

MORE THAN A MOMENT

**Building a Coordinated Statewide
Strategy for a Diverse and
Sustainable Educator Workforce**



Background

The [California Educator Diversity Action Network](#) (CEDAN) is a [growing statewide network](#) of organizations representing educators, community leaders, advocates, researchers, and policy partners organizing to build a more diverse educator workforce in California to benefit and improve outcomes for all California's students. At a time when student outcomes remain uneven and young people are preparing for an increasingly complex future, California must ensure all students have access to effective educators who can meet their needs and support their long-term success.

[Research](#) continues to demonstrate that a diverse educator workforce strengthens outcomes for all students and is especially important for California's growing population of students of color. Yet too often, promising investments and initiatives to advance educator diversity operate in isolation. CEDAN exists to align efforts, elevate educator expertise, and move the field toward coordinated action.

CEDAN brings together state and local efforts that have too often operated in parallel rather than partnership. Central to this work are the leadership and lived expertise of diverse educators, particularly educators of color and multilingual educators, whose voices shape both priorities for immediate action and long-term reform.

Between 2023 and 2025, CEDAN built the foundation of the network, deepened statewide partnerships, and co-created shared goals grounded in educator and community expertise. Through this process, three issues consistently rose to the forefront: **equitable compensation, educator retention, and high-quality, debt-free pathways into the educator profession.**

This document outlines CEDAN's broader strategic vision for advancing long-term educator workforce transformation in California. While [CEDAN's 2026 State Policy Agenda](#) identifies the network's immediate legislative, budget, and policy priorities for state leaders and decision-makers, this document is designed for network partners, advocates, educators, researchers, and system leaders working to build alignment across the field. It outlines how CEDAN intends to align partners, elevate educator expertise, and coordinate shared strategies to advance long-term educator workforce transformation in California.

CEDAN's Goals

CEDAN's work has been anchored in four organizing goals for state, regional, and local policy change that chart the network's direction over the coming years:

- **Develop a coordinated, equity-driven educator workforce strategy** that builds political will, strengthens the alignment and impact of public investments, and ensures every student has access to a diverse, well-prepared, and well-supported educator.
- **Sustain, expand, and institutionalize high-quality, debt-free educator pathways** that reflect California's racial and linguistic diversity and enable aspiring educators to enter the profession fully prepared and without financial burden.
- **Implement a transparent, equity-driven system of educator retention** system that uses publicly accessible, disaggregated data to identify inequities and drive differentiated supports prioritizing the success and well-being of early-career educators, particularly educators of color and multilingual educators.
- **Advance an equitable compensation framework** that attracts, retains, and values a diverse and effective educator workforce, ensuring consistent access to high-quality instruction for students.

Building Bridges II: CEDAN's Statewide Summit

At the end of 2025, the [Building Bridges II](#) summit marked a pivotal moment for CEDAN, bringing together educators, advocates, researchers, and state and local leaders to build consensus around the policy actions needed to advance educator diversity and workforce sustainability. Grounded in data, practitioner insight, community experience, and shaped by educators every step of the way, the convening clarified how CEDAN's shared goals can be advanced in practice.

Participants affirmed that the barriers facing California's educator workforce are not inevitable; they are the result of policy choices, fragmented systems, and inconsistent investment. Because these conditions were created, they can be changed. State leaders in attendance reinforced that progress on these priorities requires not only strong internal leadership, but also clear, consistent external advocacy. They emphasized that advocates play a critical role in sharpening policy direction by surfacing field realities, maintaining urgency that reflects those realities, educating key audiences, and shaping actionable solutions that help leaders move complex policies forward.

Participants recognized that to advance CEDAN's comprehensive vision of a robust educational system to recruit, prepare, grow, and sustain diverse educators, it would take coordinated campaigns of cross-cutting strategies. These strategies must include the co-creation of innovative policy solutions, sustained narrative change to build public will, and advocacy to secure the resources and political conditions necessary for implementation.

Building Bridges II reinforced that no single strategy can transform California's educator workforce in isolation. When policy lacks a compelling public narrative, it stalls; when narrative is not anchored in actionable policy, it scatters; and when advocacy is not tied to durable solutions rooted in what students, teachers, and educational systems need, impact is limited.

CEDAN's next phase of work will focus on deeper coordination across advocacy, communications, research, and educator leadership to support long-term workforce strategies capable of addressing California's most persistent challenges. The recommendations that follow reflect this shared analysis and chart a clear path for CEDAN's work in the years ahead.

"We aim to build tables big and focused enough to hear and hold educators, students, families, community members, researchers, and policy leaders."

**—Sarah Lillis, Executive Director,
Teach Plus California and CEDAN Co-Chair**



Strategy 1: Advance a Coordinated Short-Term Policy Agenda

CEDAN will champion a coordinated set of near-term policy actions designed to stabilize, strengthen, and modernize California's educator workforce infrastructure. Our goal is to ensure that public investments are sustained, aligned, and equity-centered so every student has access to a diverse, well-prepared, and well-supported educator.

California must move its educator pathway ecosystem from disconnected programs to coordinated, well-resourced systems that support candidates from recruitment through preparation and into the early years of practice. To expand **affordable pathways into the profession** for diverse teacher candidates, California must protect proven investments, including the [Golden State Teacher Grant \(GSTG\)](#), [Teacher Residency Programs](#), [Student Teacher Stipends](#), and [Diverse Educator Leadership Pipeline Initiative \(DELPI\)](#).

California should also prioritize stable, ongoing funding to support long-term workforce sustainability, particularly for educators serving in hard-to-staff roles within high-need communities, while expanding investment in high-quality, affordable preparation pathways, including teacher residencies and [Grow Your Own](#) models. At the same time, the state must continue investing in **high-quality educator preparation programs** by strengthening clinical practice, candidate supports, and program capacity. This includes protecting and expanding investments in bilingual authorization and multilingual educator development, such as the [Bilingual Teacher Professional Development Program \(BTPDP\)](#), as well as [National Board Certification incentive](#) grants.

Recruitment alone is insufficient. CEDAN will advance policies that position educator retention as a measurable, equity-centered statewide priority. California needs **sustained investments for workforce stability**, through competitive compensation policies, targeted financial supports, and school environments and **leaders who foster schools where diverse teachers thrive**. The state should incorporate educator retention and workforce stability indicators into accountability systems and require consistent, disaggregated reporting on educator retention, mobility, and working conditions. As California revisits its statewide system of support, there is also an opportunity to integrate an **Educator-Focused Multi-Tiered System of Support (EMTSS)** that aligns differentiated assistance and school improvement efforts with educator support and retention goals.

Ultimately, California must strengthen statewide **oversight of the educator workforce**, by pairing investments with improved statewide data collection and reporting on candidate access, completion, placement, and outcomes to ensure programs are equitably resourced and accountable to workforce goals. Annual, publicly available educator demographic data at the state, local, and school levels should inform equity-centered workforce decisions. The state should also establish and fund formal [cross-agency collaboration](#) to coordinate statewide recruitment, preparation, and retention efforts for a racially and linguistically diverse TK-12 educator workforce.

Together, these short-term actions create the structural foundation necessary to move California from fragmented investments toward a coordinated, equity-driven workforce strategy.

Strategy 2: Create and Advance Key Educator Workforce Frameworks

As a cross-sector network, CEDAN is uniquely positioned to synthesize research, test assumptions, identify effective practices, and develop policy solutions that strengthen the recruitment and retention of diverse educators. CEDAN's unique cross-sector membership positions the network to effectively identify what works, for whom, and under what enabling conditions, ensuring that both immediate advocacy and long-term system change remain anchored in equity, coherence, and impact.

Central to this work is the development of strategic frameworks that organize and advance multiple, interrelated policy solutions into coherent workforce strategies. While CEDAN's policy agenda identifies the network's immediate legislative, budget, and advocacy priorities, the frameworks provide the long-term architecture needed to advance durable systems change.

These frameworks are grounded in recommendations emerging directly from CEDAN working groups, educator leaders, and network partners across the state. In many communities, advocates and practitioners are already leading innovative solutions; CEDAN's role is to elevate, synthesize, and scale these efforts into broader statewide strategies.

Equitable Compensation Framework

CEDAN will develop and advance a bold, **equity-centered compensation framework** that will provide local education leaders and policymakers with actionable strategies to attract, hire, and retain diverse educators, particularly in schools serving communities with concentrated poverty and persistent gaps between student and educator demographics.

Building on recommendations from the [California Educator Diversity Roadmap](#), this framework will recognize that competitive compensation and supportive working conditions are foundational to workforce sustainability. The framework will:

1. Address inequitable compensation structures across districts to raise educator pay;
2. Highlight local innovation through housing assistance, transportation subsidies, child care supports, and targeted tax credits to educators serving in high-needs schools;
3. Identify sustainable revenue strategies to support compensation investments; and
4. Align compensation policies with broader workforce strategies to strengthen long-term retention and career sustainability

Statewide Educator Pathways Strategy Framework

CEDAN will develop and advance a **statewide pathway strategy** that expands access to debt-free preparation, strengthens institutional partnerships, and creates supported routes into the profession for educators of color and multilingual educators—particularly those entering from diverse high schools, community colleges, and classified roles. This framework will reflect a shared commitment to moving California's pathway ecosystem from fragmented programs to coordinated, well-resourced systems that support candidates from recruitment through credentialing and into early career practice. Key elements will address strategies to:

1. Strengthen and align pathway funding streams;
2. Support districts and preparation programs in braiding and maximizing funding;
3. Deepen strategic relationships with institutions of higher education;
4. Expand Grow Your Own and teacher residency models; and
5. Address barriers to pathway completion, including housing, child care, and financial support.

Educator Support and Retention Framework

CEDAN will develop a comprehensive framework to strengthen support for educators—particularly early career educators of color and multilingual educators—by advancing policies that move retention from a localized responsibility to a shared statewide priority that leverages accountability structures, data transparency, and targeted support to improve educator outcomes. The core of this framework will outline an **Educator-Focused Multi-Tiered System of Support (EMTSS)** as the foundation of school improvement efforts. The EMTSS framework will elevate how state and local leaders:

1. Ensure school conditions that cultivate thriving educators;
2. Establish structures that foster belonging, trust, and community for diverse adults and students;
3. Develop clear systems that enable efficient, community-responsive management of schools; and
4. Prioritize professional support that ensures all teachers have the skills, resources and supports they need to be successful instructional leaders.

To meet workforce demands and serve students equitably, California must take more coordinated action to retain and sustain diverse educators.

Across all three frameworks, CEDAN will elevate local examples of innovation from district, county, and regional models that demonstrate what is possible when investments, partnerships, and enabling policy conditions align. By translating these lessons into actionable statewide strategies, CEDAN will help ensure that California's workforce solutions are field-informed, equity-driven, and scalable.

Strategy 3: Build Public Will to Prioritize Investing in California Educators

Building and sustaining a diverse, stable educator workforce requires more than sound policy design; it demands durable public will. Central to this effort is ensuring that policymakers, district leaders, advocates, grassroots organizations, families, and the broader public understand both the urgency of California's workforce challenges and the value of long-term solutions.

CEDAN will build public will to invest in California educators by strengthening partners' understanding of the policy landscape, including preparation pathways, leadership diversity, compensation stability, and high-quality preparation investments. This capacity building will support clearer, more aligned, and evidence-informed advocacy around the policies needed to recruit, prepare, and retain diverse educators. At the same time, educator leaders across the network will help inform the public about the realities facing California schools, dispel misconceptions, and elevate the urgency of sustained systemic investment in the profession.

CEDAN will also lead coordinated narrative change efforts that elevate the social and economic value of diverse educators. These campaigns will draw on research and lived experience to highlight the positive impact diverse educators have on student achievement, school climate, educator retention, and community trust. By elevating practitioner voices and celebrating successful local efforts, the network will help position educator diversity not as a niche workforce issue, but as a foundational driver of educational equity and statewide prosperity.

As the profession that makes all others possible, the educator workforce demands urgent, values-driven leadership and sustained public investment—particularly at a moment when complacency is no longer an option. California must pair bold action with accountability to confront long-standing systemic inequities to secure a prosperous future for all. Building the public and political will to sustain investment across pathways, preparation, leadership, and compensation will be essential to realizing this vision.

Collectively Advancing CEDAN's Priorities

CEDAN's North Star is a California educator workforce that is diverse, sustainable, and empowered—where educators are representative of the communities they serve, supported to thrive and lead throughout their careers, and equipped to ensure all students have access to excellent, affirming public education.

CEDAN's approach is intentionally different. By bringing together a cross-sector network of advocates, educators, policymakers, researchers, labor partners, and community leaders, we are pursuing systems change through collective strategy rather than isolated action. This work is necessarily complex, and at times messy, deeply nuanced, and requires sustained trust-building across roles and perspectives.

Transforming California's educator workforce will not yield immediate or linear answers. It demands a long-term north star that guides incremental progress while acknowledging that durable systems change happens through steady alignment, learning, and course correction. Each policy win, narrative shift, and partnership built moves the field closer to a more just and sustainable education system.

This movement for transformational change is just beginning, and there are key opportunities for educational partners and leaders to shape CEDAN's impact. The following recommendations outline ways to get involved:

- **State Policymakers:** Ensure the state budget protects and sustains proven investments, advances compensation, and strengthens statewide accountability for educator diversity.
- **School and District Leaders:** Align local strategies with state investments to improve compensation, working conditions, and early-career supports by using data transparently to strengthen recruitment and retention of diverse educators.
- **Higher Education Leaders:** Educate state leaders, policymakers, and the public on workforce realities and the conditions required to build and sustain a diverse, high-quality educator workforce pipeline.
- **Teacher Preparation Leaders:** Partner across systems to expand affordable pathways, streamline credentialing, and ensure preparation programs are responsive to workforce needs and educator experience.
- **Philanthropic Partners:** Invest in CEDAN as a statewide infrastructure for collaboration by providing financial support, strategic partnership, and opportunities to convene leaders, elevate emerging ideas, and advance shared policy solutions.
- **Educators:** Lend voice, expertise, and leadership to shape policy solutions, elevate the realities of the profession, and inform what meaningful support looks like in practice.
- **Parents:** Advocate for policies that ensure students have consistent access to well-prepared, supported educators who reflect and understand their communities.
- **Students:** Share experiences, aspirations, and vision to inform how educator diversity, workforce stability, and learning environments impact future opportunities.
- **Grassroots & Base-Building Organizations:** Center community voice to shape equitable workforce policy and build the will to move solutions forward.
- **Advocates:** Align research, organizing, and policy efforts to advance a coherent agenda that turns shared values into lasting systems change.



This work calls on all of us – across roles and systems – to act with urgency and purpose. More than a moment, this is a collective movement to secure equitable access to high-quality diverse educators and fulfill the promise of public education for all California students. To learn more, please visit our [website](#) and [sign-up](#) for our newsletters.