



Testimony of DR. SCOTT V. NICOL

Superintendent of the Ellington Public Schools

Chair of the BLAC Legislative Committee

Member of the CAPSS Legislative Committee

In reference to H.B. NO. 6439

AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH, 2023, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR

And recommending

the state-wide expansion of the CONNECTICUT TEACHERS RESIDENCY PROGRAM with an appropriation of -\$8 million annually- to the State budget for the biennium ending June 2023

Chairs Osten and Walker, Ranking Members Miner and France and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Dr. Scott V. Nicol, Superintendent for the Ellington Public Schools, Chair of the Legislative Committee for the Black Leaders and Administrators Consortium Inc. (BLAC) and member of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) Legislative Committee.

I write to you today in support of the statewide expansion of the *Connecticut Teachers Residency Program* in partnership with the Regional Education Service Centers (RESC) Alliance, which includes the originator of the program the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC).

The *Connecticut Teachers Residency Program* (TRP) is aligned with the *CAPSS Blueprint to Transform Connecticut's Public Schools'* recommendation #10 (Attacking Structural Racism & Discrimination) specifically "increasing Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino educator and leader recruitment and retention."

Teachers of Color: State-Wide Expansion of Connecticut Teacher Residency Program

The State's commitment to increasing racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of Connecticut's teaching workforce has met with some success but not enough. As of the 2019 – 2020 school year, educators of color (9.6 %) are underrepresented relative to the number of students of color (39.6 %) in the State of Connecticut.

The Ellington Public Schools, which enrolls 26% students of color, has approximately 3% teachers of color employed. Additionally, the number of teachers of color statewide in predominantly white suburban and rural school districts has been scarce.

TRP is an alternative route to certification program designed to recruit, certify and retain elementary teachers of color from a largely untapped pool of talent. Residents participate in the following:

- Take courses for 18 months as taught by practitioners
- Work as a resident for one school year with a mentor teacher while receiving pay and benefits
- Obtain a full-time teaching position upon completion of the program and certification

The Ellington Public Schools is a TRP early adopter with a resident teacher of color currently (2020-2021 school year) teaching with a mentor Ellington teacher. Upon successful completion of the program, the Ellington Public Schools will hire this teacher of color for the 2021-2022 school year.

In addition to Ellington, school districts in Bristol, Southington and various CREC schools currently enroll 15 residents (73% Black and 27% Latino) with the prospect of full employment in the 2021-2022 school year.

The cost for district participation is \$65,750 per resident which includes the resident salary and benefits of approximately \$49,000.

Recommendation:

For the State of Connecticut's Biennial Budget ending June 2023 to include a specific line item in the amount of 8 million dollars annually to expand the *Connecticut Teachers Residency Program* to at least four of the State's Regional Education Service Centers (RESC).