



# Growing an Education Workforce by Supporting Educators Rising and the Next Generation of Diverse and Qualified Educators

New Resource from PDK International

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## Introduction

An entire generation of students has been educated in the midst of a national teacher shortage, resulting from a series of national and state-specific systems that largely leave schools understaffed and educators under-supported, particularly those representing low-income communities and communities of color. Supporting workforce needs with future educators through effective programming, including community-grounded Grow-Your-Own (GYO) teacher preparation initiatives like Educators Rising, will remain a critical solution.

Educators Rising is a national nonprofit organization cultivating the next generation of highly skilled and culturally competent educators, thereby providing contextualized workforce solutions to local P-12 schools and local education agencies. Through innovative programming, curriculum, mentorship opportunities, chapters, conferences, competitions and hands-on experiences, Educators Rising empowers aspiring educators to explore, develop, and refine their teaching skills while addressing the pressing need for diversity and excellence within the teaching profession.<sup>1</sup>

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Educators Rising guides students through a journey of self-discovery and professional development, equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to thrive in the teaching profession.

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## Summary of Educators Rising

Educators Rising operates as a transformative force within the national P-12 workforce landscape, providing community based workforce solutions to local schools by identifying, engaging, and supporting secondary school students who plan to join the educator workforce. By offering a comprehensive framework of resources, support, and networking opportunities through chapters and curriculum, Educators Rising guides students through a journey of self-discovery and professional development, equipping them with the knowledge, skills,

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<sup>1</sup> PDK International (2024). *The impacts of strong, comprehensive teacher preparation programs in secondary schools*. [Monograph]. Retrieved from <http://pdkintl.org/whitepapers-edrising/>

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Educators Rising engages students at an early stage, igniting their passion for teaching and guiding them along a pathway towards a successful career in education.

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and confidence to thrive in the teaching profession. This unique GYO model of support plays a crucial role in supporting communities by addressing teacher shortages, promoting diversity and representation, building trust and connection, empowering community leadership, and promoting economic development.

The organization's initiatives include structured curricula, mentorship programs, leadership development opportunities, and experiential learning activities—all designed to foster a deep sense of purpose and commitment among aspiring educators. Through its national network of chapters including over **25,000 students in 1,000 high schools in all 50 states**, Educators Rising connects students with mentors, educators, and educational institutions, creating a supportive ecosystem that nurtures their growth and prepares them for successful careers in education. Students also participate in local, regional, and national competitions annually, which are themed around the Educators Rising curriculum.

Educators Rising offers a multitude of benefits for participants, educational institutions, and the broader community. For students, participation in Educators Rising cultivates a passion for teaching, enhances leadership skills, and provides valuable exposure to the realities of the teaching profession. By engaging in hands-on experiences such as classroom observations, lesson planning, and student teaching, participants gain practical insights into effective teaching practices and develop a deep understanding of the diverse needs of students.

Furthermore, Educators Rising serves as a pipeline for recruiting and retaining diverse, qualified educators who are reflective of the communities they serve. By actively recruiting students from underrepresented backgrounds and providing them with tailored support and mentorship, Educators Rising addresses the systemic inequities that have historically marginalized certain

groups within the teaching profession. As a result, participating students are empowered to become agents of change within their communities, advocating for equitable access to quality education for all students. **Because 60% of teachers end up teaching within 20 miles of where they went to high school, we have seen this model become one of the most successful programs at diversifying the workforce with our program mirroring the national demographics: 52% of students nationwide are students of color and 53% of Educators Rising students are as well.**<sup>2</sup>

## Addressing the Need for Educators

The imperative for diverse, qualified educators has never been more pressing. Research consistently demonstrates the positive impact of diverse teachers on student outcomes, including academic achievement, graduation rates, and socio-emotional development. The teacher shortage is not uniform across the profession. Shortages are often more acute in subjects like math, science, special education, and in rural or low-income areas.<sup>3</sup> The resulting larger class sizes, use of long-term substitutes, and hiring of underqualified teachers can affect the quality of education students receive.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, many students do not have teachers who reflect their racial or ethnic backgrounds, which may impact their sense of belonging and educational outcomes.<sup>5</sup>

Educators Rising directly addresses this gap by actively recruiting and supporting students from underrepresented backgrounds who aspire to become educators. Roughly 53 percent of students who participate in Educators Rising Programming are students of color. By providing culturally relevant curriculum, mentorship from diverse educators, and opportunities for community engagement, Educators Rising equips students with the skills and confidence needed to succeed in the teaching profession and become advocates for educational equity.

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<sup>2</sup> 53% of students attending the 2023 Educators Rising National Conference reported as students of color.

<sup>3</sup> Mcvey, K. P. and Trinidad, J. (2019). *Nuance in the noise: The complex reality of teacher shortages*. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED596444.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Garcia, E. And Weiss, E. (2019 March). The teacher shortage is real, large and growing, and worse than we thought. *Economic Policy Institute*. Retrieved from <http://www.epi.org/publication/the-teacher-shortage-is-real-large-and-growing-and-worse-than-we-thought-the-first-report-in-the-perfect-storm-in-the-teacher-labor-market-series/>

<sup>5</sup> National Center for Education Statistics. (2023). Characteristics of Public School Teachers. *Condition of Education*. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/clr>

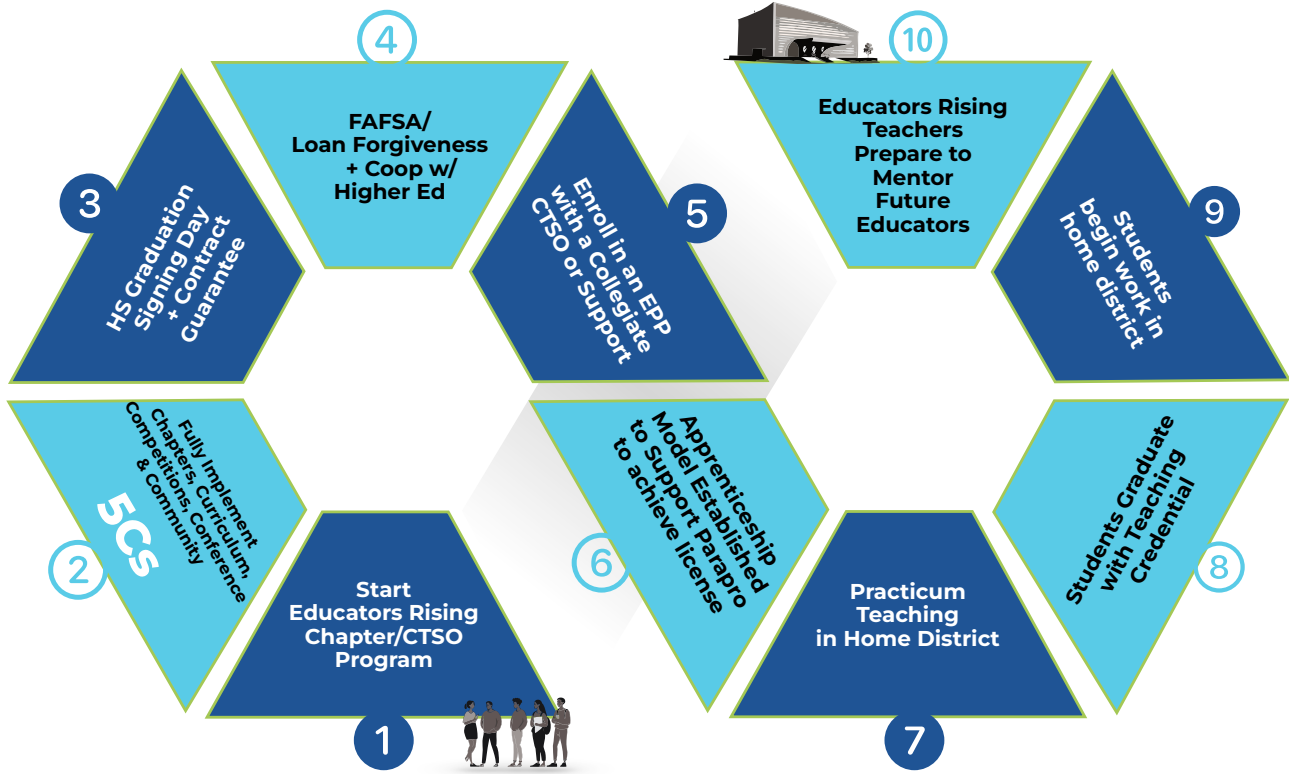
Educators Rising adeptly addresses the pressing need for new educators by cultivating a dynamic ecosystem through GYO that nurtures aspiring teachers, equips them with essential skills and knowledge, and empowers them to make meaningful contributions to the field of education. Through its comprehensive programs, resources, and support networks, Educators Rising engages students at an early stage, igniting their passion for teaching and guiding them along a pathway towards a successful career in education. By providing hands-on experiences, mentorship opportunities, and professional development, Educators Rising prepares students to enter the teaching profession with confidence, competence, and a deep understanding of educational theory and practice. Moreover, Educators Rising fosters a culture of innovation, collaboration, and advocacy, empowering future educators to address systemic challenges, promote educational equity, and shape the future of teaching and learning. By harnessing the collective energy, talent, and enthusiasm of its members, Educators Rising plays a pivotal role in cultivating a diverse and skilled pipeline of new educators who are poised to make a positive impact in schools, communities, and society at large.



**Educators Rising's regional, state, and national competitions give students experiences to network with other students and showcase the education skills they've developed back home.**

## Capitalizing on Grow Your Own

Grow Your Own solutions districts adopt can be fortified through a ten-step process that leverage partnerships with institutions of higher learning and apprenticeship models.




1	2	3	4	5
Schools <u>establish or expand an Educators Rising chapter</u> at their school.	Schools implement the full features of our program with curriculum and access to conference and competitions at regional, state, and national levels.	Districts make a commitment to invite graduating seniors back to teach in their community with college acceptance into an education program.	A full suite of financial incentives for teachers are explored, including loan forgiveness options in cooperation with higher education institutions.	Students stay connected with the community of rising educators in a college-based chapter.
6	7	8	9	10
Pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship models are established or expanded to allow students to be compensated while completing their student teaching requirements.	Students have an option to return to their home district to complete student teaching requirements.	Students become credentialed to teach.	Students return to their home district to begin a new career in education.	Educators Rising students work within the district to continue the cultivation of new students into the pipeline program.

## General Operations

To sustain and expand its impactful programming, Educators Rising seeks funding support from philanthropic organizations committed to advancing educational excellence and equity through sustainable workforce solutions. A general operations grant of \$1 million will enable Educators Rising to:

- Scale programming to reach a broader audience of students across diverse communities by hiring additional curriculum implementation specialists along with outreach and engagement staff. Additional staffing is necessary to address the large pipeline of districts that are ready to partner with Educators Rising.
- Enhance professional development and networked collaboration opportunities for educators and mentors involved in the program.
- Develop innovative resources and curricula that address emerging trends and challenges in education.
- Strengthen partnerships with educational institutions, community organizations, and policymakers to promote systemic change within the education system.
- Negotiate dual enrollment and registered apprenticeship agreements with states and districts that need additional support, including our unique model as a pre-apprenticeship.
- Foster and deliver to the field the highest quality research on the effectiveness of future educator programs.
- Target workforce programs specifically focused on diversity of the teacher and principal pipeline.

In conclusion, by investing in Educators Rising, philanthropic partners have the opportunity to **catalyze transformative change within the teaching profession** and contribute to the **creation of a more equitable and inclusive educational system for all students.** 





# EDUCATORS RISING



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