

## Preparing and Retaining Education Professionals (PREP) Act

*U.S. Senators Tim Kaine (D-VA) and Susan Collins (R-ME)*

Teacher shortages are impacting almost every community in the United States, particularly in rural communities and subjects such as special education; science, technology, engineering, math (STEM); English language; and career and technical education (CTE). Teacher shortages are becoming more pervasive, with current vacancies [up to 3.1%](#), compared to an average of 1.7% from 2015 – 2019. [A 2022 survey](#) showed that about twice as many teachers and principals experience job-related stress compared to other working adults. Furthermore, job-related depression and stress are disproportionately impacting teachers of color, which is resulting in [more educators of color leaving the field](#). Research shows that teachers of color [enhance the academic performance](#) of their students of color, playing an important role in reducing educational opportunity gaps.

To increase access to high-quality teacher and leader preparation and address the significant national teacher shortages, the PREP Act streamlines and focuses Title II and Title III of the Higher Education Act on evidence-based programs designed to develop a diverse workforce that is well-prepared to provide the educational opportunities students need to be successful in college and career by:

- Expanding the definition of high-need districts to include those experiencing teacher shortages in rural communities and in areas such as special education, STEM, English language, and CTE and the definition of high-needs schools to those identified under the Every Student Succeeds Act for additional support and improvement;
- Supporting strong partnerships between school districts and institutions of higher education to ensure that teacher and leader preparation programs are designed to meet the needs of K-12 and streamlining the collection and use of program data to improve program quality;
- Prioritizing high-quality residency programs that research shows result in better prepared teachers who are more likely to stay in the profession, and Grow Your Own Programs to address subject or geographic areas of teacher or leader shortage;
- Creating a set aside to support states in their work to increase teacher and school leader diversity, improve teacher preparation programs, and address state teacher and school leader shortages;
- Requiring states that are not already doing so to identify areas of teacher or leader shortages by area of certification or licensure, subject, and specialty in public schools across geographical regions and use that data to target their efforts;
- Increasing support for teacher preparation programs at minority-serving institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and Tribal Colleges and Universities to support a diverse and well-prepared educator workforce, including through aligning such programs with evidence-based programs under Title II; and
- Requiring teacher and leader preparation programs to support the development of skills needed to create inclusive learning environments and opportunities for students to meet state academic standards, effectively use technology to support instruction, including personalization, and implement college and career pathways such as dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and CTE programs.