Integrating High Skilled Immigrants into a “Grow Your Own” Educators Strategy to Address Teacher Shortage

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An Increasing Proportion of Immigrants are Highly-Skilled Bachelor’s Degree or higher:
• 32% - overall
• 41% - newly arrived (past 5 years)

“Grow Your Own” in WA

• Growing Your Own Teacher programs are becoming increasingly important for developing future teachers for districts due to teacher shortage.

• Current vehicles available to grow your own teachers, including alternate routes, retooling and teacher academies.

• PESB has been working in the following areas to support highly skilled immigrants find pathways into the teaching profession

  – Collaborative Brainwaste Report
  – Provide funding for preparation and support through Alternative Route Block Grants
  – Conduct work group to map out pipeline for bilingual educators
  – Focus on district, regional, state policies and Legislation to support high skilled immigrants entering the educator workforce
BRAIN WASTE AND THE TEACHING PROFESSION

The integration of foreign-trained teachers and other immigrant professionals into the educational system also demands attention from policy makers and promises to bring about positive change in the educational experience of Washington State students.

The education sector has one of the highest forecasted rates of growth of any occupational category in the state, but the field is also highly professionalized; over 75 percent of jobs require at least a bachelor’s degree. Unfortunately, foreign-educated teachers show the greatest rate of underemployment compared to other immigrant professionals like nurses and engineers. They are also nearly three times more likely to be underemployed compared to their U.S.-born peers with the same education level. Those who can find work in the education system typically hold jobs that do not reflect their level of education or experience, often employed as instructional assistants or para-educators, and, in some cases, even janitors or school bus drivers. While the state has a responsibility to screen teacher candidates for competence and essential pedagogical skills, the exclusion of so many potentially highly qualified diverse professionals is a great loss to the educational system.

This loss occurs at a time when the demographic profile of students in Washington State has changed dramatically. White-63 percent of students in the state identify as people of color, only 12 percent of teachers are from those backgrounds. In a 2014 study, Washington ranked 24th among the states in the Teacher Diversity Index.

The percentage of English language learners has also steadily increased, reaching 10.2 percent of the student body in 2012-2013, creating a strong market for qualified bilingual teachers. Demographic projections indicate that, by 2025, 1 in 4 of our students will be English language learners. As student diversity increases, we must build a teacher workforce that reflects this diversity. Foreign-educated immigrants — whether teachers in their home countries or holders of other advanced degrees — can help as a pool to meet this demand.

Improving Student Outcomes: Why Diversifying Washington’s Teacher Workforce Matters

Establishing pathways for foreign-educated teachers or other professionals to pursue teaching careers brings much needed language and cultural skills, as well as rich experience and training, into the classroom.

The importance of teacher diversification as a strategy for closing the opportunity gap has been widely recognized in research and by community advocates. Establishing a more representative education workforce is also among the top ten priorities identified by the state for improving educational outcomes. Addressing and implementing efforts to diversify the teaching workforce often brings many improvements and positive outcomes for the morale of students, staff, and schools. Diverse teachers are more likely to understand the perspectives of marginalized students, which can be a powerful learning experience for students beyond academic curricula. Diverse teachers also bring culturally or linguistically based teaching approaches that expand the views represented within a school’s teaching staff.

Levels of Employment for Teaching BA/BS Degrees

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>U.S.-BORN</th>
<th>FOREIGN-BORN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign educated</td>
<td>97,400</td>
<td>5,300</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S. educated immigrant</td>
<td>3,400</td>
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Source: Migration Policy Institute, Select Labor Force Characteristics of College-Educated Native-Born and Foreign-Born Adults, 2014

Reducing Brain Waste: Creating Career Pathways for Foreign-Educated Immigrants in Washington State
Brainwaste Report Recommendations for Washington State

- Bringing diverse, bilingual instructors from the immigrant talent pool will require programmatic and systemic supports from state agencies, school districts, schools, and education degree programs to recruit, train, and retain these individuals as teachers in their communities.
- Making the effective integration of foreign-educated teachers a priority by building the existing alternate routes to Teaching Certification infrastructure to strengthen career pathways for foreign-educated teachers:
  - Develop policy to support, accelerated pathways for those with foreign degrees
  - Develop programs and policy that help candidates support and navigate the pathway to become a teacher for those with education from foreign countries
  - Expand the alternate routes to teaching pathway routes to include a design explicit for foreign-trained educators, which include recruitment advising, developing tailored teacher training programs, and securing employment in the field.
- Centralized Credential Evaluation and Standard Setting
- Case Management tied to Scholarship and Loans
“Growing Our Own” Teachers

Partnerships that support student transitions to become teachers

- Undergrad
  - Traditional
  - Alt Route

- Post-Bac/Graduate
  - Traditional
  - Alt Route

- Field

Cascading Mentorship

- Student/Parent/Community Member

Foreign Trained Teacher Workforce Entry-Credential Evaluation

Linking the Pathway

Foreign Trained Professional Workforce Entry-Alternative Route Program

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PESB GYO Initiative

• Grow Your Own Website launching July- Toolkit for Districts
  • Para Survey/ District Grow Your Own Self Assessment
  • Sample job descriptions, policies and resolutions
  • Guidance for ESSA, spending Title dollars
  • Data Tools related to hiring, recruitment, retention etc.

• Bright Spots Report
  • Best practices as it relates to human resources, recruitment and advancement, high schools teacher academies, para/emergency substitute pipeline, engaging career changers and retirees, and candidate tracking across systems.
  • Demographic report with data that demonstrates teacher shortage needs and the potential opportunities to strengthen workforce development through Grow Your Own. Analysis on and strategies for statewide sustainability and implementation of GYO programs in WA.
  • A Toolkit of recommended strategies for growing/ sustaining Grow Your Own programs in Washington State in the form of mini-case studies

• FAQ for Foreign Trained Teachers
What are the needs?

- Testing assistance
- Tuition assistance
- Full or part of their salary during student teaching
- Flexible time requirements
- Social support and a nurturing environment
- Life experience, prior learning credit
- Transcript evaluation
- Child-care assistance

What are the barriers?

- Lack of information or guidance
- The challenge of language
- Testing
- Navigating certification
- Cost of credential evaluation and certification
- Support services along the pathway
“Grow Your Own” refers to a type of program or project a district implements to cultivate their own teachers in the district’s high need areas.

**Approaches to Prioritize:**

- **Priority Populations**
- **Regional work**
- **Collaborative Recruitment and Selection**
- **Strong partnerships**
- **Innovative Design**
  - **Design:** Alternate Routes for individuals engaged by the district as Resident Intern in a mentored internship
  - **Design:** Alternative route for individuals teaching with conditional certificates
Alternate Routes are the leading innovation lab for exemplary program design in Washington State.

- Supports a Grow Your Own teacher model
- Engage the most diverse students
- Create prestige in residency learning for teachers
- Provides support services to candidates
  - Focus on recruitment partnerships, curriculum, retention and support
- Targets shortage areas and candidate populations that have been underserved
- Evaluate and provide credit for prior learning

Next Generation Alt routes
PESB awarded block grant awards to partner to address teacher shortage. Of those funded, 77% address developing paras to become teachers. We would like to see all public and private institutions of higher education as well as public community colleges offer an alternate route programs that meet their local need.

Grant spotlight: focused on high skilled immigrants and developing dual language/bilingual educators in WA

- Future Bilingual Teacher Fellows (FBTF) Program
- Secondary Educators for Equity and Diversity (SEED) Program
- Heritage University Accelerate Program
- ARC Program in partnership with STARTALK
Questions?

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