



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2024.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: _____

Program Title: _____

Program Category: _____

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: _____

Title: _____

Department: _____

Telephone: _____ Website: _____

Email: _____

SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Mirror Me
(Community & Economic Development/Organizational Development Category)

Executive Summary:

Chesterfield County Public Schools (CCPS) recognizes that a diverse teacher workforce benefits all students and staff. CCPS is a “majority-minority” school division with over half of its student population identifying as a race or ethnicity other than white. Teacher demographics reflect the nationwide shortage of teachers of color, and CCPS staff do not proportionally reflect the student body's demographics. During the 2021-2022 school year, division leaders collaborated with the division and community stakeholders to develop Mirror Me, a Grow-Your-Own (GYO) teacher initiative. Mirror Me aims to recruit and retain teachers of varied backgrounds, increase the number of minority teachers, change perceptions of hiring practices, and promote interest in the teaching profession. Mirror Me currently consists of two cohorts of 23 high school and college participants with devoted CCPS teacher-mentors to support them on their journey to a career in education. At the end of year one, two participants completed the program, earned their teaching certification, and joined the CCPS team for the 2022-2023 school year. With the support of the Chesterfield Education Foundation and university partners, CCPS is committed to growing the program each year, supporting students through college graduation, and welcoming them into CCPS as a classroom teacher. The division is committed to growing the program and diversifying its teacher workforce.

Problem or need addressed by the program:

Chesterfield County Public Schools understands a diverse teaching workforce benefits all staff and students. CCPS is a “majority-minority” school division with over half of its student population identifying as other than white. Division staff doesn’t reflect the student population, mirroring a nationwide shortage of teachers of color. Twenty-seven percent of students enrolled in teacher preparation programs identify

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as people of color; upon graduation, these students often seek employment in school divisions with diverse staffing.

Mirror Me aims to recruit and retain teachers of varied backgrounds, increase the number of minority teachers, change perceptions of hiring practices, and promote the teaching profession. Partnering with Virginia Commonwealth University and Virginia State University, Mirror Me helps students obtain an education degree and return to Chesterfield to teach.

Program Description:

Chesterfield County Public Schools recognizes that a diverse teaching workforce benefits all staff and students. With more than half of the student population identifying as other than white, CCPS is considered a “majority-minority” school division. Still, division staff does not currently reflect the student population but mirrors the nationwide shortage of teachers of color. Students of color benefit from higher teacher expectations and seeing members of their ethnic groups as role models in positions of authority. Teacher diversity creates an environment of sharing and learning from others, breaking down stereotypes, and building culturally responsive practices. White students and students of color report positive perceptions of teachers of color. Furthermore, teachers of color continue to impact their students beyond K-12 with increased college attendance and post-secondary success.

During the 2020-2021 school year, Chesterfield County Public Schools developed a team of teachers, Equity Leads, school leaders, and central office leaders to acknowledge and develop action steps to address a nationwide trend that affects the division – a shortage of teachers of color. The team’s goal was to ensure students have schools and classrooms where their teachers look like them and have similar backgrounds. The natural first step was to develop a program that encouraged Chesterfield County

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students and students at nearby universities to learn about the teaching profession, be supported as they pursue a degree in education, and ultimately come to Chesterfield as a teacher.

Throughout the 2021-2022 school year, Chesterfield County Public Schools leaders collaborated with stakeholders in the division and community, with Chesterfield Education Foundation as a community partner, with two university partners, Virginia Commonwealth University and Virginia State University, to develop the Mirror Me program.

The Mirror Me program aims to recruit and retain teachers of varied backgrounds by increasing the number of minority teachers, changing the perceptions of hiring practices, and promoting the importance of the teaching profession. Mirror Me seeks to build pathways for students to pursue higher education at Virginia Commonwealth University or Virginia State University and join Chesterfield's teaching workforce.

Mirror Me is available to high school juniors and seniors in Chesterfield County and college students at Virginia Commonwealth University and Virginia State University who are interested in becoming teachers. At the high school level, Mirror Me identifies juniors and seniors in Chesterfield County Public Schools who have the aptitude and mindset for teaching. It creates a pathway for them to reach that career goal in Chesterfield County through teaching programs at Virginia Commonwealth University or Virginia State University. Current college students seeking a teaching degree at Virginia Commonwealth University or Virginia State University can also enter the program. Program participants who earn a teaching degree through VCU or VSU are guaranteed a teaching position in Chesterfield County Public Schools. By connecting with students in its schools and partner universities, the division intends to strengthen the teacher workforce and increase the number of diverse candidates returning to serve their community.

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Mirror Me participants receive support through mentoring programs and financial support throughout their undergraduate experience. Chesterfield County Public Schools fosters partnerships with stakeholders committed to ensuring a strong, dynamic, and diverse workforce. Internally, the Department of Equity and Student Support Services, the Office of Professional Learning, the Office of Family and Community Engagement, the Department of Career and Technical Education, and the Human Resources Department collaborate to secure program mentors, experiential opportunities, and academic and career guidance for participants.

Externally, the Chesterfield Education Foundation, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Virginia State University lead the work to support participants financially and through their programs. The Chesterfield Education Foundation offers a financial incentive to participants each semester through the life of their time in Mirror Me. In addition to supporting school/college of education students at their respective institutions, our university partners provide high school students with engaging experiences and support through the college application process.

By the end of the 2021-2022 school year, leaders had learned more about the experiences of current teachers of color in the division and perceptions of hiring practices. Leaders developed processes for students to apply as participants in the Mirror Me program, and recruiting for Cohort 1 began in the spring of 2022. During 2022-2023, Cohort 1 participated in an orientation and regular cohort meetings to discuss topics relevant to equity and education. Further, Cohort 1 participants were assigned mentors who supported participants during cohort meetings and provided guidance with experiential opportunities and reflection on their journey exploring education as a career through Mirror Me. By the end of the 2022-2023 school year, two of the first 11 Mirror Me Cohort participants graduated with a degree in education and joined Chesterfield's teaching workforce. In the spring of 2023, students applied for Cohort 2. During

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2023-2024, Cohorts 1 and 2 will continue to engage in Mirror Me through mentorship, cohort meetings, and experiential opportunities.

Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:

Chesterfield County Public Schools intends to sustain a culture of valuing diversity and promoting inclusion, affirmation, and empowerment. The Mirror Me program aims to ensure the teacher workforce reflects the community it serves. While demographic group percentages between students and educators are disproportional, changes in educator demographics in the 22-23 school year from the 21-22 school year trend in the right direction by demographic reporting group. Tables 1 and 2 depict demographic percentages and changes from 21-22 to 22-23.

In the 21-22 school year, white students comprised 45.4% of all students in the school division. Black students comprised 26.2% of all students, 19.5% were Hispanic, 5.3% were two or more races, and 3.3% were Asian. Student percentages reflect the “majority-minority” characteristic of the division’s student population, with 54.6% representing a minority ethnic group. Student-group percentages are similar for the 22-23 school year. White students comprised 43.9% (-1.5) of all students in the school division. Black students made up 26.4% (+0.2) of all students, 20.7% (+1.2) of students were Hispanic, 5.4% (+0.1) were two or more races, and 3.2% were Asian.

While the composition of the school division’s student population reflects a “majority-minority,” educators, conversely, have a notably different composition. In the 21-22 school year, white teachers comprised 82.8% of all teachers in the school division. Minority teachers together were still in the minority: 11.8% of all teachers were Black, 2.4% were Hispanic, 1.6% were two or more races, and 1.0% of all educators in the school division were Asian. Teacher composition was similar the following year,

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with white teachers making up the majority at 81.8%, 12.0% were Black, 2.9% were Hispanic, 1.9% were two or more races, and 1.3% were Asian. Despite the disproportionality in educator-to-student ratios by race/ethnicity, trends from 21-22 to 22-23 reflect progress toward the desired ratios. There were increases among teacher minority groups: a +0.2% increase in Black teachers, a 0.5% increase in Hispanic teachers, a 0.3% increase in teachers of two or more races, and a 0.3% increase in Asian teachers. Additionally, the population of white teachers decreased by 1%.

Table1

Student and Educator Demographics 2021-2022 (September 30, 2021 Count)					
	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic	White	2 or more races
Students	3.3%	26.2%	19.5%	45.4%	5.3%
All Teachers	1.0% (0)	11.8% (+0.2)	2.4% (-0.1)	82.8% (-0.3)	1.6% (0)
New Teachers	1.4% (+0.1)	14.9% (-6)	3.9% (+1.5)	77.4% (+4.4)	1.9% (-0.3)
All School Admin	1.1% (-0.1)	19.3% (+0.2)	2.2% (+1)	75.7% (-1.8)	1.7% (+0.5)
New School Admin	0.0% (0)	71.4% (+28.5)	0.0% (0)	28.6% (-28.5)	0.0% (0)

Table2

Student and Educator Demographics 2022-2023 (September 30, 2022 Count)					
	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic	White	2 or more races
Students	3.2% (0)	26.4% (+0.2)	20.7% (+1.2)	43.9% (-1.5)	5.4% (+0.1)
All Teachers	1.3% (+0.3)	12.0% (+0.2)	2.9% (+0.5)	81.8% (-1.0)	1.9% (+0.3)
New Teachers	2.5% (+1.1)	15.4% (+0.5)	4.8% (+0.9)	73.0% (-4.4)	4.3% (+2.4)
All School Admin	1.1% (0)	20.8% (+1.5)	1.6% (-0.6)	74.9% (-0.8)	1.6% (-0.1)
New School Admin	**Fewer than 5 new school administrators total hired from 10.1.21 to 9.30.22				

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Program Cost:

Chesterfield County Public Schools does not incur any costs beyond expenditures for the regular day to run Mirror Me.

The Chesterfield Education Foundation provides financial support through stipends for participants and expenses to execute in-person events. On some occasions, partner universities absorb costs related to in-person events. Division staff assigned to oversee the program do not receive a Mirror Me-specific stipend; teacher-mentors are volunteers and do not receive compensation from the school division.

In its current form, Mirror Me is a Grow-Your-Own (GYO) program, but it is not a Virginia Department of Education registered apprenticeship program. Other school divisions wanting to replicate Mirror Me should plan to allocate funds for participants and events or develop partnerships with businesses or colleges/universities for financial support. School divisions interested in creating a registered apprenticeship program can apply for grant funding from the Virginia Department of Education.

Program Results/Success:

During its planning year, the planning committee sought to identify a cohort of participants interested in or considering a career in education. The first cohort would be CCPS high school juniors and seniors, students enrolled in the School of Education at Virginia Commonwealth University, and students enrolled in the College of Education at Virginia State University. The committee identified the first cohort for the 22-23 school year, comprising students from all desired groups. Cohort 1 had 11 participants, two of which were college seniors. After the 22-23 school year, both college seniors secured full-time teaching positions in CCPS. The remaining participants continue through the program at their various levels during the 23-

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24 school year. They intend to continue until they matriculate through university and secure a teaching position within CCPS.

The program continues to grow, and Cohort 2 began in the 23-24 school year. Cohort 2 added 12 participants to Mirror Me; there are 23 participants in Mirror Me as of the 23-24 school year. As intended, participants are high school juniors, seniors, and college students in teacher preparation programs. While no Cohort 2 participant will graduate from college at the end of the 23-24 school year, one Cohort 1 participant will earn a degree and go through the application and hiring process to secure a teaching position in Chesterfield County Public Schools. Depending on the composition of Cohort 3, which will begin during the 24-25 school year, at least two college graduates will be eligible to pursue a teaching position with CCPS beginning in the fall of 2025. Chesterfield County Public Schools also offers Teachers for Tomorrow (TFT) courses in three high schools and one of the career and technical centers. Students enrolled in these courses express interest in the education profession and are prospective Mirror Me participants. Increasing Mirror Me participation among TFT students is a desired outcome; however, students who aspire to attend a college or university other than our partner universities still benefit from Mirror Me, welcoming mentors and program leaders into their classrooms. In this case, Mirror Me reaches beyond its cohort participants to support student success and promote a career in education.

In addition to students' interest in Mirror Me, many teachers in the division express interest in serving as mentors to participants. Eighteen CCPS teachers expressed interest in mentoring participants in the first cohort. In the 2022-2023 year, 68 CCPS teachers expressed interest in mentoring the second cohort. Ultimately, 35 teachers committed to serving. Although there were not 35 participants to pair with a mentor, teachers without a Mirror Me mentee expressed interest in welcoming a participant to observe or volunteer in their classroom or support participants as needs/interests arise during the year. Growth

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in teacher interest is promising. Teachers recognize the benefits of diversifying the workforce in CCPS and know the value of mentorship in the profession.

Every school in CCPS has an Equity Lead, a staff member designated to collaborate with fellow educators across the division to discuss and pursue equitable access and outcomes for the school community. Equity Leads promote Mirror Me to students and teachers in their building to solicit participation in the program. Additionally, principals designate a staff member to serve as a liaison between their school and Mirror Me. They communicate with and support participants in their buildings and promote the program each year. Mirror Me liaisons also share communications and promote opportunities from our partner universities with students.

Worthiness of an award:

Chesterfield County Public Schools recognizes the diversity of its communities and values representation in its learning environments. Mirror Me is a Grow-Your-Own teacher initiative to provide high school and college students with information and equitable academic experiences, support their journey to an education degree, and ultimately diversify the teaching workforce.

In partnership with Chesterfield Education Foundation, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Virginia State University, CCPS strives to close gaps in access and opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds. The objective is for CCPS's educator population to mirror the student population, meaning the division must make a concerted effort to identify potential teachers as early as possible and guide them into our classrooms.

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Now in its second year, Mirror Me has graduated and hired two Mirror Me participants and is currently supporting 21 participants from two cohorts on their way to teaching in a CCPS classroom. Cohort 3 begins in the 2024-2025 school year, and interest among students and staff continues to grow. Mirror Me promotes education beyond high school while increasing and diversifying CCPS's teacher workforce.

Supplemental Materials:

- Pictures and website link enclosed

Supplemental Materials:

Website link: <https://www.oneccps.org/page/mirror-me>

