

---

February 26, 2021

Marlene Megos  
Director, CT Teacher Residency Program

Good evening Honorable Chairmen, Senator Osten and Representative Walker, Ranking Members, and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Marlene Megos and I am the Director of the CT Teacher Residency Program in partnership with the RESC Alliance. I am here in consideration of **HB 6439 An Act Concerning The State Budget For The Biennium Ending June Thirtieth, 2023, And Making Appropriations Therefor.**

I grew up in Meriden, Connecticut and was fortunate enough to attend John Barry elementary school and other diverse schools during my K-12 education. I became a teacher because I could see myself in those who inspired me in school, but this was not the case for many of my peers back in 1978 and this is certainly not the case for many of our students in the classrooms today in Connecticut.

Beyond creating mirrors for our students of color, the research is clear that the impact of teachers of color leads to reduced dropout rates, improved college admissions, and achievement gains for all students. Having a diverse teaching staff will benefit any and all of our students, white, black or brown.

Connecticut continues to struggle to recruit and retain teachers of color for our classrooms, yet the percent of students of color in urban areas such as Hartford, Bridgeport, New Haven and Waterbury exceeds 80%. Without significant change, we will continue to struggle to give voice and opportunity to marginalized populations in this state.

The CT Teacher Residency Program launched in summer of 2019, is specifically designed to eliminate the most common barriers to certification for candidates of color. It also equips candidates with the hands on, authentic experiences and skills necessary to become highly effective teachers.

In this program residents:

- work for a full year side by side with a distinguished teacher
- receive full-time pay and full benefits
- take courses in elementary education for 18 months at no cost
- are guaranteed a full-time job teaching in a partner district

---

February 26, 2021

Marlene Megos  
Director, CT Teacher Residency Program

With this program, 11 teachers of color are already in classrooms and 14 residents (all people of color) enrolled this year will be guaranteed positions as classroom teachers next year when certified. For the next cohort, we are expanding to 60 slots across four sites and partnering with 25-30 different districts in New Haven, Bridgeport, New London and Harford Counties. We have a model that increases the diversity of the teacher workforce, increases the pool of teachers and increases their economic impact as they can earn about \$20,000 more per year as a first year teacher.

As we plan to offer this program across Connecticut, we are upfront that the residency model requires dedicated funding of approximately \$73,000 per resident for tuition, materials, training, salary and benefits. Many districts cannot add this to their already -stretched budgets. While you will see in the CAPSS blueprint, the full amount to fund CT TRP is \$8 million for 8 sites across the state. At a minimum, we are asking for 80% of the funding needed to open four sites this summer or \$3.6 million to train 60 new teachers of color. I implore you to allocate this money to ensure that we finally invest in diversifying Connecticut's teacher workforce.