

**Testimony Regarding the Governor's Proposed SFY 2019 Budget Revisions
for the Department of Education**

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Appropriations Committee
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Good evening Senator Osten, Senator Formica, Representative Walker, Representative Ziobron, and esteemed members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Camara Stokes Hudson, and I am submitting testimony today on behalf of Connecticut Voices for Children, a research-based child advocacy organization working to ensure that all Connecticut children have an equitable opportunity to achieve their full potential. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding the Governor's proposed changes to the Department of Education's budget in SFY 2019.

Today, **I would like to recommend that Minority Teacher Recruitment be made a priority in the 2019 budget.** With the number of children of color in Connecticut's school system rising every year, providing them with teachers that share their race/ethnicity can support their academic success and in turn the success of our state.

It is essential that the state provide a robust education for *all* children to ensure that they are able to pursue their chosen dreams and goals. But, that same education is equally essential to ensure the economic competitiveness of the state. For Connecticut to ensure that its workforce and economy remain strong into the future, education of all of its students regardless of their race/ethnicity must be a priority.

The FY 2018-2019 budget cut funding to the Talent Development Office line item within the SDE budget by 89 percent, and the Governor's proposed revisions to the FY 19 does not restore any of this funding. **Cuts to the Talent Development Office will impact SDE's ability to attract a diverse teaching workforce,** which had already begun initiatives to increase the numbers of teachers of color in the state. We ask that the Appropriations Committee restore this five million dollars of funding so that SDE can continue their important Minority Teacher Recruitment program.

Forty-five percent of Connecticut's demographic of children are children of color,¹ and this population is growing.² Students of color benefit academically and socially from learning from teachers of color because these teachers are more likely to understand students' cultures and family contexts, and they can serve as role models.³

¹ AEC KidsCount Database. (2016). Connecticut Child Population by Race and Age 2012-2016.

² *Ibid.*

³ Hudson, C. S. (2018). *The Black-White Education Gap in Connecticut: Indicators of Inequality in Access and Outcomes*(Issue brief). Retrieved

<http://www.ctvoices.org/sites/default/files/New%20Edits%20-%20NG%20-%20The%20Black-Wh>

Despite the fact that students of color are 45 percent of the student body in Connecticut, teachers of color are less than ten percent of full time teaching staff and Black and Latino teachers are less than 8 percent.⁴ For students of color, there is a significant relationship between academic success and teachers that resemble their classrooms. Research shows that Black students who just have one Black teacher in elementary school are 36 percent more likely to graduate from high school than a child that did not.⁵ Similar impacts can be seen for Latino students on both dropout and four-year graduation rates.⁶

41 percent of Latino students in Connecticut and 51 percent of Black students did not meet Math standards on Smarter Balanced Exams in SY2016-2017,⁷ and graduation rates between students of color and white students show a significant gap.⁸ Increasing minority teacher recruitment is a critical piece of improving academic outcomes for Latino and Black students and opening educational and employment opportunities for this growing population of children. Further, providing these children with the rich and engaging education they need is important to growing and strengthening Connecticut's economy over the long term.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify regarding how the Governor's proposed revisions to the SFY 2019 budget impact minority teacher recruitment and academic outcomes for students of color in Connecticut. I am happy to answer any questions and can be reached at chudson@ctvoices.org or (203) 498-4240 x 116.

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⁴ Connecticut State Department of Education. (2016). 2015-2016 Enrollment Counts and 2015-2016 Full Time Teaching Staff by Race/Ethnicity.

⁵ Gershenson, Seth, Cassandra M. D. Hart, Constance A. Lindsay, and Nicolas W. Papageorge. The Long-Run Impacts of Same-Race Teachers. Rep. IZA Institute of Labor Economics, Mar. 2017. <http://ftp.iza.org/dp10630.pdf>

⁶ Fraga, L. R., Meier, K. T., & England, R. B. (1986). Latino Americans and Educational Policy: Limits to Equal Access. *The Journal of Politics*, 48(8), 850-876

⁷ Connecticut State Department of Education. (2017) 2016-2017 English Language Arts and Math Smarter Balanced Scores - All-Grades by Race/Ethnicity.

⁸ Hudson, C. S. (2018). *The Black-White Education Gap in Connecticut: Indicators of Inequality in Access and Outcomes*(Issue brief)..

⁹ Treuhafft, S., Scoggins, J., & Tran, J. (2014, October). *The Equity Solution: Racial Inclusion Is Key to Growing a Strong New Economy*(Rep.). Retrieved https://www.policylink.org/sites/default/files/Equity_Solution_Brief.pdf