



Teach Plus Federal Policy Agenda: Advancing Equity and Teacher-Driven Solutions

Teach Plus is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to the belief that all students should have the opportunity to achieve their potential in an education system defined by its commitment to equity, its responsiveness to individual needs, and its ability to prepare students for postsecondary success. The mission of Teach Plus is to empower excellent, experienced, and diverse teachers to take leadership over key policy and practice issues that advance equity, opportunity, and student success.

We seek to work with Congress and the Administration to prioritize education funding as states work to stabilize budgets and minimize economic and educational harm. Specifically, we request \$500 billion in state stabilization funding with a significant proportional amount directed toward K-12 and higher education relief. Our priorities include:

- At least \$175 billion for the Education Stabilization Fund to prioritize the reopening and recovery of our public schools, and to prevent significant budget and staffing cuts in K-12 education as students' academic needs are increasing;
- Up to \$261 billion to states and school districts over 10 years, to preserve up to 4 million education jobs, including teachers, school leaders, paraprofessionals, social workers, school psychologists and others;
- \$4 billion for the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) E-rate program so that teachers can provide remote learning opportunities for the millions of K-12 students who lack internet access and access to on-line learning at home; and
- \$50 billion to stabilize early learning and child care for low-income families and children of color.

Based on the priorities of Teach Plus teachers across the country and research-based evidence, Teach Plus seeks to work with the Administration and Congress to enact bold change focused on six urgent priorities:

1. School Finance Equity
2. Teacher Preparation, Development, and Leadership

3. Recruitment and Retention of a Diverse Workforce
4. Whole Child, Student-Centered Learning
5. Rigorous Curricula, High Standards, and Meaningful Accountability
6. High Quality Early Childhood Education

School Finance Equity

- Invest in a **stimulus package** (described above) that makes up for steep declines in state tax revenues for education; saves teaching jobs, especially in schools that serve low-income students; and ensures that states have sufficient funds to pay for new costs such as personal protective equipment and programs and services designed to address inequities exacerbated by the pandemic. This stimulus funding should include **maintenance of effort and equity** provisions to ensure that states are prioritizing equity as they face difficult budget decisions in the coming years.
- Invest in **digital equity**. The federal government must take bold steps to ensure that all students have access to high-speed internet and devices that allow them to learn and practice at home during and beyond the pandemic.
- **Triple Title I funding**, phasing in new dollars alongside **a requirement that states update their state funding formulas to advance equity** and invest in teachers.

Teacher Preparation, Development, and Leadership

- **Increase funding for Title II** of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and invest it in strategies that:
 - Improve **teacher induction, mentoring, and support** during teachers' early years in the classroom;
 - Support **distributed leadership and teacher advancement** with competitive dollars that retain excellent, experienced, and diverse teachers, providing districts serving predominantly low-income students and students of color with competitive funds to support distributed leadership models and student success.
- Through reauthorization of the **Higher Education Act (HEA)**:
 - Improve **data transparency and accountability** for educator preparation programs, including disaggregation of data by race and ethnicity, and set federal guidelines for teacher licensure;
 - Increase funding for **Title II of HEA**, including a new funding stream for teacher residencies, Grow Your Own programs, and other teacher preparation and induction strategies designed to improve clinical preparation and maximize teacher success in the early years of the profession.
 - Create a competitive priority to invest in strategies that have a track record of preparing teachers of color, including minority-serving institutions (MSIs).

- Reauthorize **TEACH grants** to support greater loan forgiveness for teachers in their early years, creating an enhancement for those grants to prioritize teacher diversity and teachers in high-demand subjects and geographies.
- Expand AmeriCorps to provide high-dosage tutoring, mentoring, and classroom assistance in high-poverty schools and provide diverse teacher candidates a pathway to licensure through high-quality preparation routes (See the bipartisan [CORPS Act](#).)

Recruitment and Retention of a Diverse Workforce

- Invest in **incentives for states to close the gap in recruitment and retention** rates between white teachers and teachers of color.
- Expand **Civil Rights Data Collection** (CRDC) to include reporting on rates of recruitment and retention of teachers, disaggregated by race.
- Invest in **loan forgiveness and scholarships to attract and support a greater number of teacher candidates of color and bilingual education teachers.**
- Incentivize **high quality teacher preparation pathways**, including Grow Your Own programs, teacher residencies, and high-quality preparation pathways at minority-serving institutions (MSIs).
- Restore dedicated teacher preparation and career ladder programs and funding authorized under the **Bilingual Education Act**.

Rigorous Curricula, High Standards, and Meaningful Accountability

- Create a new **college and career pathways fund to expand the educator pipeline** in underserved schools and districts, including teacher pathway programs for career and technical education and dual-credit programs in teaching.
- Provide grant funding to states and districts to expand **access to rigorous curriculum and coursework** for low-income students and students of color, including Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual enrollment opportunities. (See the [Advanced Coursework Equity Act](#).)
- Offer grants to incentivize states and districts to adopt strategies for advancing **high quality, rigorous curriculum and culturally responsive instructional materials and practices.**
- Invest in **equitable college and career readiness**, including career and technical education programs tied to high-quality local career opportunities. States and districts that receive the funds should be required to report disaggregated data on enrollment, industry-certified credentials, proficiency on high school assessments, attainment of college credit, and employment.
- Improve the **enforcement of state ESSA plans** to preserve accountability and ensure equity for students, enhance the **ESSA innovative assessments pilot**, and explore new measures for student assessment and growth.

Whole Child, Student-Centered Learning

- **Convert funding for school police officers to investments in personnel to meet the mental health needs of students**, and increase investments in student mental health. (See the [Counseling Not Criminalization Act](#).)
- Direct a portion of Title II funding in both ESSA and HEA to increase educators' expertise in **restorative practices, social and emotional learning, and trauma-informed instruction**.
- Provide **integrated supports and wraparound services** for schools serving low-income students and students of color, including support for community schools and additional efforts to support the whole child.

High Quality Early Childhood Education

- Invest in expansion of **access to high quality early childhood education**, including preschool for low-income students and students of color and quality early learning and child care programs.
- Prioritize **high quality curriculum and instructional methods** in the early years, including the science of learning, play-based instruction, and support for dual language learners.
- **Expand the early childhood education workforce** in underserved communities through scholarships and high quality preparation and professional learning.