



EDUCATOR QUALITY AND DIVERSITY ADVISORY

SEPTEMBER 2020 UPDATE



OKLAHOMA
Education

In March 2015, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Joy Hofmeister commissioned the Teacher Shortage Task Force to address state recruitment and retention issues. Effective September 2020, the task force is renamed the Educator Quality & Diversity Advisory. The name change has not altered the work of this stakeholder group; rather, it has made the work more focused on quality of Oklahoma's workforce and much-needed attention given to diversity in the talent pool.



INTRODUCTION

This annual report details recent work as well as future efforts addressing the continuing educator recruitment and retention challenges in the state. Also provided in this document are related legislation, initiatives and COVID-19 impact.

PROBLEM

Prior to the COVID-19 global pandemic disrupting Oklahoma in early 2020, teacher shortages remained a challenge in Oklahoma school districts. Additionally, Oklahoma educator preparation programs continue to experience decline in enrollment. The current public health crisis has cast a dark cloud over already existing shortages that will require enhanced communication and data-sharing with education entities at all levels. It is apparent, now more than ever, that prioritizing a qualified teacher in every Oklahoma classroom is equitably and deservedly appropriate for over 703,000 Oklahoma public school students. Additional prioritization is needed in providing a qualified administrator at every site and district level.

EDUCATOR QUALITY & DIVERSITY ADVISORY WORK UPDATES

Advisory members participated in two initiatives this year. One was the SREB-sponsored Educator Supply & Demand Network, and the second was the CCSSO-sponsored Teacher Table initiative.

▪ Educator Supply & Demand Network

The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) supported a statewide network to collaborate and take action to increase the quality and effectiveness of educator preparation practices and first-year teaching supports in Oklahoma. Six district leaders and seven educator preparation program leaders were strategically selected and invited to enter into collaboration around two actions: (1) support for pre-service teachers in their student teaching or clinical block and (2) support for the transition into year one classroom teaching in an Oklahoma school. From November 2019 through July 2020, the Network met nine times to study policies and practices which culminated in a report of recommendations. The report can be found at https://sde.ok.gov/sites/default/files/2020_OESDN%20Report%20%281%29.pdf.

▪ Teacher Table Initiative

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) invited Oklahoma to participate with three other states in a Teacher Table Initiative designed to develop and implement strategies to address state-specific recruitment and retention issues. CCSSO's grant funding enabled the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) to host two Teacher Table events and to develop and disseminate a follow-up survey to Oklahoma certified teachers initially surveyed in 2017.

The 45 Teacher Table participants included teachers, administrators, pre-service teachers, educator preparation providers, education association stakeholders and education agency representatives. The two events were November 18, 2019, and August 5, 2020, where racial diversity and equity gap data were shared. The follow-up survey project was designed at the initial Teacher Table event, and results of the survey were shared at the second event (<https://sde.ok.gov/sites/default/files/Follow%20up%20Survey%20Results.pdf>). Additionally, all participants were given the book, *So You Want to Talk About Race*, by Ijeoma Oluo. More information on the two Teacher Table events can be found at <https://sde.ok.gov/educator-effectiveness>.



Teacher Table participants from left to right, Tobie Mitchell, Kari Rhoden, Lesa Hefner, Patricia Lightfoot and Superintendent Joy Hofmeister



CCSSO representatives Monica Taylor and Teresa Mooney (center) with Naneida Lazarte Alcalá, Marsha Herron and Robyn Miller

JOB MATCHING TOOL

In December 2019, the OSDE launched a new online tool matching teachers with Oklahoma job openings. Using the Oklahoma Educator Credentialing System (OECS), school administrators post job openings at OKTEACHMATCH.com and access a pool of certified teachers actively seeking employment. To be eligible to use the innovative feature, teachers must have a valid Oklahoma teaching credential. The new job portal displays estimated salaries for each job opening, reflecting the recent average \$7,400 teacher pay raise and the job-seeking teacher's degree level and years of experience.

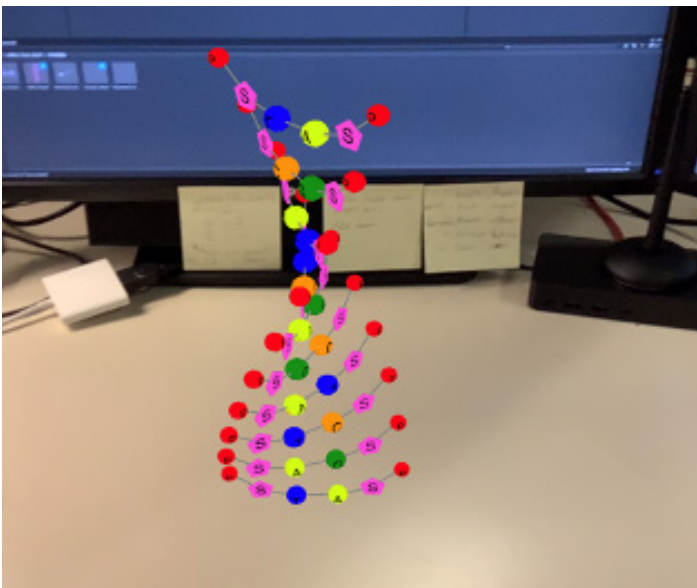
Nine months after the job matching tool was launched, more than 1,500 educators, on average, were listed as open candidates weekly. The job opportunities posted by school districts also show a positive trend surpassing 120 openings listed every week.

TEACHER EXTERNSHIP UPDATE

In its fourth year partnering with STEM-related businesses, the program continued to offer teachers an experience to learn about potential career paths for their students. This year, the summer teacher externship program expanded to fall and spring offerings thanks to Thick Descriptions, who offered a fall, spring and summer paid externship to teachers. In addition, AAON and OneNet hosted an externship program in July 2020 with OneNet offering the first ever virtual externship experience. Other businesses that had previously hosted the program declined due to COVID-19.



Thick Descriptions externship included a welcome from Boley Mayor, Dr. Francis Shelton pictured back right.



AR DNA Helix created by Melisa Moorman, Cheyenne Public Schools and Julie Clark, Kingston, ISD at their One Net Virtual Externship

E-Rate Guide

<div style="background-color: #1a3d4d; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">?</div> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 5px;">E-Rate provides discounts to assist schools and libraries to obtain affordable internet access and telecommunications services.</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">What is E-Rate?</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">OneNet has been an E-Rate service provider since 1999</p>				
<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Who can apply?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="margin-bottom: 5px;">■ Schools and school districts <li style="margin-bottom: 5px;">■ Libraries and library systems <li style="margin-bottom: 5px;">■ Certain consortia-groups 	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Resources</p> <table style="width: 100%; font-size: x-small;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">USAC video series will help guide users through the filing process</td> <td style="width: 33%;">OneNet's E-Rate FAQ webpage</td> <td style="width: 33%;">USAC webinars answer common filing questions</td> </tr> </table> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin-top: 5px;"> https://www.usac.org/sl/ or https://onenet.net/current-customers/e-rate-faq/ </p>		USAC video series will help guide users through the filing process	OneNet's E-Rate FAQ webpage	USAC webinars answer common filing questions
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E-Rate information shared by One Net with Melisa and Julie



RELATED 2020 LEGISLATION

HB 3142: Education Administration

Allows principals and superintendent candidates who completed a master's degree program in education prior to July 1, 2005 to be exempt from the current requirements of a master's degree program in education administration.

HB 3350: Teacher Retirement

Institutes a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for members of the Teachers' Retirement System (OTRS) and other state retirees.

SB 1115: Teacher Certification

Allows an extension of a teacher's emergency certificate beyond two years and allows an individual with a master's degree to be exempt from the subject-area exam if the degree aligns with the content.

SB 1125: Teacher Certification

Clarifies that an individual with a valid out-of-state teaching certificate may receive an Oklahoma teaching certificate without any additional requirements pending a successful background check.

SB 1436: Teacher Certification

Creates a new micro-credential for special education teachers certified in mild-moderate disabilities to become certified in severe-profound disabilities as well as a new certification in the area comprehensive special education.



OTHER RELATED INITIATIVES

Homebuyer Assistance for Teachers

The Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) announced September 1, 2020, homebuyer down payment assistance by making special interest rates available to teachers. Eligible first-time and repeat buyers may utilize OHFA's 3.5% down payment assistance at closing.

The special interest rates are available for eligible teachers and state employees. Eligibility for teachers includes holding a current Oklahoma State Department of Education Teaching Certificate and current employment with an Oklahoma Accredited Public School and/or Private/Parochial School. Details of the down payment assistance can be found at www.ohfadownpayment.org.

USDE Approved Shortage Areas

The following 13 areas are approved by the U.S. Department of Education enabling Oklahoma to receive federal funding to enhance the educator talent pool.

Arts & Humanities

Business & Computer

Career & Technical

Counselor

Early Childhood

Health/PE

Language Arts

Math

Music

Science

Social Studies

Special Education

World Languages



Teach Oklahoma

Sponsored by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, Teach Oklahoma continues to serve as a strong recruitment program for future teachers. Sixteen schools hosted the program in 2019-20, and over 205 students were served. Thirty-two percent of all Teach Oklahoma students surveyed are interested in teaching. This past year, 43% (57) of the graduating seniors indicated they plan to become teachers.

Special Education Recruitment

School year 2019-20 was the third year of Project 616, a subject area certification reimbursement program allowing districts to reimburse teachers who take certification exams. Twenty-nine districts took advantage of the program, and 76 people were reimbursed for certification exams they took and passed.

Teachers of World Languages

Spanish Guest Teachers

Tulsa Public Schools employed 39 Spanish guest teachers through a memorandum of understanding with Spain and retained one Spanish teacher and one French teacher who were entering their sixth year in Oklahoma and who obtained an International Teaching certificate.

Oklahoma City Public Schools employed one Spanish Guest Teacher from their 2017-2018 cohort. These teachers served more than 2000 students in Dual-Language/Immersion programs and world languages secondary programs.

Teachers of Chinese Language

Tulsa Public Schools employed one Chinese teacher through the Confucius Institute for their secondary IB Mandarin program. Santa Fe South charter school employed ten international graduate students from China to assist with their Mandarin language program which serves approximately 2000 students.

World Languages Education Teacher Preparation programs

- University of Oklahoma
 - 2019-2020 Graduated: 3
 - Fall 2020 Candidates: 3
 - Spring 2021 Candidates: 3
 - Foreign Language Education Majors: 9
 - Current UG program: 20



- University of Central Oklahoma
 - Foreign Language Education Majors: 9

- Oklahoma State University 2019-2020:
 - 3 (2 in Spanish, 1 in French)
 - Spring 2021: 1 (Spanish)
 - Foreign Language Education Majors: 5

Native American Languages

- 8+ Different Languages
- 32 Teachers
- 38 Sites

Troops to Teachers

Recruitment efforts through this grant-funded program are categorized by leads, registrants and hires teaching in districts.

LEADS (May 2019-May 2020)	REGISTRANTS (May 2019-May 2020)	TEACHING IN DISTRICTS (May 2019-May 2020)
578	317	344



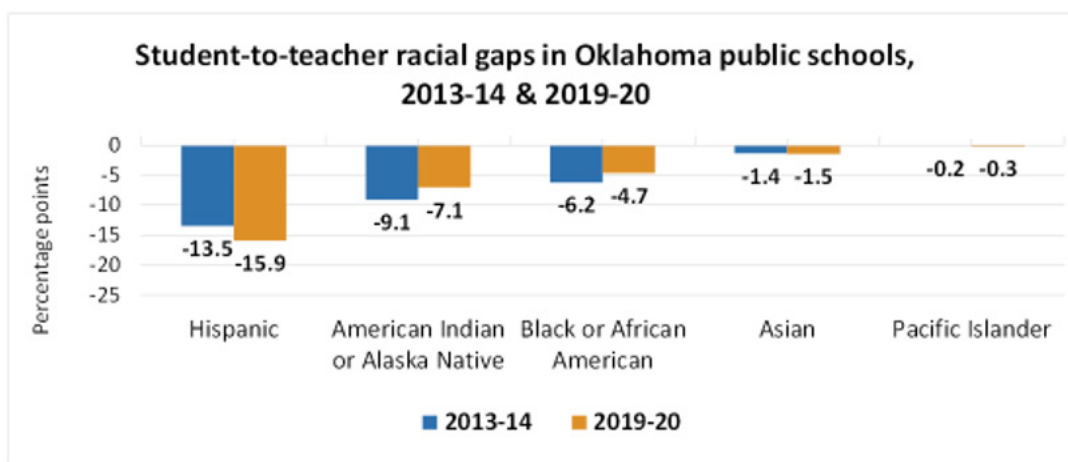
Grants

Priorities in each of these grants address teacher training and professional learning intended to increase teacher retention.

- Troops to Teachers – \$1,245,170 (in year 2 of 5 years)
- Project GET FIT! - \$1,825,000 (in year 2 of 5 years)
- Native Youth Community Partnership - \$3,992,364 (in year 2 of 4 years)
- Project AWARE - \$8,616,110 (in year 2 of 5 years)
- School Climate Transformation - \$3,729,615 (in year 2 of 5 years)
- Oklahoma Prevention and Mental Health Project - \$148,661 (in year 2 of 3 years)
- Oklahoma Violence Threat Assessment Project - \$249,684 (in year 2 of 3 years)
- Oklahoma School Emergency Management - \$3,740,874 (in year 2 of 5 years)
- STOP School Violence - \$250,000 (in year 1 of 3 years)
- Supplemental CDC for COVID 19 Training – \$333,333 (in year 1 of 1 year)
- ARTech Well-Rounded Project - \$5,801,691 (begins Oct. 1 for 5 years)
- Project AWARE East - \$8,981,170 (begins Oct. 1 for 5 years)

Additional Research from the OSDE Supply and Demand Report

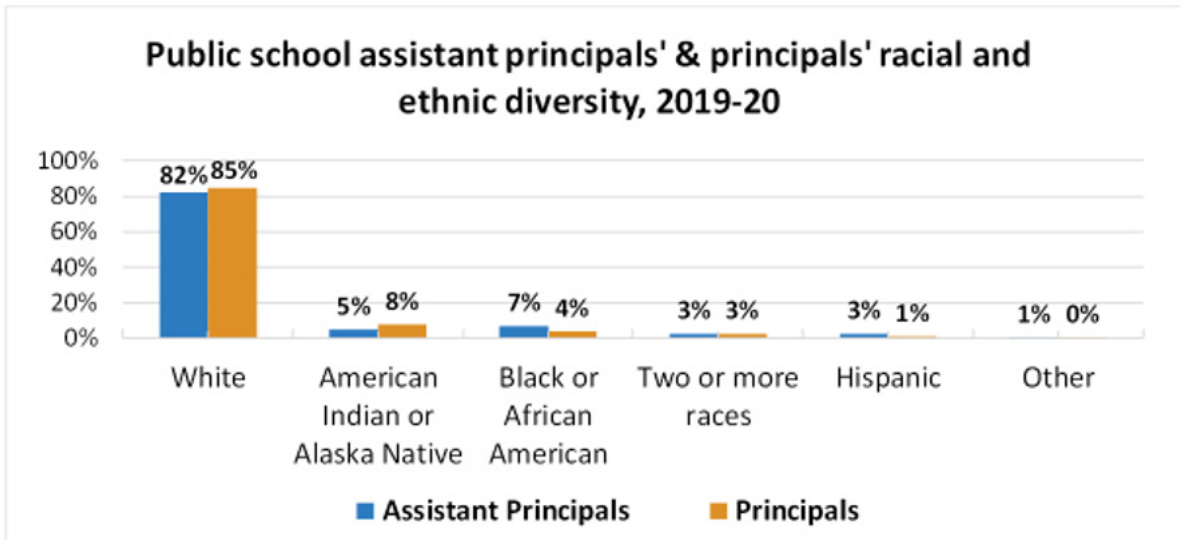
Racial Diversity of Students and Teachers



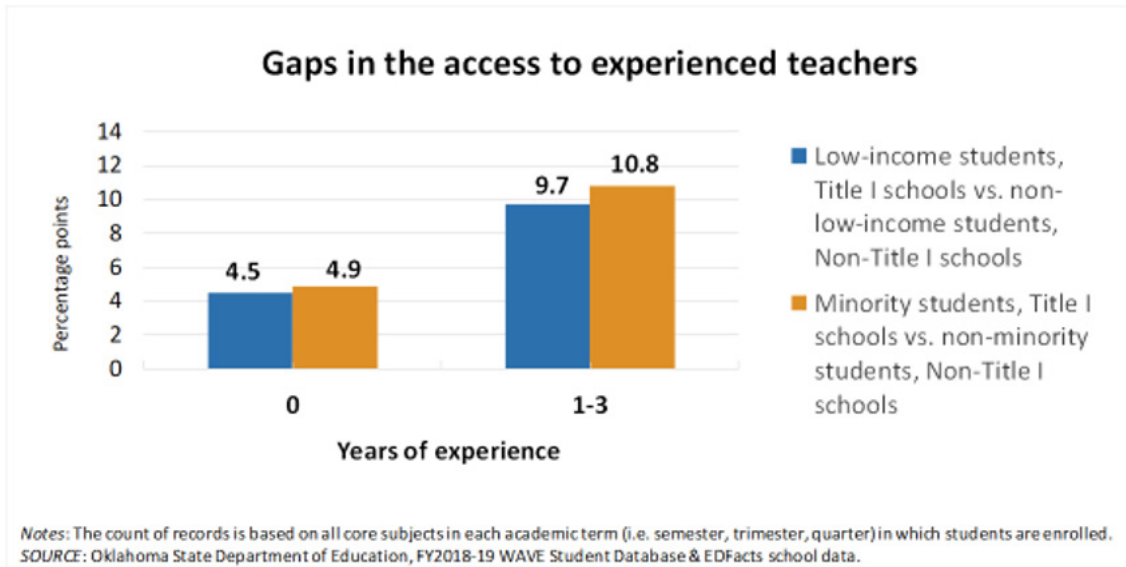
- Racial gaps are significantly larger for Hispanics (*city/suburban*) and American Indians or Alaskan Natives (*town/rural*)
- Minority gaps are larger –regardless of enrollment size–in:
 - Low-income schools
 - Schools with nonminority principals

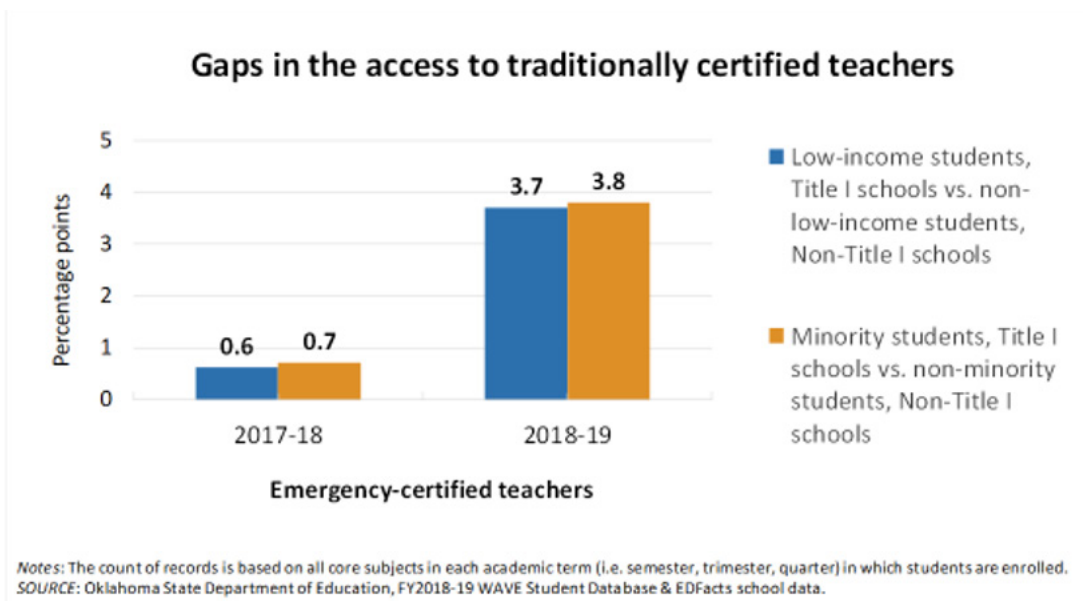
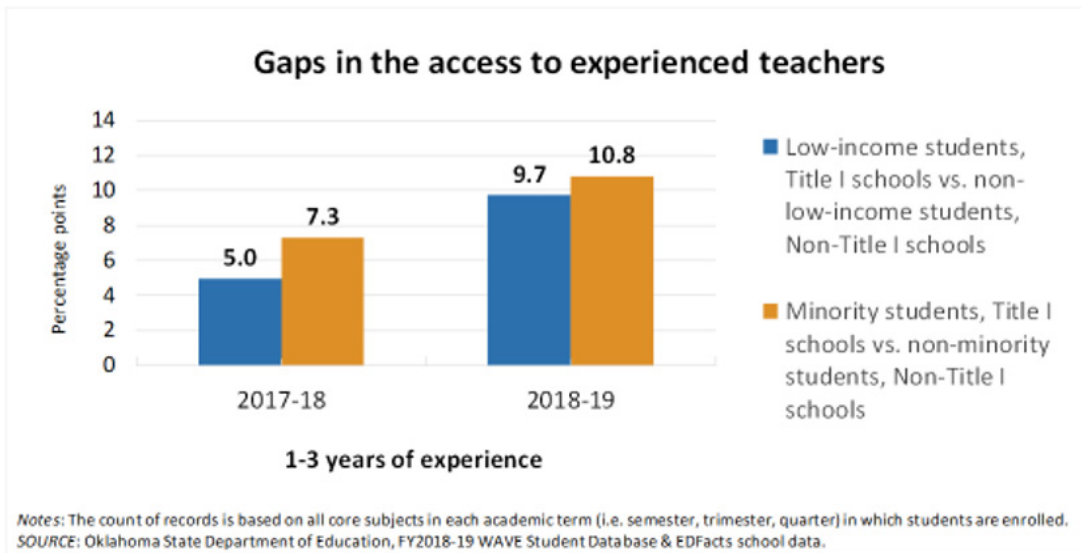


Racial Diversity of Assistant Principals and Principals



Equity Gaps in the Access to Excellent Teachers







COVID-19 Impact on Educator Workforce

According to an EdWeek Research Center national survey, teacher morale is declining. Thirty-one percent of teachers and district leaders claimed teacher morale as “much lower” than it was prior to the pandemic. The decline in morale is up from 26 percent the last time surveyed in June and nearly double from a March 2020 survey.

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/09/01/teacher-morale-and-student-enrollment-declining-under.html>

Teacher Retirement Data

Oklahoma Teachers’ Retirement System (OTRS) records show 2,579 teachers retired during the 2019-20 school year. According to OTRS, the average age of retirees was 63.

OTRS claims an uptick in retirements for September and October of this year. By mid-August 2020, the number of teachers scheduled to begin retirement in September and October was 333, an increase of 51 from 2019.

Teacher Professional Development

High-quality professional learning for Oklahoma educators was a critical retention effort before COVID-19 and now, more significantly, amid the public health crisis. Two COVID-19 professional development responses this year were EngageOK in the Cloud and Education ECHO Tele EDGE.



EngageOK In The Cloud was the State Department of Education’s annual summer conference held virtually July 15th , 16th and 17th. Over 4,500 teachers and school staff attended sessions on trauma-informed instruction, literacy, the Tulsa Race Massacre, distance learning strategies, safely reopening a new school year and more.

Educator Quality and Diversity Advisory

September 2020 Update



In partnership with OSU/Center for Health Sciences Project ECHO, the already established Tele EDGE education video sessions became a COVID-19 response video conferencing in March 2020. It continues currently in an effort to support educators as they safely reopen schools across the state whether in-person, blended or virtually. OSDE staff share elements and updates of Return To Learn: A Framework for Reopening Schools <https://sde.ok.gov/sites/default/files/Return%20to%20Learn%20Oklahoma.pdf>. Additionally, school district representatives join OSDE staff to share best practices and policies on topics such as engaging families, learning loss, RSA screening, supporting English Learners, child nutrition, distance learning and social emotional learning on bi-weekly video conferences. More information on education ECHO video lines can be found at <https://medicine.okstate.edu/echo/tele-edge.html>.

Next Steps

The OSDE will continue to convene the advisory this coming year with a first meeting to take place in October or November. The focus will be recruitment and retention of qualified and diverse educators with specific emphasis on best use of Title IIA federal funds and educator preparation for a variety of instructional delivery models.

- The advisory will be asked to formulate recommendations for use of Title IIA federal funds to
 - improve quality and effectiveness of teachers, principals and other school leaders.
 - increase the number of teachers, principals and other school leaders who are effective in improving student academic achievement in schools.
 - provide low-income and minority students greater access to effective teachers, principals and other school leaders.
- The advisory will consult the newly released publication, *Restarting and Reinventing School: Learning in the Time of COVID and Beyond* (Learning Policy Institute, 2020) to determine how Oklahoma might reinvent educator learner opportunities to match current state needs such as
 - Distance and blended learning teaching experts
 - Novice teacher and veteran teacher roles
 - Paraprofessional and student teacher roles



OKLAHOMA
Education

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