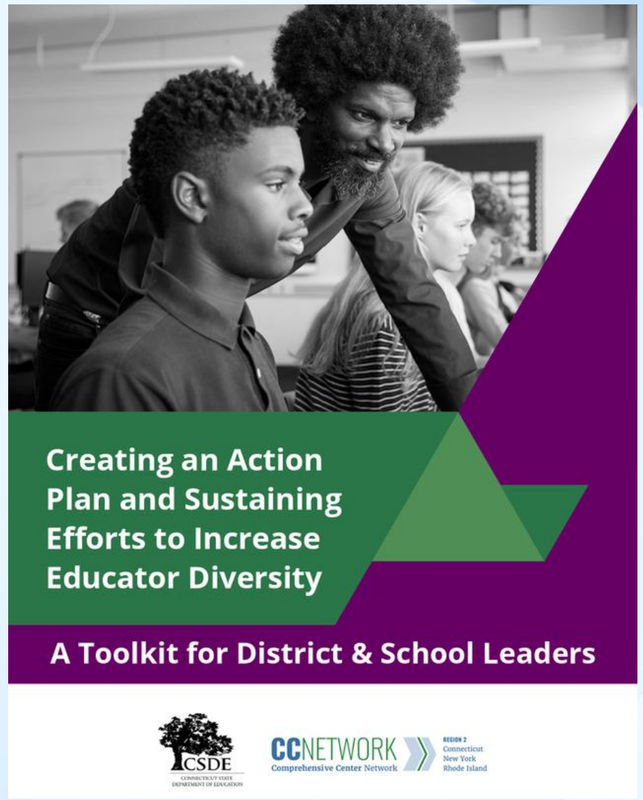
- Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) 2.0 Redesign
- Aspiring Educator Scholarship
- CT-Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Expansion
- Paraeducator Preparation Academy Expansion
- Pathway for Paraeducator to Special Education Teacher Certification
- Educators Rising CTSO & Expansion

Tools and Digital Resources



[CSDE Digital Resources]





Why I Want To Teach



"I want to inspire young minds."

"Helping students grow every day."



"Building tomorrow, one student at a time."

"Sharing knowledge, shaping futures."





"Learning is my passion."



"I love making a difference."

TEACH CT: Why I Teach

- Why I Want To Teach: Connecticut High School Students Talk About Their Passion For Education
- Student Educators Talk About Their Inspiration For Teaching
- Impact—High School Students https://youtube.com/shorts/-56o4VlQ1wg
- Salary & Career—Students & Current Teachers https://youtube.com/shorts/7ts5VBBzsgY



Tools, Resources & References

Tools and Resources



- EdSight and Educator Diversity Dashboard | Increasing Educator Diversity Plan (ct.gov)
- Creating a District Plan to Increase the Racial, Ethnic and Linguistic Diversity of Your Educator Workforce: A Guidebook for Hiring and Selection ("Guidebook")
- Creating an Action Plan and Sustaining efforts to Increase Educator Diversity: A Toolkit for District and School Leaders ("Toolkit")
- Recorded Increasing Educator Diversity Plan Informational & Technical Assistance Webinars
- Resources for Increasing Educator Diversity Plan Creation, Revision, and Implementation
- Increasing Educator Diversity Plan: Proposed Revisions Tool (ct.gov)

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Questions and Answers


THANK YOU