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**July 18, 2022**

## **Wolf Administration Unveils Strategic Plan to Recruit and Retain Educators in Pennsylvania**

**Harrisburg, PA** – The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) today released [\*The Foundation of Our Economy: Pennsylvania Educator Workforce Strategy, 2022-2025\*](#), PDE's strategic plan to recruit and retain more educators across the commonwealth.

Acting Secretary of Education Eric Hagarty joined Laura Boyce, Pennsylvania executive director of Teach Plus; John Ward, president of the Pennsylvania Association of Colleges and Teacher Educators (PAC-TE); and the Pennsylvania Educator Diversity Consortium (PEDC) to announce the plan.

"Educators are the cornerstone of our communities and serve as the gateway to our collective future; without them, our workforce and economy cannot survive," said Hagarty. "Like other states across the nation, we have been grappling with an educator workforce shortage that would have severe and long-lasting implications for generations to come. However, Pennsylvania is acting now to reverse course, and this plan will help guide us as we recruit and retain teachers, school leaders, early childhood professionals, school librarians, and other vital personnel at all levels, from pre-K to high school, in all corners of the commonwealth."

The strategy was developed after conducting extensive [feedback sessions](#) with vested partners across Pennsylvania and contains 50 steps that the Pennsylvania Department of Education and its partners will use to address the commonwealth's educator shortage.

"Pennsylvania's educator shortage is the biggest threat facing not only our educational system but our future prosperity as a commonwealth," said Pennsylvania executive director of Teach Plus Laura Boyce. "If schools are engines of educational and economic opportunity, then educators are the conductors who keep the train moving forward. Teach Plus teachers have been sounding the alarm about this crisis and are eager to partner with the Department to enact ambitious and transformational changes to better recruit and retain educators in Pennsylvania."

The last few years have been among the most challenging for those working in schools, and the number of new educators entering the profession has declined as a result: a decade ago, roughly 20,000 new teachers entered the workforce each year, while last year only 6,000 did so. To make matters worse, the rate of educators leaving the profession continues to accelerate. This means that schools are having a harder time than ever before in filling critical staff positions.

Additionally, by 2025, the commonwealth's K-12 population will have higher proportions of students of color, yet less than 7% of teachers in Pennsylvania are people of color. Research has proven that students learn best when they have the opportunity to do so from teachers whose life

experience reflects their own. Meeting the needs of the diverse student population will require a significant increase in the diversity of Pennsylvania's educator workforce.

"The Pennsylvania Association of Colleges and Teacher Educators (PAC-TE) welcomes the Pennsylvania Educator Workforce Strategy and the recent changes in the Public School Code as important steps toward growing the number of well-prepared teachers who will choose teaching as a life-long profession. We look forward to working together to enact this vision," said PAC-TE President John Ward.

*The Foundation of Our Economy* sets forth ambitious goals related to the following five educator workforce focus areas:

- Meeting the educator staffing needs of rural, suburban, and urban areas;
- Building a diverse workforce representative of the students we serve;
- Operating a rigorous, streamlined, and customer service-oriented certification process;
- Ensuring high-quality preparation experiences for aspiring educators; and
- Ensuring educator access to high-quality and relevant professional growth and leadership development opportunities.

"The Pennsylvania Educator Diversity Consortium welcomes this new report from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and, through it, the Wolf Administration's recognition that Pennsylvania educators and the learners they serve represent the future viability and prosperity of the commonwealth," said PEDC Co-Director, Pennsylvania Educator Diversity Consortium Juliet Curci. "We believe that the future of Pennsylvania depends on our strategic collaborative efforts to recruit and retain educators who will support each learner to thrive. To this end, we must increase the number of ethnically, racially, and linguistically diverse educators as well as culturally relevant and sustaining educators. The strategies included within this report provide much needed and timely guidance for how we can collectively grow and strengthen our educator workforce for the benefit of our educators, our students, and our communities."

The plan builds on the Wolf Administration's efforts over the past eight years to ensure a high-quality education to learners of all ages across the commonwealth. The administration has [increased education funding](#) by more than \$3.7 billion since 2015, with an historic increase of \$1.8 billion in this year's final budget.

Additionally, recently approved amendments to the [Public School Code](#) will complement the efforts and actions contained in the educator workforce strategy. The bill — negotiated by the Wolf Administration — improves pathways to Pennsylvania certification for teachers prepared out of state, including career and technical education teachers, establishes a Committee on Education Talent Recruitment within PDE to develop programs of study for high school students interested in pursuing careers in education, establishes a Talent Recruitment Grant Program for colleges to increase participation in the education workforce, and waives the Basic Skills assessment for education candidates for three years.

For more information about Pennsylvania's education policies and programs, please visit the [Department of Education's website](#). Follow PDE on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), [Flickr](#), or [Pinterest](#).

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