

[Executive Order 113](#), signed by Governor Roy Cooper at December's DRIVE Summit, established the Developing a Representative and Inclusive Vision for Education (DRIVE) Task Force to develop a plan to increase the diversity of North Carolina's educator workforce. The task force is comprised of [32 members](#) representing stakeholder groups from along the educator pipeline.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

✉ **Dr. Anthony Graham**, Chair, DRIVE Task Force; Provost, Winston-Salem State University

✉ **Kristi Jones**, Chief of Staff, Office of Governor Roy Cooper

Recruiting Racially and Ethnically Diverse Educators

The second meeting of the DRIVE Task Force sought to better understand issues related to recruiting racially and ethnically diverse educators. By thinking critically about the barriers to entry for aspiring educators of color and learning from successful strategies and partnerships that are finding success in this space, task force members gained a clearer picture of how North Carolina can work to increase the recruitment of educators of color.

BARRIERS TO ENTERING THE EDUCATOR PIPELINE

RESOURCE EXPERT

✉ **Dr. Maria Hyler**, Deputy Director, Washington DC Office, and Senior Researcher, Learning Policy Institute

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Student loan debt and career earning potential** | Students of color are more likely to report that student debt impacts their career choices. Black students are more likely to take on debt to cover the cost of their degree, and on average owe significantly more than their white peers years after graduation. While Hispanic and Latinx students borrow about the same amount as their white peers, they are twice as likely to default on their loan, suggesting a greater relative debt burden. With the cost of higher education rising and the low career earnings potential in education, students of color are deterred from pursuing teaching as a career.
- **The impact of preparation on recruitment** | Educator Preparation Programs can serve as a barrier by failing to employ diverse faculty, develop culturally-responsive and anti-racist curriculum, or actively commit to monitoring and acting on the lack of diversity within their program.
- **Consider teacher working conditions** | Students see firsthand the working conditions under which their K-12 teachers are operating. States can use Title I, II, and IV set-aside funds to make the profession more attractive for pre-service educators of color by improving their schools by strengthening the quality of school leaders, increasing induction and development opportunities for teachers, and expanding academic supports and enrichment for students.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Incentivize recruitment into high retention pathways like teacher residency models (not to be confused with the current North Carolina Residency License) and 2+2 programs by offering scholarships, loan forgiveness, or tuition reimbursement programs in exchange for a commitment to teach in high-need schools or subject areas.
- Revisit the North Carolina Teaching Fellows program to prioritize the recruitment and selection of diverse candidates. This can be achieved by reinstating recruitment goals prioritizing diversity of Fellows and expanding the number of campuses to include Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs).
- Consider how Title I, II, and IV set-aside funds can be used to improve teaching conditions to make the profession more appealing for aspiring educators of color.
- Investigate alternatives to educator licensure exams that identify high-quality recruits without disproportionately barring aspiring educators of color from the profession.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Diversifying the Teaching Profession: How to Recruit and Retain Teachers of Color](#) | Report referenced by Dr. Hyler that investigates methods to recruit and retain educators of color.

RECRUITING IN MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS

RESOURCE EXPERT

✉ **Dr. Denise Pearson**, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Equity Initiatives, State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Historically Black Colleges and Universities as pioneers** | For decades, HBCUs have led the way in recruiting and preparing educators of color. Specifically, their representative faculty and culturally responsive and anti-racist curricula have been essential in serving as the primary source of male educators of color in the United States.
- **Shifting the narrative about the teaching profession** | [Project Pipeline Repair](#) created focus groups of undergraduate males of color to better understand their perspective on the teaching profession. Responses ranged from issues with salary, the lack of respect toward the profession, and negative personal experiences with K-12 education. Reclaiming this narrative will be critical to recruit diverse educators.
- **Forging strategic partnerships** | Project Pipeline Repair found that HBCUs that recruited and prepared more aspiring educators of color engaged in collaboration with state higher education agencies, local districts, and community members to expose more potential teachers to the profession, support the development of Grow Your Own programs, and align their efforts with the needs of local district.
- **Focus on closing opportunity gaps** | Recognizing the postsecondary gap for students of color and employing strategies to increase enrollment can increase the pool of students at Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) from which educator preparation programs can recruit. IHEs can do so by engaging with students beginning in ninth grade, and expanding opportunities for dual enrollment, structured mentoring programs, standardized testing support (both ACT and SAT), and bridge programs to assist in the transition to higher education.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Work to shift the narrative around the teaching profession by spotlighting successful educators of color to recruit teaching candidates, highlighting incentives to entering the profession, and redefining teaching as an opportunity to be change agents who are giving back to their community.
- Consider how an interdisciplinary “Consortium of North Carolina HBCU Educator Preparation Programs” could support HBCUs across the state in developing programs and strategies to overcome barriers to recruitment and strengthen the pipeline of educators of color.
- Engage HBCUs in North Carolina to compile best practices, especially in expanding the use of culturally-responsive and anti-racist pedagogy.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Strategic Priorities for Historically Black Colleges and Universities with Teacher Preparation Programs](#) | This report outlines the lessons learned from Project Pipeline Repair.
- [State Agencies and Systems of Higher Education Leading for Equity](#) | SHEEO recently produced this report to provide recommendations for state agencies and systems of higher education as they work to pursue equity-based policies.

RECRUITING PROFESSIONALS THROUGH ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

RESOURCE EXPERT

✉ **Terrik Higgins**, Program Administrator, GCS Alternative Certification Track, Guilford County Schools

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Intentional program design** | To increase the pool of diverse teachers, the [Guilford County Schools Alternative Certification Track](#) (GCS-ACT) program recruited STEM majors at area HBCUs to complete educator certification, incorporating financial incentives for completion, and implementing a cohort model to provide additional support for participants.
- **Importance of partnerships** | To identify these potential educators, GCS-ACT engaged in partnerships with science and math departments at HBCUs in the region to build a pipeline of teachers. In doing so, the program was able to identify local talent that was invested in remaining in the area.
- **Finding sustainable funding** | The GCS-ACT program was most successful while it was funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. With that funding, the program was able to employ a recruiter to actively seek out candidates and offer financial incentives to increase interest in the program. Since the grant ended, the program has been maintained by the district but without the additional financial incentives and dedicated recruiter. Without these supports, the program has seen a decrease in participants.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Investigate sustainable funding models to ensure that effective elements of recruitment programs, particularly additional financial incentives and dedicated recruiters, can remain in place.
- Encourage districts to develop their own teacher diversity initiatives and provide the tools for them to create alternative certification programs committed to recruiting racially and ethnically diverse teaching candidates.
- Identify additional talent pools of diverse, college degree-holding individuals and introduce them to the opportunities that lie within the teaching profession.
- Incorporate district needs, like STEM and special education positions, into local initiatives to increase the diversity of the educator workforce.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Guilford County Schools Alternative Certification Track](#) | The homepage for GCS-ACT provides additional information around the application process and program offerings.
- [Need a STEM Teacher? This District Trains Its Own](#) | This Education Week article provides an overview of the GCS-ACT program.

BEST PRACTICES FROM A SUCCESSFUL GROW YOUR OWN PROGRAM

RESOURCE EXPERT

✉ **Dr. Margarita Bianco**, Associate Professor, School of Education and Human Development, University of Colorado Denver; Founder, Pathways2Teaching

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Mission-centered curriculum** | To recruit aspiring educators of color at the high school level. [Pathways2Teaching](#) utilizes a research-based curriculum focused on social justice and equity. Through this carefully constructed curriculum, the program hones critical thinking and develops the next generation of “disruptors” to reform an inherently inequitable system.
- **Addressing barriers to entry in program design** | The Pathways2Teaching program made an intentional effort to overcome barriers to entry for aspiring educators of color. By removing GPA requirements, instituting culturally-responsive curriculum, carefully selecting instructors, and offering college credit and paraprofessional certification to lessen the burden of higher education, the program is better positioned to introduce diverse students to the profession.
- **Sustainable funding** | Pathways2Teaching is supported by a sustainable funding model that does not rely on grant funding. This can be achieved by investing school and district funds in the program, establishing partnerships with local universities to help subsidize tuition costs, and working with the state to classify the curriculum as Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses to qualify for additional state funding.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

- When designing programming, do so with a specific focus on overcoming barriers to entry.
- Expand incentives for students who engage in high school-based recruitment strategies, including offering college credit through concurrent enrollment or incorporating a paraprofessional certification element to offer a pathway to a job immediately following high school.
- Consider working with the state to classify high school teacher preparation programs as CTE courses to open another avenue for funding.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Pathways2Teaching](#) | The Pathways2Teaching homepage offers information for potential students, instructors, and links to research focused on the program.
- [Pathways2Teaching encourages youths to teach close to home](#) | This article (with links to a podcast discussion) focused on Pathways2Teaching’s efforts in Colorado.
- [It’s hard to be who you don’t see: An exploration of Black male high school students’ perspectives on becoming teachers](#) | This article, co-authored by Dr. Bianco, investigates the perspectives of black male high school students on what factors influence or deter their consideration to become teachers.
- [Pushed to Teach: Pedagogies and Policies for a Black Women Educator Pipeline](#) | Another article co-authored by Dr. Bianco that discusses the development of Black Women Educator Pipelines.