

# Delaware Educator Snapshot

## A Glimpse into How Delaware is Building a Stronger, More Diverse Educator Workforce

Winter, 2025

### Why Diversity Matters

A more diverse educator workforce leads to better student outcomes, like increased academic achievement, access to advanced coursework, and strong social-emotional support for students.

### The Problem

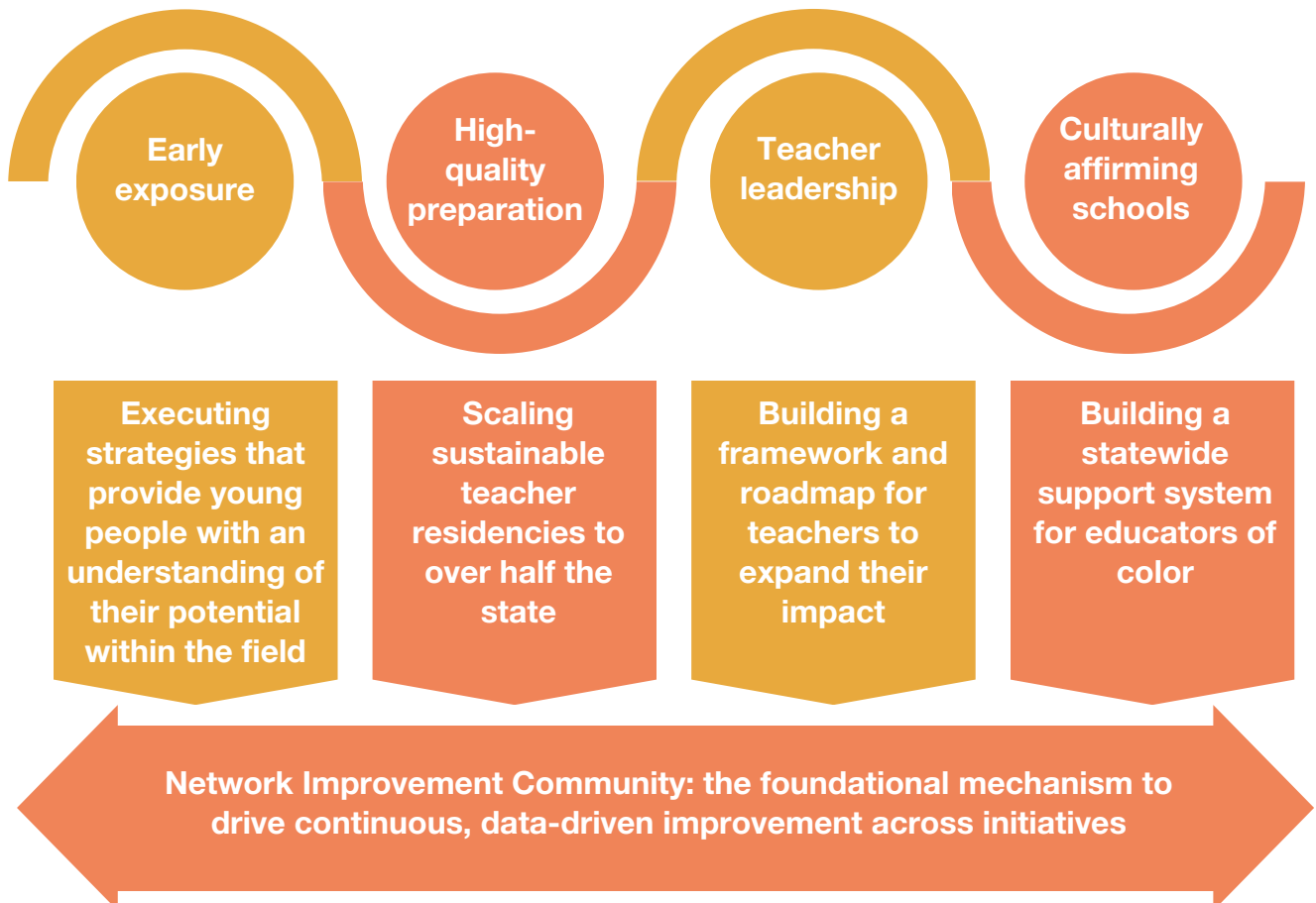
Only 20 percent of teachers in Delaware identify as people of color, while our student population is over 50 percent students of color. Additionally, teachers of color are leaving the profession at higher rates, citing working conditions, leadership, and opportunities to advance as key factors in their decision to leave the classroom.

### How We Work

Rodel partners with districts and educator preparation programs to build strategies focused on diversifying the educator workforce in Delaware, from early exposure through creating culturally affirming school environments.

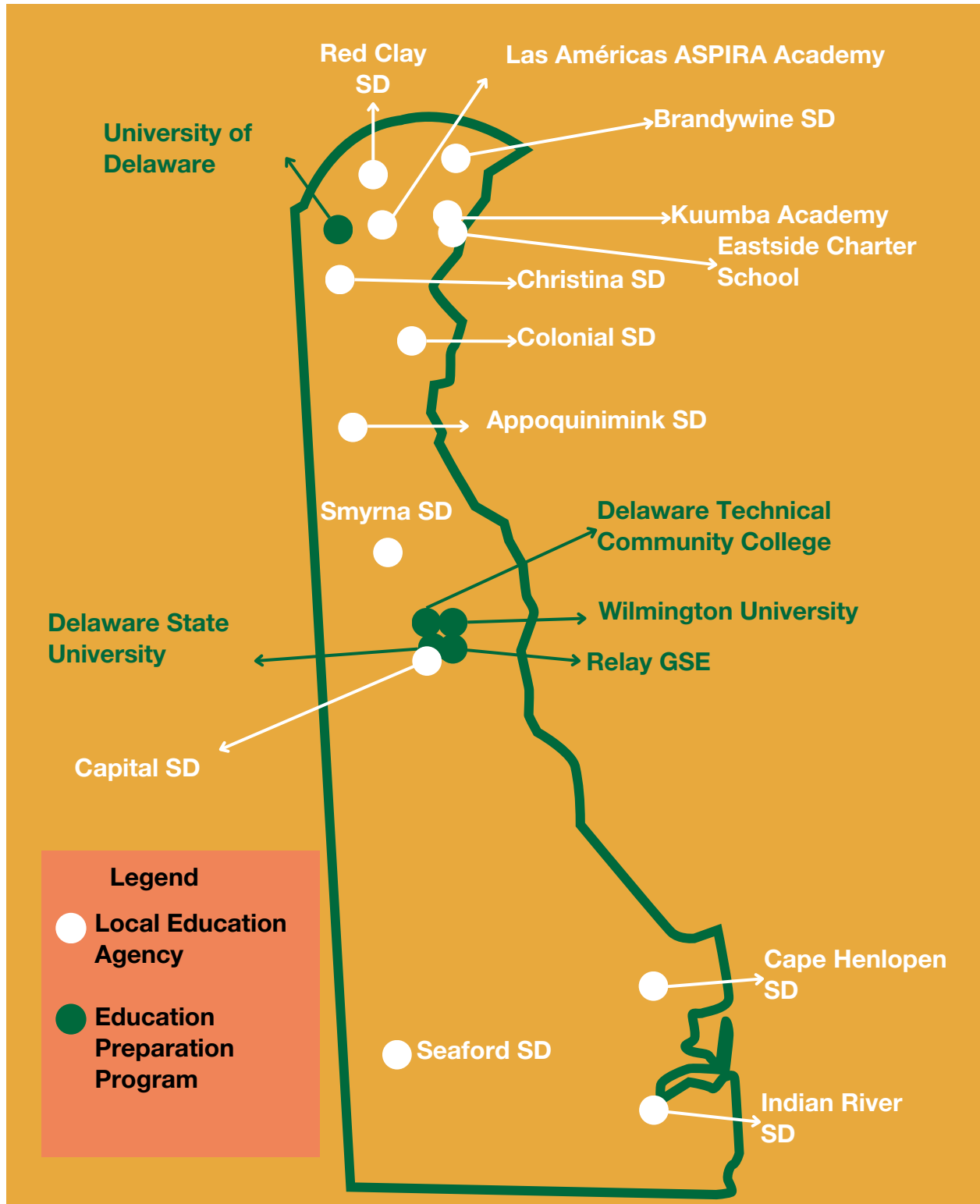
### Building the Pathway to a Diverse Educator Workforce

*Strategies that support the recruitment and retention of educators of color*



## Where are We Working

Rodel is working to diversify Delaware's educator workforce by supporting and convening Local Education Agencies (LEA) and Education Preparation Programs (EPP) statewide. We believe that by creating opportunities for early exposure, building a statewide network of high-quality teacher residency programs, scaling opportunities for teacher leadership, and creating a statewide community to action-plan for cultural competency, Delaware will build an educator workforce representative of the students we serve.



## Early Exposure Matters

Research shows that the earlier young people are exposed to the teaching profession and the impact teaching has on their communities, the higher likelihood they will pursue it as a profession. Unfortunately, many students—especially students of color—do not consider teaching until well after their postsecondary education is complete. Rodel is working with partners across the state to create opportunities for students of color to see themselves in the profession while earning college credits. The goal is to grow the number of high school and college students interested in pursuing education as a career.

## Changemakers Program

The Changemakers Program, sponsored by Rodel in collaboration with Delaware State University (DSU), offers high school students the unique opportunity to engage in college-level coursework. This innovative program is designed to deepen their understanding of the education system, school operations, and the daily realities faced by teachers. Through a thoughtfully crafted curriculum, students develop critical thinking skills and explore how educators are making a meaningful impact on the world. By partnering with DSU, the program aims to equip future educators with the tools to reimagine and enhance the educational landscape, grounded in the core principles of DSU's Teacher Education Program conceptual framework: diversity, interpersonal communication, reflection, effective teaching, content knowledge, and technology.



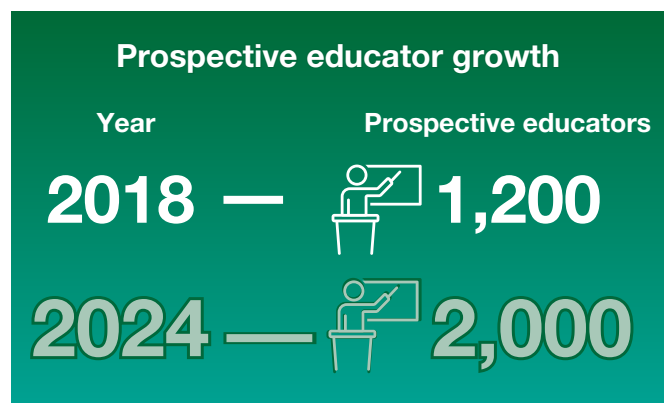
Changemakers Course:  
+50 students engaged

“[The Changemakers] course has taught me independence, individuality, and leadership. I look forward to pursuing teaching in the long run.”

~10th grade student, Sussex Technical High School

## Teacher Academy

The high school Teacher Academy pathway is a state-approved career and technical education program that provides an early opportunity for young people to explore and engage in opportunities to begin their path into the education profession. Students in this pathway learn how educators make an impact in their community while earning college credit and gaining hands-on experience in the PK-12 education system.



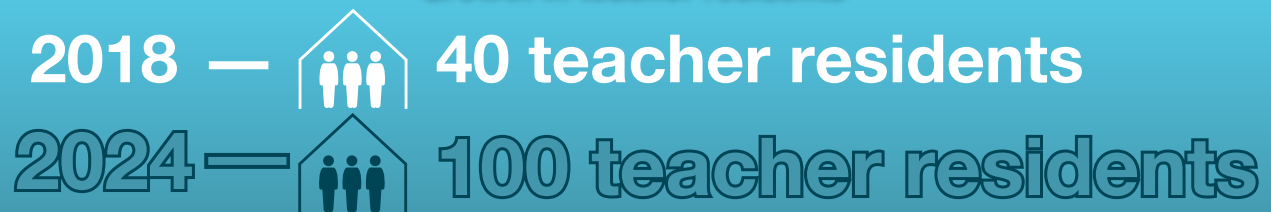
## High-Quality Preparation

Creating high-quality preparation routes into the profession is a key driver to ensuring teachers stay in the classroom. Year-long teacher residency programs are considered the gold standard for teacher preparation, leading to greater diversity and retention among teachers prepared through those programs. Building on a decade of investment in teacher residency programs by the Delaware legislature, Rodel and the Delaware Department of Education have supported six districts in developing sustainable teacher residency programs. The newly designed programs will expand and strengthen the number of teacher residents across the state.

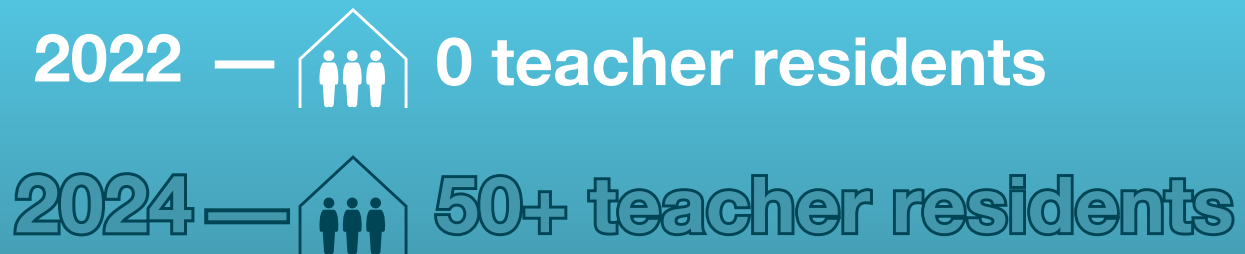
“I’m proof that it works. And the teachers that you’ve been able to keep from these residencies, they’re better prepared. They feel more supported and your students are going to benefit from it in the end.”

~Tameka Wingo, teacher, New Castle Elementary School

### Growth in teacher residents



### Increased residency sustention across six districts



## Teacher Leadership

Teachers are often asked to take on more roles in their schools on top of their teaching responsibilities, and many times, without additional compensation. We also know this is particularly true for teachers of color, who are often asked to take on additional responsibilities, serve on committees, or be default leaders without additional pay, compensation, or recognition. With support from the Delaware Department of Education, Rodel has worked with a dedicated group of 18 teachers to develop a set of recommendations to drive future state investments and policy to support teacher leadership statewide.

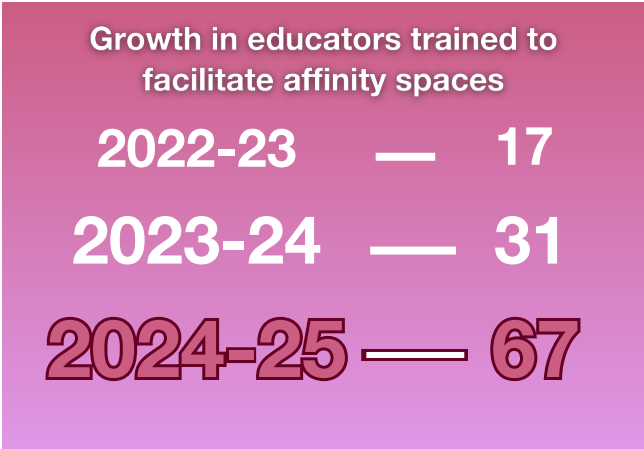
“Leading with cultural responsiveness is the responsibility of all leadership roles in schools, not just those typically thought of at the top.”

– Rodel Teacher Network Working Group



### Culturally Affirming Schools

As Delaware grapples with a teacher shortage, it is imperative to focus on retention strategies that uplift and empower educators, especially educators of color. Building strong, culturally affirming school environments where all students, teachers, and communities feel seen and valued is key to addressing this challenge. At Rodel, we are driving transformational change by:



- Training educators to become affinity space facilitators and supporting the implementation of affinity spaces to uplift and retain educators of color.
- Convening partners twice yearly at data roundtables to analyze data and co-create actionable equity solutions.
- Guiding districts and EPPs in designing and implementing equity action plans to create lasting, systemic change.
- By focusing on initiatives like these, we are helping to build culturally affirming school communities where educators and students feel empowered to thrive.

“A lot of times as a teacher, I feel like I’m on my island. I often think I’m the only one that has to juggle the mental health of my students, my mental health, and serious social issues because of the gaps of service in the community. Teaching is a job of service, so I’m constantly trying to figure out, how do I teach the whole child? And if I’m doing that in a silo, it’s extremely draining. This is why affinity groups are so necessary because educators come together in a specific time, space, and format to be heard and supported to create equitable policies.”

~Alena Warner-Chisolm, Stanton Middle School educator and Red Clay affinity group leader

Visit <https://rodelde.org/report/educator-support-and-development/> for more Educator Support and Development Reports  
Follow us on socials | Facebook: @Rodel | Instagram: @rodel.delaware | X: @RodelIDE