



STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Department of Education, Rowan University Launch Program to Encourage Diversity in Teaching Workforce

Trenton, NJ – The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) today announced the launch of a partnership with Rowan University designed to increase and retain diversity in the K-12 education workforce, specifically men from disadvantaged or minority backgrounds.

The new program, “Men of Color Hope Achievers,” will focus on recruiting, preparing, and placing men of color to become teachers in New Jersey.

Legislation signed by Gov. Phil Murphy directed the NJDOE to create a two-year pilot program to increase the access of disadvantaged or minority men to teaching opportunities and to provide needed high-quality teachers in underperforming schools in New Jersey, and the governor’s Fiscal Year 2022 budget provided \$550,000 needed to implement the first year of the program. Rowan has demonstrated success implementing programs that engage in rigorous recruitment and support strategies, meeting the needs of minority male teaching candidates to experience success in educator preparation programs and enter the teaching profession. The Men of Color Hope Achievers Program will build upon its alternate-route program that allows eligible individuals who have not completed a traditional teacher-training program to become certificated as a teacher.

This program advances the Murphy Administration’s longstanding commitment to fostering a diverse, learner-ready teacher workforce, and will build on the progress achieved through programs such as “Diversifying the Teacher Pipeline” and “Minority Teacher Development” grants. According to 2020-2021 data provided by schools to the NJDOE, 59 percent of New Jersey’s student population are children of color, while teachers of color represent 17 percent of the educator workforce.

“The partnership between the NJDOE and Rowan University is an important initiative that will impact student learning,” said **Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan, Acting Commissioner of Education**. “When we have an educator workforce that is more reflective of the students they teach, it builds positive perceptions among all children. Moreover, research has found that students of color who are taught by at least one teacher of color tend to have higher test scores and graduation rates.”

As part of the Men of Color Hope Achievers Program, Rowan will aim to recruit 25 participants each year to obtain licensure to teach in participating school districts. The new teachers will serve as role models for minority and non-minority students. In addition, Rowan will hire a full-time project coordinator who will work with the NJDOE and school districts to support planning, marketing, and program development. Rowan will provide coaching to support the development of the participants and the university will collect data on the success of the program.

In addition, Rowan and the NJDOE will work collaboratively to create a community mentor network for program participants. The NJDOE will designate a point person to support the certification process and expedite reviews for participants of the program.

Program participants could enter the program and begin teaching as early as September.

