

Supporting Diverse Educators



By actively promoting and supporting diverse educators, we can create inclusive learning environments where all students, regardless of their background, feel seen, understood, and represented. School communities are enriched and strengthened when all educators can bring their unique perspectives, experiences, and cultural competencies to the classroom.

In addition to encouraging representation and inclusivity, supporting diverse educators also plays a pivotal role in addressing the mental health needs of our students. This is particularly important for students who experience identity-based marginalization, which can lead to depression, anxiety, isolation, and victimization.

When diverse teachers are supported, they help break down stereotypes and biases, and foster student empathy and understanding. This cultivates an inclusive and equitable school environment where all students are able to achieve academically and socially.

RACE

20% Teachers of Color

Most public school teachers and administrators are White, while 55% of students are youth of color.

SOURCE: NCES, 2021



GENDER

23% Male

The majority of public school teachers are women. In elementary grades, 11% are men. In secondary grades, 36% are men.

SOURCE: NCES, 2021

DISABILITY

4.6% Have a Disability

60% reported their disability was physical. Among students, 15% qualify to receive Special Education Services.

SOURCE: Disabled Teacher Network, 2018



IDENTITY

8% are LGBTQ

Climate for LGBTQ teachers varies widely geographically, but they often face additional challenges compared with others. 20% of students identify as LGBTQ.

SOURCE: GLSN, 2021

How Do Students Benefit?

- **Better Grades and More Learning:** When teachers understand and respect where their students are coming from, they can teach the curriculum in ways that make sense to each student. When a student sees a teacher who looks like them, they can more easily see themselves in that role one day.
- **Building Relationships:** Diverse teachers come with a multitude of experiences and perspectives. They help students see the world through many lenses, fostering empathy and respect for different people. Diverse teachers often 'get' what a student might be going through, offering a guidance when students face challenges.
- **A Safe Space to Speak Up:** For some students, opening up about personal things, especially mental health, can be tough. But it might feel a little less scary with a teacher who shares their background. And when students feel like they belong, school becomes less about stress and more about growth.



Mental Health Matters: Awareness to Action Tips

The New England Mental Health Technology Transfer Center develops training and technical assistance resources to address the multiple levels of cultural responsiveness needed for optimal behavioral health treatment, recovery, and care.

Use our "Awareness to Action" tips to engage and support diverse communities in consistent and practical ways that ensure racial equity and advance cultural humility in behavioral health.

1 Build a Diverse Culture

Promote a welcoming and inclusive work environment where diversity is celebrated and everyone feels valued and respected.

1

Gain insight and awareness through inquiry and dialogue that generates positive ideas and actionable next steps.

Reach out to diverse organizations, universities, and community members.

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2 Target your Recruitment

Develop a targeted recruitment strategy that actively seeks out diverse candidates.

3 Offer Competitive Pay

Offer competitive salaries and benefits to attract and retain diverse educators

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Ensure pay equity for all staff, and re-evaluate regularly.

Consider what each individual educator needs to meet career and leadership goals.

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4 Provide Opportunity

Offer ongoing professional development opportunities to help diverse educators grow and advance in their careers.

5 Mentor and Support

Implement mentorship and support programs for diverse educators, and ensure that those supports are culturally responsive and representative.

5

Help educators contribute to workplace culture and provide them with ongoing support.

Encourage communication about individuals' needs, and be as responsive and respectful as possible.

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6 Promote Work-Life Balance

Create a work environment that supports work-life balance and provides flexibility to accommodate diverse educators' needs.

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7 Encourage Diverse Leadership

Encourage diverse leadership within the school system and provide opportunities for diverse educators to advance into leadership roles.

Representation in leadership is essential to a compassionate and dynamic school culture.

Examine hiring, promotion, and administrative practices for equitable opportunity, bias, or exclusion.

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8 Address Systemic Barriers

Address systemic barriers that may prevent diverse educators from entering or advancing in the field.

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9 Ensure Cultural Competence

Provide resources and support for cultural competency training to help all educators better understand and serve diverse student populations.

These supports should be ongoing, responsive to educators' feedback, and specific to the school community.

Build relationships and collaborate to better understand the strengths, needs, and challenges of diverse educators,

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10 Engage the Community

Engage with the local community to build relationships and partnerships that support the recruitment and retention of diverse educators.



STAY CONNECTED

New England Mental Health Technology Transfer Center is funded by the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and is part of the broader Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC) Network.

mhttcnetwork.org/centers/new-england-mhttc

To learn more about our intentional efforts to support the multitude of mental health experiences within underserved communities, contact us.

