



# **TO ADVOCATE FOR EDUCATION**

Raising awareness about the importance of advocating for changes that elevate education and education preparation to ensure all learners receive a high-quality, equitable education.

Thank you to campaign participants for your valuable contributions



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One easy way to support change at the national level is to bookmark AACTE's action alerts page (aacte.org/policy-and-advocacy/action-alerts), which gathers the most relevant and highleverage education-related legislation being introduced in Congress. AACTE provides easyto-use forms that allow you to ask members of Congress for support in a matter of minutes. Those forms are also perfect for sharing on social media!"

#### – Christine Gentry

AACTE Committee on Government Relations and Advocacy

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Tip O'Neill famously said, 'all politics is local.' Meet your local state legislators. Go to their twin halls and fundraisers and talk to them about what is important to schools and the community. Explain what the life of a teacher/ administrator/student is like these days. Make sure they see your face multiple times so that they recognize you whenever you contact them in the future."

#### -Jared Stallones

Professor and Dean, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, University of Northern Colorado

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Embrace the opportunity to elevate and learn from educators, parents, and community members whom you would otherwise not typically start a conversation. Although some may not share your interests, values, or background experiences, they are potential partners. Remember, intercultural proficiency is a journey we are on together; our PK-12 learners and pre-service teachers are direct benefactors of our cultural competence!"

#### – Ahlam Bazzi

Education Consultant, Michigan Department of Education

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Support quality music and arts programs in schools. Every child has a right to a high-quality education in the arts. People who engage in the arts lead richer, fuller lives. The arts help to define what it means to be human. They teach us how to express ourselves in meaningful ways. They challenge us to think critically and creatively and are a necessary component in educating the whole child."

#### – David Edmund

Associate Professor, University of Minnesota Duluth



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In the state of Oklahoma, we have found our voice through OACTE. As a group, deans/ directors from the 23 teacher prep institutions across the state meet almost monthly. We have found it very meaningful and advantageous to work together at the state level. Building this type of culture and climate among the stakeholders can be a critical component and catalyst to dynamic change."

#### –Vanessa Anton

Dean, College of Education, Northeastern State University

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Attracting and recruiting prospective students to your teacher preparation program requires personal contact from teacher education faculty members and admissions offices. This strategy is far more effective than postal mail, social media, websites, or email blasts."

#### -Dr. Dwight Manning

Associate Director, Office of Teacher Education, Teachers College, Columbia University

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If we desire for educators to effectively serve those in their classrooms, homes, and communities, it is imperative we advocate for the importance of health and wellness. The profession seems to be more demanding and complex than ever. In order to be a positive part of the solution, educators must prioritize taking time to rest and recharge daily. We must be mindful that educators, much like their students, need support mechanisms in place to help them achieve success."

#### -Dr. Cherona Hicklin

Department Chair of Teaching and Leadership, Pittsburg State University

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As a university professor, I teach my students about advocating for themselves. Sometimes students must 'Do it afraid.' They may be uncomfortable, but students must remember that professors want them to succeed and speak about their concerns."

-Ronda Mitchell, Ed.D. Professor, University of Illinois Springfield



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For *all* teacher educators: we must know whom we are before teaching our students how to be their authentic selves. Especially for teacher educators of Color: Nurture your ethnic identity in your journey of becoming."

> – Lin Wu, Ph.D. Professor, Western Oregon University

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Working with pre-service teachers, one idea I've recently implemented is affirmation messages. The process is simple. Students write and share a positive, anonymous sticky note message for each person in class, including me, the professor. Silence reigns as we read the notes, replaced with smiles and even sweet tears as each person is encouraged."

> — Melissa Comer Professor, Tennessee Tech University

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As a profession all educators, birth through grade 12, must unify their voices with one another and educate society about the valuable role teachers play in the lives of all children. Once educators feel valued for their work, more people will clamor to fill these roles, which will be the start of a solution to many of the issues we are trying to advocate for separately. I encouraged these aspiring teachers to join their voices with others from organizations, such as AACTE, to make a difference in the life of a child."

– Dawnita Gallo Assistant Professor, Minnesota State University Moorhead

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Sharing information about the ins/outs of a teaching contracts/negotiated agreements with teacher candidates is a great way to grow strong early career teachers who are confident in their advocacy work, especially important in an era of increasing work intensification and walkouts across the nation."

#### -Kim Pennington

Chair and Associate Professor, Educational Sciences, Foundations and Research, University of Central Oklahoma



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The simplest, most crucial way is to engage with policy makers. Without your insights and experience, they do not know the challenges – and successes – teachers encounter while helping students reach their full academic potential. You may not always agree, but it is essential that they hear from you."

#### -Mike Rose

AACTE Senior Director of Government Relations

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Actively work against your implicit biases. There are many ways to do this; one is to learn about what happened to the jobs of Black teachers after *Brown v. Board of Education*. Start with Malcolm Gladwell's 'Revisionist History,' Season 2, episode 3: Miss Buchanan's Period of Adjustment."

#### - Terri Hessler

Associate Professor of Special Education, The Ohio State University at Newark

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In addition to attending AACTE's Annual Meeting and remaining engaged as a member, teacher educators should get involved with their state's chapter of AACTE. I am involved with KACTE in Kentucky and encourage all of my colleagues to get involved. The profession needs your advocacy, experience, and expertise."

> -Nicholas D. Hartlep, Ph.D. Professor, Berea College

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Find out what is happening in your school district by reviewing the board agenda online and then attending — and even speaking — at the district's board meeting."

> -Brooke Evans Former High School Teacher



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Advocacy for all in education begins with knowing that equity is not a program; equity is a value. Ask these questions: How do we know what our educational systems value? What is the mission? Whose voices and input inform policy? Does the staff/faculty represent the students and community being served?"

#### **– Teresa Perkins, Ed.D.** *Professor, Doane University*

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As faculty, one of the best ways to combat censorship and advocate for autonomy in the classroom is to initiate a Faculty Senate Resolution Campaign. AACTE has a toolkit to address academic censorship in IHE's, with a special section on policy and advocacy strategies curated for teacher educators. Visit aacte.org to learn more."

-Nicole Dunn Assistant Director, Equity & Strategy, AACTE

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The value of education seems to be in the hands of those who are not in the classroom. So, what happens next? American higher education's tradition of excellence is underpinned by shared governance. As issues are formulated, and decisions are finalized, meaningful consultation with constituents of one's college community (administration, faculty, staff, students, alumni, etc.) is crucial in the fight toward systemic justice in the academy."

— Leslie Ekpe, M.A., M.B.A. AACTE Holmes Scholar National Board Member 2021-22 Northern Colorado

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Teaching remains one of the most important professions in the world because developing young minds is the key to our future. New teachers have the opportunity to become actively engaged at the policy level to help advance legislation to advance the profession."

#### – Marvin Lynn

Dean and Professor in the School of Education & Human Development at the University of Colorado Denver

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### **#AACTE75Days75Ways** to advocate for education

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During AACTE's Washington Week, educators can meet other educators and have great conversations about educational policies and about issues important to our communities and students. I've organized panels with different educators to talk about some of the issues relating to diversity in the communities we serve. There's the theoretical part of it, but there's always the action side of it that we, as educators, can organize."

> -Vivian Medina-Messner Holmes Scholar

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As educators, scholars, and practitioners, we are uniquely positioned to build deep community ties to disrupt systems of inequality that impact economically oppressed communities, people of color, and students with learning differences to build long-term sustainable solutions collaboratively. The Black InGenius Initiative (BiGI), developed at the University of San Diego, is a community partnership. We recognize the potential and brilliance of young Black San Diegans and work to nurture their academic potential and access to college."

-Kimberly White-Smith, Ed.D. USD Dean of the School of Leadership and Educational Sciences

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One way we can advocate for educators is by ensuring that we in colleges and schools of education, prepare them to successfully teach and support all learners. Collaborative teams of educators, both general and special educators can work together to ensure that all students have the access and support they need to succeed academically and socially."

- Marquita Grenot-Scheyer, Ph.D. Professor Emeritus, CSU Long Beach College of Education

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Every interaction we have with a student, colleague, or community partner matters. Advocacy begins with appreciating what each individual brings to the table, takes root when we bring the right people together, and blossoms when we say yes to the right ideas at the right times. Each day is an opportunity. It is up to us to seize the day and maximize our opportunities for positive impact on children, our profession, and our communities."

-Larry G. Daniel, Ph.D. Dean and Professor, College of Education, The University of Texas Permian Basin



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AACTE is the voice of educator preparation in the United States. Their online resources are easy to access and provide excellent support for advocacy at the federal and state levels. Become active in your state ACTE affiliate to promote and support effective practices that strengthen education preparation through the work of advocacy and capacity building. Click on your state to find contact information and engage in this important work (aacte.org/state-affiliates/#info).

#### -Anne Tapp, Ph.D.

Saginaw Valley State University Professor and Curriculum Director, University of Michigan AA Center for Digital Curricula

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Newspaper opinion articles, or op-eds, are a powerful tool for reaching policymakers and the public. Write and submit an opinion article, using data and statistics to reinforce your advocacy message in support of education, educators, and students and their families."

#### -Katrina Norfleet

AACTE Senior Director, Digital Marketing & Communications

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Focus on making a difference in someone's life. Teaching is a job that can be rewarding every day and extremely rewarding in the long term. Years later, students who were in your classroom come back to tell you what an impact you had on them. I taught middle school math in 1972, and last year, one of my students from that class reached out to tell me what a difference I made in his life."

#### -Robert E. Floden

University Distinguished Professor Emeritus and Dean Emeritus, Michigan State University

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Educators are our nation's first responders for democracy. Our primary goal is to improve the lives of students through education. To accomplish our mission, we must create environments where all children, regardless of their race or socio-economic background, can learn and excel. Secondly, we must teach our students the skills and model the values of an informed and compassionate citizenry."

-Lynn M. Gangone President and Chief Executive Officer, AACTE



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Look for opportunities to fund continuous learning and peer-to-peer engagement events. The AACTE CO-Teaching in Clinical Practice Topical Action Group (TAG) used TAG funds to support K-12 practitioners and administrators who practice co-teaching in schools in attending the National Association for Co-Teaching (NACT) Conference. This Co-Teaching Engagement Award provided financial support for four practitioners to engage with higher education faculty and other practitioners, exchanging expertise and perspectives."

-Amber Bechard and Wendy Murawski Co-Chairs of the AACTE Co-Teaching in Clinical Practice TAG

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It is important to provide pathways to the profession early. Create pipelines like Grow Your Own and Teacher Academies to expose middle and high school learners to the teaching profession prior to college, which can begin to build a pool of future educators. Teaching might not be the first career choice for many, but early exposure to teaching programs could make the difference when selecting a career."

#### -Stacey Leftwich, Ph.D.

Executive Director, Office of Educator Support and Partnerships, Rowan University

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We can begin by advocating for education on a state level, thus becoming informed about potential laws/policies that will impact education before they are passed. We can no longer wait until laws are passed before we get engaged. We have to be proactive instead of reactive! We can no longer afford to give our voices solely to politicians. Let the voices come from the ones who are actually educating our children."

#### -Jennifer Young Wallace

Associate Professor, Educational Leadership, Jackson State University

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Access AACTE's Toolkit designed to help educator preparation programs collaborate with their local partner districts to allocate the American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds to strengthen the educator workforce by supporting residency models, grow-your-own programs, and other innovative approaches. Visit the AACTE Advocacy Center for more resources at aacte. org/policy-and-advocacy/advocacy-center/."

- Mike Rose AACTE Senior Director, Government Relations



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Successful advocacy depends on developing lasting relationships with policymakers, agency leaders and members of the media. You can elevate your message by becoming a recognized and trusted source."

#### – Brandi Palmer

Brandi Palmer, Director of Media and Public Relations, AACTE

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Participate in Washington Week and the AACTE Day on the Hill to continue to learn how to prepare for conversations with your state representatives. After Washington Week, we were able to prepare and align our work with the initiatives outlined by AACTE. This year we all felt more prepared to talk with our New Jersey representatives about issues around teacher education from both a state and national level."

#### -Stacey Leftwich, Ph.D.

Executive Director, Office of Educator Support and Partnerships, Rowan University

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Advocacy on behalf of P-12 educators begins at home, not always in Washington or the House. Attend your local school board meetings and ask to speak on behalf of the issues that you feel are relevant to advance the profession of teaching, the education of your children, grandchildren, and those of the community at large. Never, go along to get along. Advocate for what you believe in."

> -Alan Sebel Associate Professor, Touro University

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As a member of the education community, I believe it is my responsibility to inform and advocate with our state legislators, support schools and educators, and be a vocal activist supporting education to ensure that quality educator preparation continues, which will result in high student achievement. I don't believe I have ever lived in a more challenging time as an educator, and all of us must continue to tell the stories of our success."

#### -Sara Skretta

Sr. Director of Accreditation, Placement & Licensure & Certification, College of Education & Human Services, University of Nebraska-Lincoln



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We believe that states should decide how to confront teacher shortages and other critical challenges facing their educator workforce and propose a framework that would enable states to target such challenges. We believe four-year institutions should also be incentivized to develop new and innovative pathways with community colleges, school districts, and local educational agencies focused on bringing educators into the profession who have traditionally not had access due to financial limitations or other life circumstances."

> -- Mark A. Nook President, University of Northern Iowa

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As teacher educators and educational advocates, we have power to change the world. Schools and children deserve the best we can offer. In a recent conversation, our College of Education invited the superintendent of a small rural school district to join an innovative program that we are currently doing with larger school partners. The superintendent gave an immediate affirmative response and then noted, 'You have brought hope to our community.' Advocacy matters!"

-Larry G. Daniel, Ph.D. Dean and Professor, College of Education, The University of Texas Permian Basin

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Although I believe advocacy by individuals is essential and can have an impact, I encourage educators to consider the impact of collective action through membership and participation in professional organizations, such as AACTE or disciplinary-focused professional societies. The advocacy efforts of such organizations are enhanced and will likely have a more significant impact when reporting that they represent and are a voice for a considerable number of educators who share common values and aims."

-Gladis Kersaint Vice Provost for Strategic Initiatives, University of Connecticut

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Addressing complex problems in education requires a systems-change approach. No one entity can solve issues of educator shortage, inequitable funding, and school safety, to name a few of the current challenges plaguing the field. Institutions of higher education, state and local education agencies, non-governmental and governmental entities, and policymakers must collaborate to create a common agenda that seeks to address the root causes to systemic problems."

- Weadé James, Ph.D. Vice President, Organizational Advancement AACTE



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Start with self. Constantly evaluate and selfreflect on your impact and your service. Stay student-centered and out of your own ego. Reach back and pull others forward."

#### -Kala Burrell-Craft

Professor, University of Maryland Eastern Shore

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Just listen. All too often in serving our students, the school districts and communities, we make assumptions about what their needs actually are or what their perspectives may be. Listen, process and incorporate their perspectives in potential solutions. Actively listening to each other and creating space for dialogue has quickly become a lost art in today's world."

-Jesse Perez Mendez, J.D., Ph.D. Dean of the College of Education at Texas Tech University

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We have to think of education in ways that include and impact not just the classroom, but our communities and the people we interact with on a day-to-day basis. Prioritizing good education, with good teachers, rooted in sound philosophy and pedagogy, that invokes compassion for all learners will have an impact felt for generations to come. There is no time machine, but there is a way to impact the future and that's through education."

- Dustin D. Meritt Professor, Kansas State University College of Education

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One effective way to advocate for teachers and teacher preparation is to use your voice on social media. Amplifying your message through social media channels can have far-reaching impact that boosts recognition for insights or actions that can help educators. Take advantage of social media platforms to magnify your cause and connect with supporters. Use hashtags to engage with your audience. Thank, repost, or reply to policymakers. Get your message out there!"

— Tunara Moore Manager of Digital Communications, AACTE



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There is strength in numbers, so it is important to band together with like-minded allies. For more on forming a strong advocacy coalition, attend the ACSR Session for State Affiliate Leaders during the AACTE Annual Meeting on Saturday, Feb. 25, in Indianapolis."

#### -Jacqueline E. King, Ph.D.

Senior Consultant, Research, Policy & Advocacy, AACTE 66

Do not underestimate the power of a thank you note. More than any other formal feedback or recognition, it is the personal, heartfelt stories from a student (or family member) of how a teacher impacted them that are especially cherished. Knowing that you are genuinely making a difference, even with one student, gives teachers the inspiration to continue on the amazing journey of being an educator!"

> - Marta Perez Drake Chief Operating Officer, AACTE

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When we think about advocacy it can be easy to think that policy just happens and that the cards will fall as they will whether you show up or not. But that simply is not the case. Your story is so important, you need to tell it and you need to keep showing up— be persistent, build relationships, and get to the table. Because if you're not there to tell your story, someone else will be."

> - Kaitlyn Brennan, Ph.D. Education Policy Advisor

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Exceptional teachers ensure they make time to know more about their students' backgrounds, experiences, and biographies. The goal is to subsequently use this knowledge as asset pedagogy so that their students are intentionally seen and heard during the teaching and learning process. Therefore, let us not take our teacher preparation programs for granted because they graduate teachers who will do legacy work and create a fertile environment for students' success."

#### -Paul Massy

Holmes Scholars Council Member and Doctoral Candidate, Florida Atlantic University



### 66

We must each read our state constitution. These living documents remind us that public schools were designed to develop citizens for our democracy and that knowledge cultivates understanding and virtue — important attributes for each generation of citizens."

> — Leslie T. Fenwick AACTE Dean in Residence

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Teachers make thousands of decisions every day and with each one, you hold a person's life in your hands. Make decisions that are made with empathy and compassion. Decisions that are inclusive and civil. Have a decision mindset that comes from a place of problem solving and truth-seeking. Be creative, courageous, and work hard to say 'yes or we will figure it out.' These are the practices that move us closer to systemic equity."

-Carole G. Basile Dean, Arizona State University, Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College

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I help preservice teachers to see the best in themselves and to believe in the power of self-will and perseverance. I help them to understand that passion in life for what you do and authenticity for your personal convictions will take you far and that the lives of children are sacred and must be treasured as an educator. My slogan to my students is 'Give children a future by teaching with your heart.'"

-Cordelia Yates Assistant Professor, Education, Morningside University

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It is critical for educators to share their stories and experiences to further advocacy support and opportunities. Our narratives influence the ways in which we can continue to ensure our profession is appreciated, respected, and acknowledged."

-Leslie Ekpe, M.A., M.B.A. AACTE Holmes Scholar National Board Member 2021-2022, Doctoral Candidate in Higher Educational Leadership



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Remember, the world of education is diverse. Every topic, every idea has multiple voices. Take the opportunity to question the status quo as well as shared alternatives. Dive into all views, especially those that make you uncomfortable. We may not always agree with the voices behind each story, but we can learn from each one. Active practice of critical thinking for ourselves is just as imperative as when we request it from our students."

> **— Dawn Lewallen** Retired Educator and Librarian

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Some of us live multiple lives—professors, educators, parents, etc.—and we can advocate for education in numerous ways. Straight forward things like volunteering at a school, speaking at a school board meeting, inviting a teacher to grab a coffee can go a long way in building a more robust public education system."

> - Eleanor Su-Keene Professor, Texas A&M University

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Never underestimate the value of researching the students who are right in front of you. They humanize our spaces and make our programs practical and authentic. Reach out to students and invite them to lend their voices and opinions on how to improve programming."

#### -Rangasamy Ramasamy, Ph.D.

Professor & Interim Chair, Department of Special Education, Coordinator: Holmes Scholars Program, Florida Atlantic University

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Public education is the one enterprise designed to prepare all Americans for a democratic society! As educators and believers in American democracy, advocacy — advocacy to ensure full inclusion, respect for our plurality, and equitable, quality learning conditions — is the most honorable of all patriotic acts. Advocacy can take many forms, including teaching, inquiry, community organizing and policy making. There is a role for everyone. Join AACTE in revolutionizing the future of education for all learners. #AACTE23"

#### -Jacob Easley II

Professor and Special Assistant Provost for New Initiatives, Touro University

# 75

### **#AACTE75Days75Ways** to advocate for education

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Education is our past, present, and future and shared heritage across cultures. Because it's the strategic heart and soul of sustainable development goals in our societies, when education falls apart, society suffers! We must have the courage to stand for education. Quality teacher preparation programs, student success and access to equitable and inclusive education do not arise by chance or accident. I stand with educators! One way I do this is by serving as a volunteer leader within AACTE."

- Oumarou Abdoulaye Balarabe President, Holmes Scholars Council and Doctoral Candidate, Ohio University

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We can help to prepare and retain diverse teachers for our nation's schools by developing teacher residency programs that are clinically-based preparation programs developed in partnership between university programs and school district partners. California has invested over \$675 million through the California Teacher Residency Grant Program to launch and expand these pathways. The grant is intended to address the state's teacher shortage and ensure that California's students have access to well-prepared teachers."

- Marquita Grenot-Scheyer Professor emeritus, CSU Long Beach College of Education

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Effective advocacy begins with identifying potential partners and listening to what is important to them. Where do your goals overlap? Who is passionate about moving your cause forward? What skills, contacts, and/or resources can they contribute? Ideally, you are building relationships with partners even before you advocate for a particular cause. Start conversations with others in your education community by asking, "What are our common concerns, and how can we work together to address them?"

#### -Christine Carrino Gorowara

Senior Associate Director, Center for Excellence and Equity in Teacher Education, University of Delaware

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Working together we can solve problems, change opinions, and encourage good policy so invest time in creating a network of support for your interests and challenges. Attending conferences, workshops, and webinars is a great first step. The second is intentionally meeting at least one new person per session. The third step is to stay in touch and share information and questions email, social media, and online communities all work well. Many hands make light work!"

— Christopher Martin AACTE Senior Director, Membership Strategy



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Media relations is an essential advocacy strategy. Learn more about how to effectively work with journalists to raise awareness about and address important education and educator preparation issues at the Media Training session during 2023 Washington Week."

#### -Jacqueline E. King

Consultant, Research, Policy, & Advocacy, AACTE

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There is power in numbers. Form a coalition with key colleagues, such as state education agencies and union officials, to advocate for your policy priorities."

#### – Anne Tapp

Saginaw Valley State University Professor and Curriculum Director, University of Michigan AA Center for Digital Curricula

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I recently had groups of teacher candidates complete their Advocacy Presentations in an Administration and Leadership in ECE course. Presentations focused on the need for equitable early care and education for all children, smaller class sizes, mental health support for teachers, and increased wages. Among the quotes from students, there was one that really stood out: 'to really provide support to students, we must first support our teachers.'"

**– Dawnita Gallo** Assistant Professor, Minnesota State University Moorhead

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Opportunities for students to practice and enjoy reading should not be defined by income, race, ethnicity, or geography. Teachers need equitable access to diverse, content-rich, grade-level texts to add to their school's curricula to build out full, robust reading programs for all students."

#### -Susanne Nobles

Chief Academic Officer, ReadWorks Alumna, Virginia Commonwealth University, Old Dominion University



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I entered education at the age of 20, seeking advocacy, reform, and equity, expecting to have a voice. A decade later, with passion, I listen and ask well-intentioned questions. This is a seminal trait of civic engagement. More must be done to complete transparent feedback loops because we are as great as our relationships with one another. Therefore, actively listening and 'showing up' to difficult conversations thoughtfully are essential."

#### -Derek Porter

St. Christopher's School/Center for the Study of Boys, AACTE Holmes Scholar Alumnus, William & Mary



- Leah Wasburn-Moses Professor of Educational Psychology, Miami University



-Brooke Evans Assistant Director of Research & Practice, AACTE



Dean Emeritus, College of Education, Health and Society, Miami University of Ohio





-Lisa Bisogno Associate Dean of the College of Education, Northeastern State University



-Carole G. Basile Dean, Arizona State University, Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College



— Monika Williams Shealey Senior Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Rowan University



Professor, College Education, Eastern Michigan University





Associate Dean of the College of Education, Northeastern State University



Oklahoma State University, Chair-elect, ACSR Executive Committee