

## Strategies to Increase Educator Diversity

Effective strategies to recruit and retain a diverse workforce are those tailored to local context, informed by data, and developed through collaboration between LEAs and Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs).

According to the Education Trust [Educator Diversity State Profile for Tennessee](#), which describes Tennessee's progress towards creating policy conditions to increase the racial diversity of the educator workforce, Tennessee excels in many areas. This resource highlights three specific areas of strength and leverages mechanisms already in place to support districts with strategies as they develop goals to increase the diversity of the teaching workforce.

### EPP and LEA Primary Partnerships

One strategy that has proven to be effective in increasing educator diversity is strong partnerships between LEAs and EPPs. Tennessee has led the way in this area, modeling effective practices for other states. In support of this work, [SBE Educator Preparation Rule \(0520-02-04-.09\)](#) requires that EPPs have a partnership with each LEA where enrolled candidates complete clinical experiences. Partners collaborate regularly around goals, including those for recruiting high-quality candidates from diverse populations, and codify these expectations in a [Primary Partnership Agreement](#).

### Job-Embedded and Residency-based Preparation Pathways

Investing in high-retention pathways to teaching, including residency models and alternative certification (job-embedded) programs, support individuals who are employed in various capacities in a district. Data suggests these programs have a higher proportion of educators of color compared to traditional programs.

Job-embedded pathways allow candidates with a baccalaureate degree to obtain a license<sup>1</sup> and serve as the teacher of record while completing a preparation program focused on pedagogical training. 36 of 43 approved EPPs in Tennessee offer job-embedded programs in multiple licensure areas. Between 2015-2018, job-embedded programs showed higher rates of completers from underrepresented backgrounds (27%) compared to completers from traditional programs (10%).

### Grow Your Own: Tennessee's Teacher Apprenticeship

Another effective strategy includes new [Grow Your Own \(GYO\) Teacher Apprenticeship model](#)—a sustainably funded model to address the financial, recruitment, and preparation challenges school districts experience. Tennessee's Grow Your Own work has supported partnerships between Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs) and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to provide innovative, no-cost pathways to the teaching profession and will continue to develop qualified teacher and school district professional pipelines. The GYO Teacher Apprenticeship work builds on the state's 65 existing GYO programs that prepare candidates in multiple licensure areas by aligning leading practices in teacher preparation and development with the rigors and funding of the national registered apprenticeship process. The GYO Tennessee Teacher Apprenticeship model is committed to increasing diversity in the teacher pipeline by helping to eliminate certain cost and preparation barriers that often bar aspiring teacher candidates from pursuing teacher licensure.

<sup>1</sup>Based on a major or assessment scores