

**Your Question:** You wanted to know what other states are doing to recruit and retain minority teachers. You were also interested in any research available on the root cause of minority teacher shortages.

**Our Response:** This response is broken up into five sections: 1.) root cause analysis, 2.) recruitment strategies, 3.) retention strategies and 4.) recent state task force reports and legislation.

### Root Cause Analysis

Recent research finds that minority teacher shortages may be attributed more to retention issues than recruitment problems. In [this September 2016 brief](#), researchers Richard Ingersoll and Henry May use data from the National Center for Education Statistics' Schools and Staffing Survey to "examine the extent and sources of the minority teacher shortage—the low proportion of minority teachers (17 percent of teachers) in comparison to the increasing number of minority students (44 percent of students) in the school system." They found:

- **Recruitment successes:** Efforts over recent decades to recruit more minority teachers and place them in disadvantaged schools have been very successful. The number of minority teachers has more than doubled since the late 1980s. Growth in the number of minority teachers outpaced growth in the number of minority students and was over twice the growth rate of non-minority teachers. Even as the size of the teaching force has grown, the proportion of the teaching force that is minority has increased steadily—from 12 percent to over 17 percent.
- **Retention problems:** Minority teachers are often recruited to high-poverty, high minority schools where turnover is highest, and are two to three times more likely to work in these schools than non-minority teachers. Recruitment efforts have been undermined by the high turnover rates of minority teachers. Minority teachers leave their schools at higher rates than non-minority teachers largely because of poor working conditions in their schools.
- **Working conditions:** The conditions most strongly related to minority teacher turnover were the degree of teachers' classroom autonomy and input into school decisions.

The authors conclude that retention initiatives should be developed alongside recruitment initiatives.

### Recruitment Strategies

Recent research has identified a number of strategies for improving minority teacher recruitment, including approaches that leverage 1.) reporting and data, 2.) financial investments, and 3.) preparation pathways.

#### 1. Reporting & Data

- Require teacher preparation programs to publicly report information on teacher candidate outcomes disaggregated by race;
- Require schools and districts to publicly report on the race and ethnicity of teachers;
- Offer forums for teachers of color to gather and reflect on their own pathway into teaching and generate new ideas for recruiting future colleagues.

## 2. Financial Investments

- Reduce the cost of attaining certification;
- Invest in and support high-quality teacher education programs at historically black colleges and universities and public colleges and universities serving large numbers of minority students;
- Provide generous scholarship support to future teachers of color that are tied to the effectiveness of the training program and the performance of the teacher candidates;
- Improve compensation packages to attract the brightest, most resilient people of color into the teaching profession with the aim of ensuring that teachers of color are paid comparable to other jobs with similar knowledge, skills, and responsibilities.
- Use spending flexibilities under the Every Student Succeeds Act to support differentiated learning opportunities for teachers of color.

## 3. Preparation Pathways

- Develop a comprehensive system of incentives and supports for recruiting and supporting prospective teacher candidates of color from high school through college. Recruitment efforts should start at least as early as high school, as students who aspire to teach while in high school become teachers at a higher rate than students who did not express teaching aspirations;
- Encourage school- or community-based teacher preparation pathways.
- Support “grow your own” teacher preparation programs and career ladders for educational aides and paraprofessionals seeking to become teachers;
- Ensure that alternative certification programs are affordable to a wide range of nontraditional candidates by limiting university courses and learning experiences to those that are essential to beginning teachers;
- Organize teacher preparation programs to support the unique needs of minority teachers.

## Testing Requirements and Cut Scores

The lower performance of minorities on licensure tests may screen them out of the pool of potential teachers. A [national analysis](#) of more than 300,000 Praxis test-takers who completed the paper-based test between November 2005 and November 2009 found a 41.4% pass rate gap between African-American and Caucasian test-takers in math and a 40.8% pass rate gap between African-American and Caucasian test-takers in reading. Lowering cut scores could increase minority teacher supply.

There is no national cut score for licensure exams, resulting in [variation](#) amongst states. While higher cut scores pose barriers to minority teacher candidates, [one study](#) found that raising cut scores in one state would eliminate more effective teachers than ineffective teachers and would not improve teacher quality. [One researcher](#) suggests that

### Additional Resources on Minority Teacher Recruitment and Retention

- ✓ [The State of Teacher Diversity in American Education](#) (Shanker Institute, 2015)
- ✓ [The Challenge of Recruiting and Hiring Teachers of Color: Lessons from Six High Performing, High-Poverty, Urban Schools](#) (Harvard School of Education, 2015)
- ✓ [Closing Gaps: Diversifying Minnesota’s Teacher Workforce](#) (Educators 4 Excellence, 2015)
- ✓ [America’s Leaky Pipeline for Teachers of Color: Getting More Teachers of Color into the Classroom](#) (CAP, 2014)
- ✓ [Teacher Diversity Revisited](#) (CAP, 2014)
- ✓ [The Student Has Become the Teacher: Tracking the Racial Diversity and Academic Composition of the Teacher Supply Pipeline](#) (IERC, 2013)
- ✓ [Increasing Teacher Diversity: Strategies to Improve the Teacher Workforce](#) (CAP, 2011)
- ✓ [Recruitment, Retention and the Minority Teacher Shortage](#) (CPRE, 2011)

states replace the requirement of passing licensure exams and instead use performance-based assessments (such as the edTPA or the soon to be released Note) to certify teachers.

## Retention Strategies

Given the potential for [positive effects](#) of minority teachers on minority students and [non-minority students](#), and research demonstrating that minority teachers are more likely to move schools or exit the profession, minority teacher retention is an important concern for policymakers. Recent research has identified a number of strategies for improving minority teacher retention, including 1.) innovative preparation programs, 2.) improved working conditions, and 3.) differentiated professional development.

1. **Innovative preparation programs:** [Research](#) from 2010 indicates that a handful of innovative preparation programs that explicitly prepare and support teachers of color to work in urban schools have contributed to retention rates that are significantly higher than those for the overall teacher workforce. However, more research is needed to verify the impact of these programs and to specify the programs characteristics that contribute to the retention of teachers of color.
2. **Improved working conditions:** In their [2016 study](#) on minority teacher shortages, Ingersoll and May find that poor working conditions are a key contributor to minority teacher turnover. [Working conditions](#), especially “the level of collective faculty decision-making influence in the school and the degree of individual instructional autonomy held by teachers in their classrooms,” may be strong factors influencing minority teachers’ choice to remain at a school.
3. **Differentiated professional development:** According to [one researcher](#), minority candidates could benefit from differentiated professional development that responds to the experiences teachers of color face. Some models of continuous improvement initiatives for minority teachers have been developed in [Boston](#) and [California](#).

## Recent State Task Force Reports and Legislation

### Colorado

- [HB 1175](#) (2014) Directed the department of education to study and develop strategies to increase and improve the recruitment, preparation, development, and retention of high-quality minority teachers in elementary and secondary schools in Colorado.
- In December 2014, Colorado’s [minority teacher representation study](#) recommended, among other things:
  - **Grants:** The legislature create and authorize a multi-million dollar per year program that consists of a set of five to ten multi-year grants. These grants would be available to individual and consortia of districts, teacher preparation institutions, and non-profit organizations to increase the recruitment and retention of effective minority teachers.
  - **Study of Teacher Test Pass Rates:** The state department of education study whether there are differences in teacher test pass rates by race/ethnicity, and whether the tests, or aspects of the tests, are barriers for minority teacher candidates.
    - If evidence of barriers is found, then the department should review the tests for cultural bias, validity, and reliability as indicators of teacher preparation and success.
    - If the tests are deemed valid, reliable predictors of educator effectiveness, and if there are still disparities in pass rates between racial/ethnic groups, then the focus should shift to helping minority candidates understand and effectively prepare for the tests. This preparation could take the form of classes, coaching, tutoring, or other study strategies.

**Connecticut** and **Oregon** are cited as examples of best practices in policies and initiatives related to minority teacher recruitment and retention (p. 57-61 of the [Colorado study](#)).

### Connecticut

- [S.B. 1098](#) (2015) **Study**: Required the department of education to study and develop strategies to increase minority teacher recruitment and retention.
- [S.B. 379](#) **Survey & Alternative Certification**: Required the department to conduct an annual survey of the efficacy of minority teacher recruitment programs using accountability methods. Modified requirements on competency exams for those entering teacher training programs and changed some aspects of teacher certification for out of state teachers. Required the department to review and approve alternative teacher certification programs.
- [H.B. 5470](#) (2016) **Pilot Program**: Established a teacher pathways pilot program to encourage and recruit minority students to pursue a career in education. The bill created a pilot program with state universities that targets minority high school students.

### Oregon

- [S.B. 755](#) (2013): **Data Collection & Reporting**
  - Requires a 10% increase in the number of minority teachers and administrators employed by school districts and education service districts and the number of minority students enrolled in public teacher education programs.
  - Directs the Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB), until March 15, 2016 and the Education and Workforce policy advisor thereafter to report biennially to the legislative assembly longitudinal data on the number and percentage of minority students:
    - enrolled in community colleges;
    - applying for admission into, accepted in, and graduated from, public universities;
    - seeking to enter, admitted into, and have completed approved, public teacher education programs;
    - receiving Oregon teaching licenses; and
    - minority teachers who are newly employed or already employed in the public school system.
  - Requires the submission of a report which will include a summary of the most recent data collected and a summary of the plans currently implemented pertaining to (and recommendations for) recruitment, admission, retention and graduation of minority teachers.
- [H.B. 3375](#)
  - **Progress Report**: Directs Representatives of the Oregon Education Investment Board, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, the Department of Education and the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission to jointly create a report on the Educators Equity Act and include recommendations for meeting the state's minority teacher recruitment goals and progress towards meeting them in addition to a description of best practices within this state and other states for recruiting, hiring and retaining diverse educators.
- In June 2015, the Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission voted to eliminate the rule requiring the passage of a Basic Skills Test for teacher licensure.
- In July 2015, the Oregon Educator Equity Advisory Group released an "[Educator Equity Report](#)" and recommended a number policy changes meant to address minority teacher recruitment and retention. These include, among other things, recommendations surrounding: the high costs of preparation programs, low salaries and limited career ladders, and a lack of recruitment and scholarship availability.

## Wisconsin

- [S.B. 21](#) (2015) **Minority Teacher Loan Program:** Among other things, increases the student loan amount so that students may be awarded loans of up to \$10,000 a year for not more than three years and sets a maximum loan amount through the program of \$30,000 per student. (Previously students could receive loans of up to \$2,500 per year with a maximum cumulative loan amount of \$5,000.) Specifies that a loan recipient may have the principal and interest of loans received through the program forgiven if the recipient satisfies a set of prescribed conditions.