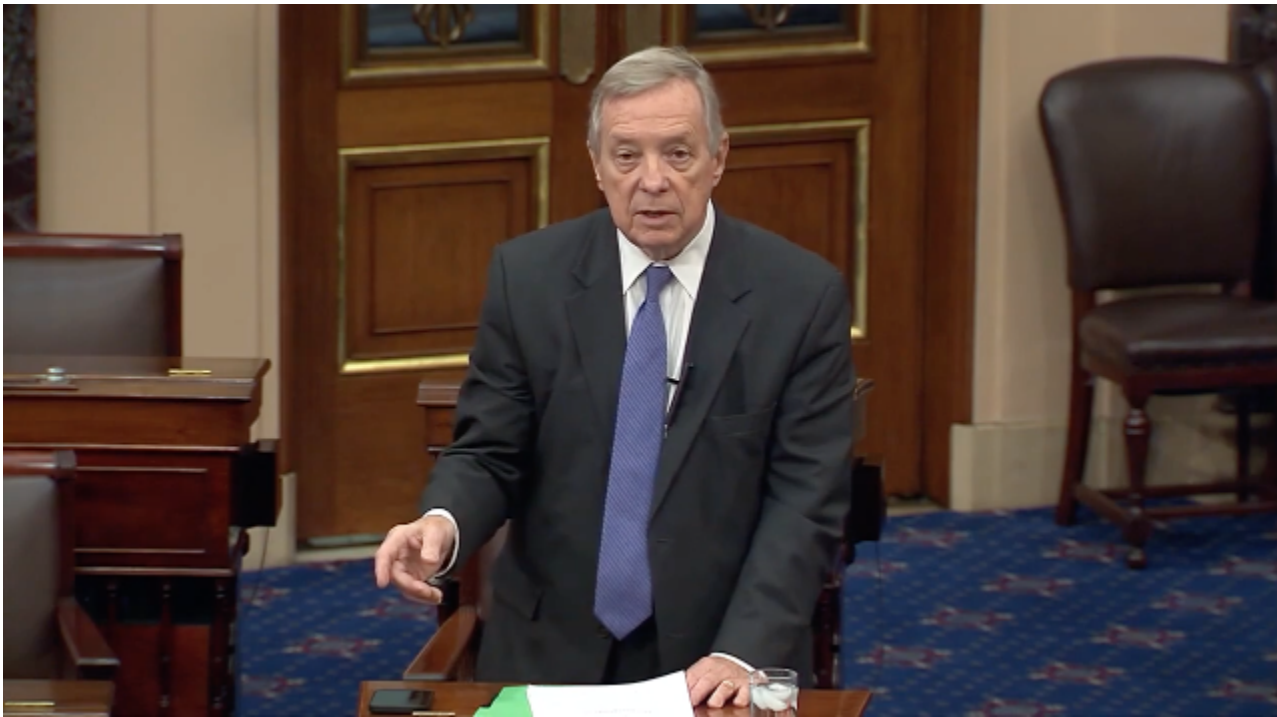


# **Durbin, Cartwright, Nunn Introduce Legislation To Streamline Collection Of Educator Workforce Data**

February 7 2024 9:04 AM



WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) and U.S. Representatives Matthew Cartwright (D-PA-08) and Zach Nunn (R-IA-03) today introduced bicameral and bipartisan legislation to collect demographic data on public school teachers and principals to improve the accuracy of educator workforce data. The *Strengthening Educator Workforce Data Act* would establish a permanent, national mechanism to collect teacher and principal data at the school district-level to assist in recruitment and retention of educators.

The legislation stems from research showing that all students benefit from a high-quality, diverse educator workforce, and that students of color with at least one same-race teacher often have improved academic performance, attendance, graduation rates, and aspiration to attend college.

Current solutions to address both educator workforce shortages and diversity gaps use incomplete data that is not easily accessible. Without a national dataset, legislators cannot identify which schools need the most help, nor can they evaluate the effectiveness of federal investments in recruitment and retention programs like the Teacher Quality Partnership and the Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence. Access to educator workforce data is necessary to track the impact of federal dollars in schools, as well as boost efforts to increase educator diversity.

“Our students, particularly students of color, perform better when taught and cared for by a diverse range of educators and administrators,” said Durbin. “As our country faces educator workforce shortages, it is essential that we reach out to, recruit, and retain educators that share the background of their students. With the bicameral, bipartisan *Strengthening Educator Workforce Data Act*, we can take a step forward in this process by examining the demographics of our current workforce so we can invest in effective recruitment and retention programs.”

“Research shows that a good teacher matters more to student achievement than any other school-related factor,” said Cartwright. “That is why we must take steps to address our nationwide teacher shortage. The *Strengthening Educator Workforce Data Act* would direct the Department of Education to collect and centralize educator data to help policymakers and stakeholders produce data-informed policies to address nationwide teacher shortages, and strengthen the educator workforce, to better serve our nation’s students.”

“Schools across the country, including in Iowa, are having difficulty finding and retaining qualified teachers,” said Nunn. “We must address the nationwide teacher shortage to ensure every child has access to a quality education, no matter their zip code. The *Strengthening Educator Workforce Data Act* is a commonsense approach to strengthen the workforce and provide better opportunities for all students.”

Specifically, the *Strengthening Educator Workforce Data Act* would direct the Department of Education (Department) to collect the following data from public schools, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and sex:

- The number of full-time principals employed and the median years of experience across the full-time principals employed, disaggregated by years of experience;

- The number of full-time preschool and K-12 teachers employed, disaggregated by years of experience; and
- The number of full-time teachers who hold State certificates, licenses, or endorsements in mathematics, science, English as a second language, and special education—all hard to staff subject areas.

This data would then be published through the Department's Civil Rights Data Collection and made publicly available. The bill would ensure privacy is protected, and individually identifiable information about teachers and principals would remain confidential.

Accurate and accessible data will help to produce data-informed policies to address nationwide teacher shortages, which will allow stakeholders and policymakers to better serve students by strengthening and diversifying the educator workforce. Currently, at least 30 states and the District of Columbia publish race or ethnicity demographics of their teacher workforce, and 36 states have funded or established initiatives to support educator retention.

The legislation is cosponsored by U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ).

The Strengthening Educator Workforce Data Act has also earned support from Teach Plus, American Federation of Teachers, National Council on Teacher Quality, The Education Trust, National Association of Elementary School Principals, The New Teacher Project, New Leaders, National Center for Learning Disabilities, Educators for Excellence, National Center for Teacher Residencies, Center for Black Educator Development, Latinos for Education, The Sikh Coalition, EDGE Consulting Partners, Leading Educators, and Opportunity Culture @ Public Impact.