4 Building capacity to foster equity and inclusion

This chapter discusses how education systems can develop capacity to respond to diverse student needs and create a system in which school staff, students, parents, guardians and members of the broader community all share and support the will to foster equity and inclusion. It discusses the importance of preparing teachers to address diversity and promote equity and inclusion, and of recruiting and retaining teachers from diverse backgrounds. This chapter also considers capacity building in terms of cultivating values of acceptance, tolerance and respect among students. Finally, it discusses the importance of building awareness among parents, students, teachers and communities more broadly, as a key step in ensuring that the different stakeholders of a given system are on board with and collaborate for advancing equity and inclusion in education.

Introduction

This chapter examines the importance of capacity building in supporting all learners to achieve their educational potential and in fostering students' self-worth and sense of belonging to schools and communities.

Teacher quality has frequently and long been acknowledged as a significant factor in students' academic performance. However, beyond learning outcomes, teachers, as the primary actors in the classroom, also play a critical role in fostering students' overall well-being. In light of this, developing teachers' capacity to identify and serve students' needs has been recognised as a key policy lever in advancing equity and inclusion in education. This involves not only incorporating competences and knowledge areas for equitable and inclusive teaching into initial teacher education (ITE) programmes but also ensuring that teachers are able to update and deepen their knowledge through high-quality professional learning and opportunities for collaboration. Professional learning and opportunities for collaboration are also essential to prepare and support school leaders, who are central actors in shaping the ethos of schools, and in ensuring that policies for equity and inclusion are carried into effect through practices tailored to the local context of the school and community.

Enhancing the diversity of the teaching workforce can have positive impacts on multiple dimensions of student well-being, from learning to broader socio-emotional outcomes, for both learners from diverse groups and for the student body as a whole. However, lack of diversity among teachers is a challenge faced by many OECD education systems, with evidence showing imbalances in representation across various dimensions of diversity. Addressing this involves considering both strategies for attracting diverse candidates into initial teacher education and how diverse teachers can best be supported so that they are more likely to stay in the profession.

Beyond teachers and school leaders, the perceptions and attitudes of a range of stakeholders feed into shaping the classroom environment and the extent to which it is inclusive for diverse students. Cultivating an appreciation for diversity and values of acceptance, respect and understanding among students is a crucial aspect in creating learning spaces in which all students feel a sense of belonging and can achieve their educational potential. In addition, raising awareness of diversity in society among parents and community members is also an important foundational step in advancing equity and inclusion in education, both to mitigate stereotypical or discriminatory beliefs and to ensure that a range of stakeholders support and contribute to the successful implementation of equitable and inclusive policies and practices.

This chapter has seven sections. After this introduction, the second section discusses the importance of preparing teachers to effectively respond to diversity in the classroom, examining in particular how diversity, equity and inclusion can be incorporated into teachers' initial teacher education and continuous professional learning. The third section then considers the various functions and roles of school leaders in promoting equity and inclusion in education, and reflects on the need to prepare and support school leaders in this respect. The fourth section addresses strategies to promote the recruitment and retention of teachers from diverse backgrounds and groups, in light of the positive impacts enhanced diversity of school staff can have for student well-being. This chapter then explores how schools can cultivate values of acceptance, respect and understanding by fostering positive relationships among students, before discussing the importance of awareness-raising to ensure wide-ranging support for and collaboration in the implementation of policies and practices to promote equity and inclusion in education. It concludes by setting out some pointers for policy development.

Preparing and supporting teachers to respond to increasing diversity and create equitable and inclusive learning environments

Efforts to promote equity and inclusion in education depend upon high-quality teachers who are properly prepared and supported to respond to increasing diversity and create learning environments in which all students can thrive (Cerna et al., 2021[1]). Teachers, as the predominant actors in setting the nature of the classroom environment, play a pivotal role in multiple dimensions of student well-being. While teacher quality has frequently and long been acknowledged as having a powerful impact on students' learning outcomes (OECD, 2022[2]), teachers can also raise students' social and emotional skills (Blazar and Kraft, 2017[3]; Jackson, 2018[4]; OECD, 2022[2]), and their dispositions and competences can influence students' engagement, drive and self-beliefs (Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021[5]). Teachers' practices have, for instance, been recognised as playing a role in reducing cognitive and socio-emotional gaps related to socio-economic status (OECD, 2018[6]). Research further shows that teachers, and in particular their attitudes, will and training, have a profound influence on the educational development and psychological well-being of gifted students, playing a central role on their identification, support and monitoring (De Boer, Minnaert and Kamphof, 2013[7]; Lassig, 2015[8]; Plunkett and Kronborg, 2019[9]; Polyzopoulou et al., 2014[10]; Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021[5]). Similarly, teachers often play an important role in the recognition or identification and referral of various special education needs (SEN), such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) (Brussino, 2020[11]; Mezzanotte, 2020[12]; Moldavsky et al., 2012[13]). There is also evidence to indicate that teachers' perceptions, and specifically their expectations regarding educational potential and attainment, can impact on the learning outcomes of refugee students (Koehler, Palaiologou and Brussino, 2022[14]).

In light of this, developing teachers' capacity to manage diversity and respond to all students' needs has been recognised as a key policy lever in advancing equity in education (OECD, 2018[6]). Beyond being a central aspect in supporting all learners to achieve their educational potential, it is also a crucial component in fostering students' self-worth and sense of belonging to schools and communities (Cerna et al., 2021[1]).

Competences and knowledge for equitable and inclusive teaching

Teaching is a complex, multifaceted task, and even more so in a context of rapid societal change (Forghani-Arani, Cerna and Bannon, 2019[15]). Increasing diversity in the classroom is resulting in additional expectations and demands on teachers, who are required to respond to a growing range of student needs (Brussino, 2021[16]). In order to be able to create equitable and inclusive learning environments that support all learners in achieving their educational potential, teachers need to be equipped with a range of competences, knowledge and attitudes (Cerna et al., 2021[1]). Knowledge areas for equitable and inclusive teaching are wide-ranging and may encompass cultural anthropology, social psychology, child cognitive development, integrated learning and second language acquisition (OECD, 2017[17]). These areas are in addition to a strong understanding of the different dimensions of diversity and of how they may intersect, which is a crucial foundation for the creation of equitable and inclusive learning environments (Cerna et al., 2021[1]). Teachers would also benefit from having knowledge and an appreciation of the historical, social and cultural context of the communities in which they teach. This has been identified as a key area for teachers' professional development in relation to teaching Indigenous students, along with knowledge of the relevant Indigenous language (OECD, 2017[18]). Research in the context of the United States also suggests that the extent to which White teachers address and value Black students' primary culture can be a significant factor in their academic success (Douglas et al., 2008[19]; Hale, 2001[20]; Irvine, 1990[21]). Teachers' reported culturally responsive teaching behaviours in relation to Spanish language and cultural knowledge have also been significantly and positively correlated to Latino students' reading outcomes in the United States (López, 2016[22]).

Supporting the learning and well-being of all students also requires teachers to have strong theoretical knowledge of differentiated instruction and the skills to put this into practice. Differentiated instruction has been defined as "an approach to teaching that involves offering several different learning experiences and proactively addressing students' varied needs to maximise learning opportunities for each student in the classroom" (UNESCO, n.d.[23]). Differentiated instruction is at the core of equitable and inclusive education systems, as it means responding to and serving all student needs (OECD, 2022[24]), thereby supporting all learners in achieving their educational potential (OECD, 2012[25]). It requires teachers to recognise students' different learning abilities, be flexible in their approach and adjust the way information is delivered to suit the needs and characteristics of different learners (OECD, 2022[24]; UNESCO, n.d.[23]). Differentiated instruction can, for instance, help foster the learning of students with an immigrant background by taking into consideration their proficiency in the host country language and adjusting learning content in light of this (Fairbairn and Jones-Vo, 2010[26]; OECD, 2022[24]). Teachers' abilities to adapt and differentiate teaching methodologies can also play an important role in supporting the academic success of students with ADHD (HADD Ireland, 2013[27]; Mezzanotte, 2020[12]). Research has further shown that tailoring teaching strategies to suit the needs of gifted students can enhance their learning outcomes at different levels of education (Callahan et al., 2015[28]; Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021[5]).

The acquisition of these knowledge areas is both facilitated by and enables the development of the competences that are required for equitable and inclusive teaching. Brussino (2021[16]) identified four core competences that are key for teachers' ability to create learning spaces where all learners can thrive (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1. Core competences for inclusive teaching
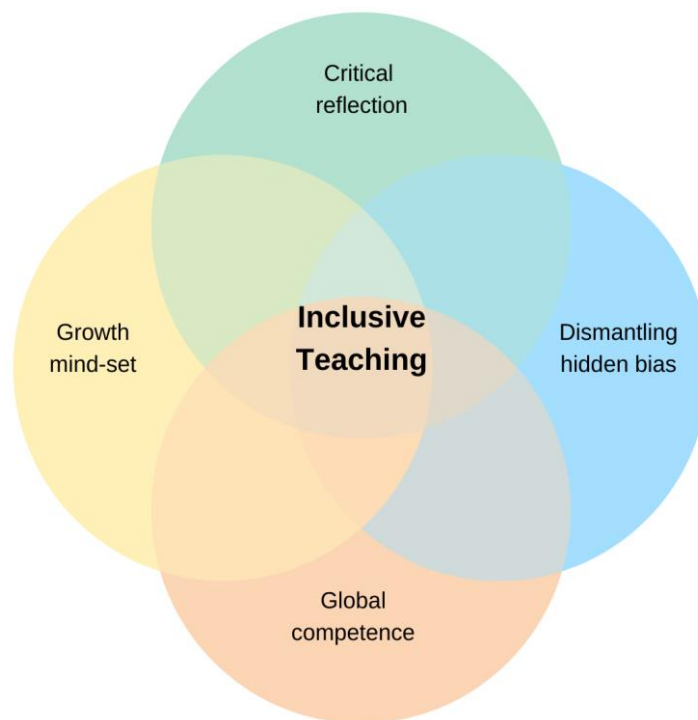
Source: Brussino (2021[16]), "Building capacity for inclusive teaching: Policies and practices to prepare all teachers for diversity and inclusion", OECD Education Working Papers, No. 256, https://doi.org/10.1787/57fe6a38-en.

i. **Critical reflection**

Critical reflection refers to the process by which individuals identify the assumptions behind their actions, understand the historical and cultural origins of these assumptions, question their meaning and develop alternative ways of acting (Brussino, 2021[16]; Cranton, 1996[29]). When teachers critically reflect upon their identities, they can better understand and navigate the assumptions and perspectives they take into the classroom, which can affect how they teach and thus impact on students' learning and well-being (Brussino, 2021[16]; Shandomo, 2010[30]). Critical reflection can also help teachers acknowledge social constructs and the way in which perceptions of various dimensions of diversity contributes to creating sources of marginalisation and discrimination (Brussino, 2021[16]).

ii. **Dismantling unconscious bias**

Both teachers and students participate in the classroom with unconscious biases (Brussino, 2021[16]). These biases, which may be shaped by a diversity of factors (such as previous experiences, personal interactions and stereotypes), can affect their interactions and decision-making process in the classroom (Brussino, 2021[16]). Teachers can perpetuate or accentuate students' hidden biases by relying solely on their own cultural frames of reference, using language that is not inclusive of all students, or by favouring students who share their own perspectives and viewpoints (Brussino, 2021[16]). In turn, teachers' hidden biases can negatively affect student performance, self-expectation and learning (Cherng, 2017[31]; Lavy and Sand, 2015[32]). Teachers working in disadvantaged schools, for example, tend to hold low expectations regarding students' academic achievement, which can negatively impact students' self-esteem, aspirations and their motivation to learn and thus contribute to reinforcing inequities in education (OECD, 2018[6]; OECD, 2012[25]). Teachers can also have preconceptions regarding the capabilities of refugee and newcomer students, believing that these students are not capable of high achievement (McBrien, 2022[33]). Similarly, labelling students as having particular SEN can reduce the academic expectations held and set by teachers (Brussino, 2020[11]; Higgins et al., 2002[34]). Research has shown, for instance, that ADHD classification among students is negatively associated with teachers' academic expectations, which can in turn impact students' achievement, motivation and self-confidence (Batzle et al., 2009[35]; Mezzanotte, 2020[12]). Evidence also shows that both unconscious gender stereotyped bias among teachers can influence the way in which teachers award grades to students of different genders (Lavy and Sand, 2015[32]; OECD, 2015[36]). Teachers' preconceived ideas have further been shown to result in them being less likely to identify students from lower socio-economic and/or diverse backgrounds as gifted, which contributes to the underrepresentation of certain groups in gifted backgrounds (Casey, Portman Smith and Koshy, 2011[37]; Ford, 2010[38]; Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021[5]). In addition to affecting the way in which they interact with or perceive their students, teachers' biases, if unaddressed, may result in them perpetuating an environment that is unsafe or harmful for some students, through, for instance, making prejudicial remarks about certain groups or neglecting to address those made by other students (McBrien, Rutigliano and Sticca, 2022[39]).

In order to be able to create environments that are inclusive for all learners, it is crucial that teachers are able to recognise their own biases and the ways in which these can impact on students, to reflect on them critically, and to engage in strategies to mitigate them (Brussino, 2021[16]).

iii. **Global competence**

Global competence can be defined as "the capacity to examine local, global and intercultural issues, to understand and appreciate the perspectives and world views of others, to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures, and to act for collective well-being and sustainable development" (OECD, 2018, p. 7[40]). Global competence requires a perspective-taking approach, adaptability, and a diverse set of socio-emotional skills, including communication and conflict resolution capabilities (OECD, 2018[40]). Equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills to develop their global competence is crucial to enable teachers to facilitate discussions on diversity and to promote inclusion in the classroom (Brussino, 2021[16]).

iv. **Promoting a growth mind-set**

Promoting a growth mind-set (in which individuals understand their abilities and knowledge as being able to be developed through effort, strategies and support (Dweck, 2016[41])) can have positive learning impacts, such as higher student motivation and performance, especially for students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Brussino, 2021[16]; Dee and Gershenson, 2017[42]). On average across OECD countries participating in PISA 2018, students who reported having a growth mind-set scored higher in reading, science and mathematics than students who reported having a fixed mind-set. A growth mind-set was associated with a larger score gain for students from disadvantaged backgrounds and immigrant backgrounds, when compared to advantaged and non-immigrant students (Gouëdard, 2021[43]), which indicates that facilitating the development of a growth mind-set in the classroom can be important from an equity perspective. A growth mind-set approach can be fostered through conceiving of and using feedback and formative assessments as a tool for student growth (Brussino, 2021[16]), as well as through pedagogies and teaching strategies that concentrate on students' effort rather than their intelligence (Columbia Center for Teaching and Learning, 2020[44]).

There is a need to better prepare and support teachers to respond to increasing diversity in the classroom

Despite growing interest in equity and inclusion in education, research suggests a need for greater emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion in teacher training across OECD countries. (Brussino, 2021[16]). In the most recent OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), only 35% of lower secondary teachers reported that teaching in multicultural and multilingual settings had been included in their ITE and only 22% reported that it had been included in their professional learning activities in the previous 12 months, on average across the OECD (OECD, 2019[45]). Data from TALIS 2018 further showed that teachers generally did not feel confident in their ability to teach effectively in multicultural classrooms. On average across the OECD, only 26% of lower secondary teachers reported feeling well or very well prepared for teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting upon finishing their formal ITE or training, and 33% of teachers reported that they still did not feel able to cope with the challenges of a multicultural classroom at the time of the TALIS survey completion (OECD, 2019[45]).

Teachers' self-perceived need for greater training in teaching in multicultural or multilingual settings, and in relation to diversity, equity and inclusion more generally, is also reflected in the OECD PISA 2018 survey (Figure 4.2). The results show, for instance, that, on average across participating countries, 54% of students attended a school where teachers reported a moderate-to-high need for training on teaching in multicultural or multilingual settings and 46% of students had teachers who reported a need for training in intercultural communication (OECD, 2020[46]). This need appears particularly acute in light of the fact that data from TALIS 2018 showed that 17% to 30% of teachers across the OECD worked in schools with a culturally or linguistically diverse student population, depending on the criterion considered (OECD, 2019[45]). Data further revealed a global increase between 2013 and 2018 in the share of teachers expressing a high need for training in teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting (OECD, 2019[45]).

Figure 4.2. Teachers' needs for training on diversity, equity and inclusion (PISA 2018)

Percentage of 15-year-olds students attending a school where their teachers report a need for training on the following (on average across OECD countries)
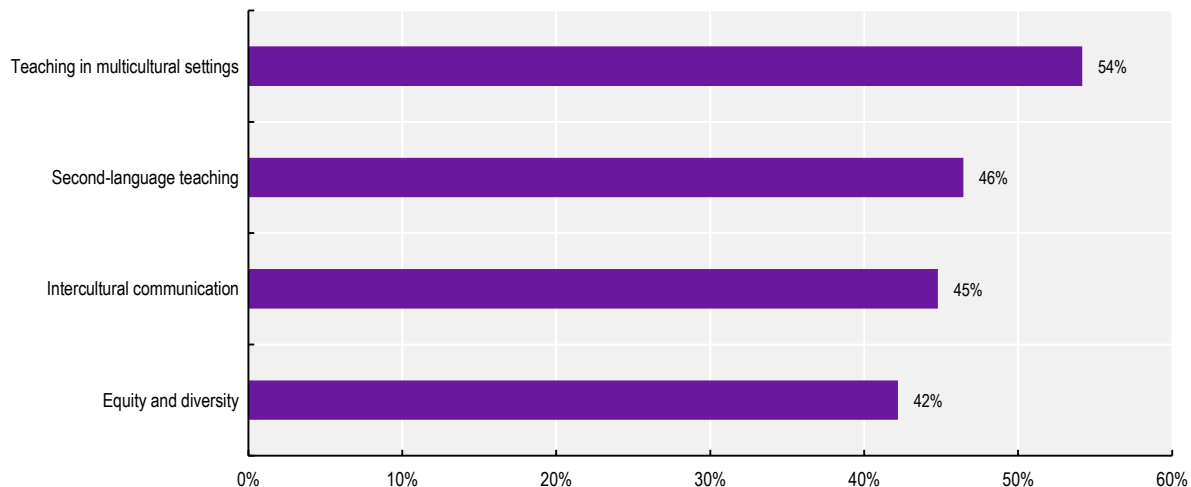
StatLink 〰️📊 https://stat.link/ka1gcd

Data from TALIS 2018 also revealed a need for greater teacher preparation in relation to teaching students with diverse abilities. While 62% of teachers reported that training on teaching in mixed-ability settings had been included as part of their formal ITE, only 44% of teachers reported feeling prepared to teach in such settings on completion of their studies (OECD, 2019[45]). At least one in five teachers on average across OECD countries reported a need for training on SEN, while 32% of school leaders reported that the delivery of quality instruction in their schools was hindered by a shortage of teachers with competence in teaching students with SEN (ibid.).

Research shows that teacher training and professional learning related to diversity and inclusion is important for teachers' feelings of self-efficacy regarding their ability to teach in diverse classrooms, as well as having a positive impact on their teaching practices (OECD, 2022[47]) and on their ability and willingness to support the needs of all learners. TALIS 2018 showed, for instance, that teachers who received training on teaching in multicultural or multilingual settings as part of their ITE and/or through continuous professional learning report higher levels of self-efficacy in teaching in such settings (OECD, 2019[45]). Research further showed that training on teaching in multicultural environments can help in addressing teachers' biases (Parkhouse, Lu and Massaro, 2019[48]) and in strengthening their capacities to foster positive relationships with students (Biasutti et al., 2021[49]; Varsik and Gorochovskij, Forthcoming[50]). Evidence also shows that gifted education programmes, from identification and assessment of students to differentiation and other pedagogical strategies, are more effectively implemented by teachers who have undertaken specialist studies in gifted education (Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, 2019[51]; Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021[5]). Dedicated training courses have also been positively associated with improved teacher understanding of, and greater confidence in teaching content related to, LGBTQI+ issues (Greytak, Kosciw and Boesen, 2013[52]; Greytak and Kosciw, 2010[53]; Kearns, Mitton-Kukner and Tompkins, 2014[54]; McBrien, Rutigliano and Sticca, 2022[39]).

Strengthening the incorporation of topics related to diversity and inclusion in initial teacher education

Preparing and supporting teachers to respond to increasing diversity in the classroom and promote equitable and inclusive learning environments starts with ITE. Initial teacher education sets the foundation for teachers' on-going professional learning and plays a crucial role in equipping prospective teachers with the competences, values and knowledge to respond to a diverse range of needs and support all learners in achieving their educational potential (OECD, 2022[24]).

Integrating diversity, equity and inclusion into initial teacher education curricula

While, as discussed above, data reveal a need for greater teacher training with respect to teaching in diverse classrooms, examples of content relating to equity, inclusion and diversity and inclusion can be found in ITE curricula in several education systems across the OECD. Dedicated, ad hoc courses on topics related to diversity, equity and inclusion – such as multicultural education and urban education – have increasingly been integrated into ITE curricula in various states across the United States for instance, along with community-based activities in diverse school settings (Brussino, 2021[16]; Mule, 2010[55]; Yuan, 2017[56]). Standalone courses related to diversity, equity and inclusion can also be found in the curricula of ITE programmes in several European countries (Brussino, 2021[16]; European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, 2017[57]). In Germany, for instance, prospective teachers are able to select two courses on SEN as part of ITE (Brussino, 2020[11]). In Denmark, the mandatory ITE module "Teaching bilingual children" "aims to prepare all student teachers to teach bilingual children and to deal with the identification of second language educational challenges in the teaching of subject knowledge" (European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, 2017, p. 62[57]).

In addition to standalone theoretical courses and modules, training on teaching in diverse settings has also been incorporated into ITE curricula through specific practical activities and programmes that encourage prospective teachers to critically reflect on their own worldviews or biases. In Melbourne, Australia, for example, the *eTutor* programme piloted by the RMIT School of Education aimed to strengthen pre-service teachers' capacity to teach in multicultural environments by creating an online space in which they could interact and engage in dialogue with students from other cultures (Gottschalk and Weise, Forthcoming[58]). An evaluation of the programme revealed that these interactions helped shift the attitudes of many of the pre-service teachers who participated and promoted greater understanding and empathy for students from diverse cultural backgrounds (ibid.). In the United States, the Persona Doll Project was a semester-long practical exercise undertaken by undergraduate pre-service teachers as part of an early childhood teaching programme (Brussino, 2021[16]; Logue, Bennett-Armistead and Kim, 2011[59]). Each student was given a persona doll with backgrounds and life experiences different to their own and was required to act as an advocate for the child personified by the doll, using storytelling to inform other students in the course of issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion associated with the doll's identity. The project helped promote awareness among pre-service teachers of their own assumptions along with improved understanding as to how different teaching strategies can promote inclusion in the classroom, with the students reporting greater confidence in teaching in diverse settings after having participated in the project (Logue, Bennett-Armistead and Kim, 2011[59]; Brussino, 2021[16]).

Incorporating hands-on classroom experience in ITE is key in preparing prospective teachers for classroom diversity, as it allows practical prospective teachers to become familiar with classroom dynamics, connect pedagogical theories to classroom practices and anticipate the challenges they might face in schools (Brussino, 2021[16]; Musset, 2010[60]; OECD, 2019[61]; European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, 2017[57]). Indeed, research indicates that practical experiences in diverse environments can have positive impacts on student teachers, helping them to reflect on and question their values and attitudes as well as supporting the acquisition of knowledge and competences

relating to diversity, equity and inclusion in education (European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, 2017[57]). Structured field experiences, for instance, have been recognised as helping to foster prospective teachers' cultural awareness, when combined with opportunities for meaningful reflection (Acquah and Commins, 2017[62]). In Australia, students enrolled in the Master of Teaching programme at the University of Melbourne who are interested in teaching in regional or remote areas of Australia have the opportunity to develop their expertise in working with Indigenous students and communities through the "Place Based Elective". The Elective includes a professional practice component, where student teachers live and work with an Indigenous community, and an on-campus learning component, where student teachers develop their knowledge and skills in this area by engaging with the research literature and sharing their learning experiences with others (The University of Melbourne, 2022[63]). In the United States, the School of Education at Indiana University offers several cultural immersion programmes that provide pre-service teachers with the opportunity to develop their skills in teaching students from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds (Cerna et al., 2019[64]). Placements include the American Indian Reservation in the Navajo Nation, the Hispanic Community in the lower Rio Grande Valley, urban settings in Indianapolis and Chicago, and multiple international locations in Latin America, Europe, Asia and Africa. Studies on the programme have highlighted its positive impacts in terms of shifts in pre-service teachers' consciousness and perspectives, as well as their appreciation for other cultures and awareness of diversity at both the global and the domestic level (ibid.).

Incorporating equity and inclusion as part of the specified objectives and competences for initial teacher education

Despite research suggesting that ITE is more effective in preparing teachers for inclusive teaching where equity and inclusion are embedded into the curriculum as central and cross-cutting themes, ITE training on these concepts currently tends to be limited to standalone, ad hoc courses addressing specific dimensions of diversity, if it features at all (Rouse and Florian, 2021[65]; UNESCO, 2020[66]).

A way in which education systems can seek to address this issue is by incorporating knowledge and skills related to diversity, equity and inclusion within the competence frameworks or standards that set out what prospective teachers are required to demonstrate at the completion of ITE. As competence frameworks and teacher standards can influence the content that is taught in ITE, this may be a way of ensuring that prospective teachers are equipped with at least some of the necessary competences to respond to the needs of diverse learners before entering the classroom (OECD, 2022[24]), though further research is required to ascertain how effective this is in practice. The Teachers' Standards in England (United Kingdom), for instance, specify that both trainee and practising teachers must (Department for Education, 2021[67]):

i. know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches that enable pupils to be taught effectively;

ii. have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn and how best to overcome these; and

iii. have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with SEN, those of high ability, those with English as an additional language, those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.

Similarly, the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST), which prospective teachers must satisfy in order to obtain their ITE qualification, require prospective teachers to show that they have a solid understanding of diversity and inclusion in the classroom and are prepared to address diverse students' needs and learning styles through differentiated instruction. They include specific standards relating to teaching students with SEN, as well as specifying what teachers should know and be able to demonstrate in relation to teaching Indigenous students and in terms of teaching Indigenous languages and culture to all students (AITSL, 2011[68]; OECD, 2017[18]; OECD, 2022[24]; Révai, 2018[69]). In Austria, student teachers

must demonstrate that they have the pedagogical competences and knowledge to teach students with various needs in order to be able to graduate from the Upper Austria College of Education. Reflecting this, inclusive content is embedded in each subject of the ITE curriculum (UNESCO, 2020[66]).

More generally, the competence frameworks for ITE in Estonia and Latvia include skills and knowledge related to the development of co-operative learning environments based on student needs and abilities and the operationalisation of the values of tolerance and human rights (European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, 2017[57]; Brussino, 2021[16]).

While further research is required as to the effectiveness of this strategy, it is envisaged that the extent to which incorporating diversity and inclusion into competence frameworks influences ITE curricula in practice will depend on how clearly and specifically the standards or competences are framed.

Graduating teacher standards or competence frameworks may operationalise or reflect policy objectives for ITE that are defined at the system level (Brussino, 2021[16]). Several countries have developed explicit objectives for ITE that relate to preparing prospective teachers to respond to diversity and/or advance equity and inclusion (European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, 2017[57]). In Norway, for instance, the values of "equality and solidarity" and "insight into cultural diversity" are explicitly promoted within the National Framework Curriculum for Teacher Education, and the Education Act for Primary and Secondary Education and Training specifies diversity as one of the main objectives for ITE (Brussino, 2021[16]; European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, 2017[57]). The Teaching Council of Ireland also includes diversity and inclusion among the objectives it specifies for ITE in its "Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers" (Brussino, 2021[16]; The Teaching Council, 2017[70]). Less explicitly, the general objectives listed for ITE in the Netherlands include promoting prospective teachers' understanding, respect and critical thinking (Brussino, 2021[16]; European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, 2017[57]).

Fostering equitable and inclusive teaching through continuous professional learning

Initial teacher education alone cannot fully prepare teachers for their profession (OECD, 2022[24]). Certain skills and pedagogical strategies are also better learnt in the classroom while teaching (Brussino, 2021[16]). Continuous professional learning enables teachers to refresh, develop and broaden their knowledge, and to keep abreast with evolving research and practices regarding equity and inclusion in education (OECD, 2022[24]). Researchers and international organisations have recognised the crucial value of continuous professional learning both in relation to teacher quality generally (LeCzel, 2004[71]; Leu, 2004[72]; O'Grady, 2000[73]; OECD, 2022[47]; OECD, 2019[45]) and more specifically in ensuring that teachers are able to meet diverse student needs and create environments that support all learners (UNESCO, 2017[74]). Continuous professional learning is also important to expand teachers' skills and knowledge in a context of growing student diversity and in preparation for unforeseen events and developments, as was highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic (OECD, 2022[24]).

Formal continuous professional learning

Formal continuous professional learning related to diversity, equity and inclusion can be provided in a variety of ways, including through seminars, courses, workshops, conferences and online training, and may be delivered or supervised by a range of actors, including official government institutions, external private providers and non-governmental organisations (Brussino, 2021[16]). Examples of formal continuous professional learning on various specific dimensions of diversity can be found in several OECD education systems. In Italy, for example, teachers undertake in-service training on teaching students with SEN co-designed by the Ministry of Education, University and Research in partnership with the particular school. Research institutes, scientific organisations, associations and local health authorities sometimes play a role in delivering some of the specific training activities (Brussino, 2021[16]; European Agency for Special

Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021[75]). In New Zealand, *Te Ahu o te Reo Māori* is a three-month programme funded by the Ministry of Education and delivered by four external providers to develop teachers' competencies in Indigenous language and in incorporating Indigenous language and culture in the classroom (Kral et al., 2021[76]). Following the programme's pilot in 2020, participants reported significant improvements in their level of confidence in using Indigenous language in their everyday teaching and in their abilities to engage with Indigenous families and communities (Kral et al., 2021[76]). In Greece, the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs has partnered with the European Wergeland Centre (a resource centre established by the Council of Europe and Norway) to provide training for teachers as part of the project Schools for All – Integration of Refugee Students in Greek Schools (Koehler, Palaiologou and Brussino, 2022[14]; The European Wergeland Centre, n.d.[77]). Experienced trainers deliver training and provide mentoring throughout the school year to equip teachers and school leaders with the competences, tools and confidence to create safe and inclusive learning environments where refugee students are welcomed (The European Wergeland Centre, n.d.[77]).

Online training modules and courses are also offered in several OECD education systems to help prepare teachers and school staff to address diverse student needs and support all learners. In New Brunswick, Canada, an online continuous professional learning course on teaching in culturally and linguistically diverse settings is available to help equip teachers to implement inclusive pedagogy for students with an immigrant background, students belonging to ethnic or national minorities, and Indigenous students (Gottschalk and Weise, Forthcoming[58]). In England (United Kingdom), the government has developed an online portal to improve access to continuous professional learning material on teaching students with SEN, which includes a resource library with materials on teaching students with SEN in mainstream settings (Brussino, 2020[11]; United Kingdom Department for Education, 2014[78]). In addition to training related to specific dimensions of diversity, examples of online learning programmes addressing diversity, equity and inclusion more broadly can also be found in several education systems. Online training programmes have, for instance, been developed in the Flemish Community of Belgium and Sweden to encourage and support teachers to effectively use digital tools in the classroom to increase accessibility of learning opportunities and tailor learning to the specific needs of students (Gottschalk and Weise, Forthcoming[58]). In Italy and Spain, the Erasmus Training Academy offers online continuous professional learning courses for teachers on topics such as enhancing diversity and tolerance in the classroom, addressing prejudice and discrimination, preventing conflict and early school leaving, and promoting socio-emotional learning (Brussino, 2021[16]; Erasmus+ School Education Gateway, n.d.[79]).

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can play a key role in some contexts in providing continuous professional learning regarding how teachers can support and serve the needs of specific diverse groups. Non-governmental organisations frequently develop training material and provide courses and programmes for teachers and school staff, sometimes funded by or in partnership with government or official institutions. In Portugal, for example, the National Association for the Study of and Intervention in Giftedness offers training courses to educational staff and supports school leaders and teachers in the implementation of personalised programmes for gifted learners (National Association for the Study and Intervention of Giftedness, n.d.[80]; Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021[5]). Government departments in Ireland and Sweden have also collaborated with NGOs specialising in LGBTQI+ issues to develop seminars for teachers (Irish Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2018[81]; McBrien, Rutigliano and Sticca, 2022[39]; Swedish National Agency for Education, 2022[82]), while, in France, several LGBTQI-focused NGOs have received official government accreditation to provide training for teachers (IGLYO, 2022[83]). There are also several examples of NGOs providing training to teachers in relation to addressing the needs of refugee students. The Support for Newcomer Education (*Ondersteuning Onderwijs Nieuwkomers*) programme run by the organisation LOWAN in the Netherlands, for example, includes the provision of training programmes in selected schools to equip teachers with the skills to be able to effectively welcome refugee and newcomer students, assess their needs and select the most appropriate teaching strategies. The programme is subsidised by the Dutch Ministry of Education (Koehler, Palaiologou and Brussino, 2022[14]).

While NGOs may have strong expertise with respect to the experiences of and issues faced by specific diverse groups and individuals, they may lack the requisite knowledge to effectively translate what these experiences and issues mean in terms of educational strategies and practices (Dankmeijer, 2008[84]; McBrien, Rutigliano and Sticca, 2022[39]). Partnerships between educational institutions or ministries and NGOs may therefore be more effective in terms of enabling teachers and school staff to benefit from the particular expertise provided, though further research is required in this respect. Collaboration between NGOs and central or local authorities can also foster the upscaling of effective programmes (see Chapter 6). This has been identified as one of the key elements, for instance, in the upscaling and/or institutionalisation process of inclusive education initiatives for refugee and newcomer students, including the LOWAN programme referred to above (Koehler, Palaiologou and Brussino, 2022[14]).

Supporting teachers' participation in continuous professional learning

To ensure all teachers are able to improve their knowledge and skills for equitable and inclusive teaching, it is important to address barriers that may hinder or discourage participation in continuous professional learning (OECD, 2022[24]). This may be particularly crucial in education systems where continuous professional learning is not mandatory for teachers.[1] Two important aspects in this respect are ensuring that teachers have dedicated time to engage in continuous professional learning and that financial costs do not hinder or discourage them in doing so (OECD, 2022[24]; OECD, 2022[47]). In the French Community of Belgium, teachers are entitled to take six half-days of working time per year to engage in continuous professional learning (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2021[85]). Similarly, in Victoria, Australia, each teacher is entitled to four dedicated days per year to engage in continuous professional learning to improve their teaching (OECD, 2022[24]). School-wide professional learning days have also been implemented in several OECD education systems as a way to ensure dedicated time to professional learning, to complement teachers' self-directed or individual learning, and to advance school improvement (ibid.). In New Zealand, for instance, the most recent collective agreement between the government and the main teaching unions provides for eight "Teacher-Only Days" during term time, which are supported by guidelines and resources developed at the national level (OECD, 2022[24]). In terms of addressing potential costs associated with continuous professional learning, Norway provides financial support to teachers engaging in professional learning on priority topics as part of a new model for teachers' in-service competence development that was introduced in 2017 (Boeskens, Nusche and Yurita, 2020[86]).

Seeking teachers' feedback and views and monitoring their progress and participation is crucial to ensure that the training that is offered meets their needs and is effective in equipping them to create equitable and inclusive learning environments in a context of increasing diversity. Teacher questionnaires can be a useful tool in assessing teachers' needs and how well prepared they feel to implement inclusive teaching practices. The TALIS questions concerning teachers' feelings of self-efficacy in teaching in a multicultural setting could be expanded to consider other dimensions of diversity and used by schools as teacher self-evaluation tools to prompt reflection on their abilities and areas of need for further training (Mezzanotte and Calvel, Forthcoming[87]). In Alberta, Canada, for example, tailored questions on teachers' feelings of preparedness regarding teaching Indigenous curriculum content were added to the OECD 2013 TALIS survey (OECD, 2017[18]). Research has shown that giving teachers opportunities to influence the substance and process of professional learning can also help to facilitate a sense of ownership and enable teachers to connect what they have learnt to the specific context of their school (Forghani-Arani, Cerna and Bannon, 2019[15]; King and Newmann, 2000[88]). In light of this, it is important to give teachers a say in shaping both the types of programmes that are offered and their professional learning pathway, through, for instance, ensuring representation of active teachers on the relevant body or bodies that set the professional learning offering (OECD, 2022[24]). Teachers should further be supported to effectively transfer and assimilate the new ideas and knowledge they have acquired through continuous professional learning into their classroom practice (ibid.). An inclusive school leadership and management that promotes a culture of collaboration (see below) plays a crucial role in this respect.

Collaborative approaches to support teachers in creating inclusive learning environments

In addition to more formal continuous learning programmes and projects, horizontal and collaborative continuous professional learning initiatives bringing together evidence-informed pedagogical theories and classroom practices are also emerging in some OECD education systems as a way of preparing and supporting teachers to foster equitable and inclusive learning environments (Brussino, 2021[16]). If implemented effectively and well-supported, collaboration can lead to increased teacher job satisfaction and improve teachers' capacity for equitable and inclusive teaching through the transferring and sharing of knowledge and experiences (OECD, 2022[24]; OECD, 2022[47]). Alberta and Ontario in Canada are two examples of education systems where in-school collaboration is actively promoted and implemented through a range of activities (Box 4.1).

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Box 4.1. Fostering in-school collaboration in Alberta and Ontario (Canada)

Alberta

The Alberta Teachers' Association, which plays a key role in teachers' continuous professional learning, has shifted its focus from individualised professional learning to more collaborative school-based activities that foster co-operation and encourage critical reflection. Some of the activities facilitated or proposed by the Association as part of this include:

- **Action research:** This involves teachers asking how a current practice might be improved and then studying the relevant research to select a potential approach. Teachers use their classrooms as research sites by investigating their own teaching through experiments to see what is effective in facilitating co-operative learning among students.

- **Classroom and school visits:** Teachers are encouraged to visit colleagues teaching in other classrooms to view innovative teaching practices, and expand and refine their own pedagogical strategies.

- **Collaborative curriculum development:** By working together, teachers design new planning materials, teaching methods, resource materials and assessment tools, and they can delve deeply into their subject matter.

Ontario

As part of its efforts in supporting teacher collaboration, the Ontario Ministry of Education has produced a series of "Capacity Building" briefs that share actionable strategies that teachers and school leaders can implement to improve their practice. The Ministry promotes a process of "collaborative inquiry" in which teachers work with other teachers from their school to research problems of practice. In teams, teachers generate evidence of what is and is not working at their school, make decisions about interventions, take action and then evaluate the effectiveness of their intervention before repeating the cycle. Teachers are encouraged to participate in a range of learning activities applying this process. These include:

- **Co-teaching classes**: In small groups, teachers work together to plan a lesson and then co-teach that lesson with assigned roles, reflecting on the student learning outcomes of the learning experience, including naming evidence of the impact on student learning.

- **Collaboratively assessing student work**: Teachers collaboratively discuss student work based on common assessment criteria.

- **Monitoring marker students:** Teachers pick a small number of students in a class, grade or school, share their assessment results with others in the school, and document the use of teaching strategies against the learning outcomes for these students.

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Sources: The Alberta Teachers' Association (2022[89]), PD Activities for Professional Growth, https://www.teachers.ab.ca/For%20Members/ProfessionalGrowth/Section%203/Pages/Professional%20Development%20Activities%20for%20Teachers.aspx (accessed 8 June 2022); Nusche, et al. (2016[90]), OECD Reviews of School Resources: Denmark 2016, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264262430-en; Ontario Ministry of Education (2014[91]), Capability Building Series: Collaborative Inquiry in Ontario, https://thelearningexchange.ca/wpcontent/uploads/2017/02/CBS_CollaborativeInquiry.pdf (accessed 22 November 2018); Deming (2018[92]), The New Economics: For Industry, Government, Education, MIT Press.

Collaborative approaches can play an important role in supporting equitable and inclusive teaching practices through promoting the sharing of knowledge and strategies among teachers (Brussino, 2021[16]; OECD, 2022[47]). In particular, "professional learning communities" can serve as effective tools in supporting the development of teachers' knowledge and competences to address and support all students' needs by providing informal environments for mutual learning and reflection (Alhanachi, de Meijer and Severiens, 2021[93]; Brussino, 2021[16]; Lardner, 2003[94]). The Life is Diversity (*Leben ist Vielfalt*) network, for instance, was initiated by pre- and in-service teachers in the North Rhine-Westphalia region of Germany and organises regular workshops, seminars and meetings for teachers on topics such as addressing unconscious bias, intercultural classroom teaching strategies and multilingualism in the classroom. Feedback received indicates that stakeholders consider that the network has had positive impacts in terms of increasing teachers' intercultural sensitivity as well as their preparedness and self-confidence to teach in diverse classrooms (Cerna et al., 2019[64]; European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, 2017[57]; Universität Paderborn (Paderborn University), 2016[95]). Similarly, "On the Shoulders of Giants" is a bottom-up professional learning community initiated by a group of teachers in Valencia, Spain, that organises monthly seminars where teachers come together to discuss research and share their experiences on strategies to improve students' learning. Data collected as part of an evaluation suggested that participating in the programme had improved teachers' practices and attitudes towards continuous professional learning, as well as encouraging collaboration and knowledge sharing among teachers (Rodriguez, 2020[96]). In New Zealand, Communities of Learning is a country-wide initiative in which schools work together to develop educational environments' that are responsive to students' different learning paths and promote equitable education outcomes for Indigenous students and students with SEN (Annan and Carpenter, 2015[97]; OECD, 2017[18]).

Collaborative teaching is another professional learning strategy that can support teachers in addressing and serving diverse students' needs. Collaborative teaching has traditionally involved general education teachers working in tandem with special education teachers (Varsik and Gorochovskij, Forthcoming[50]). This strategy utilises the presence of a special education teacher to assist in planning lessons, teaching or evaluating student progress, while holding all students to the same educational standards. While all students learn the same content, teachers have more leeway to address students' specific needs (Morin, n.d.[98]; Varsik and Gorochovskij, Forthcoming[50]). The Federation University in Australia offers a resource pack for teachers who wish to adopt this teaching style with a colleague, providing guidance on how to formulate clear teaching team roles and responsibilities, develop effective communication strategies to maximise teaching, and identify complexities and variables in managing team workflows (Federation University, 2022[99]; Varsik and Gorochovskij, Forthcoming[50]). For students with SEN, being in a co-taught classroom can be beneficial as it allows students to spend more time with and receive more individual attention from teachers (Mezzanotte, 2020[12]; Morin, 2019[100]). Beyond addressing SEN, collaborative teaching partnerships have also been implemented to help prepare and support teachers in teaching Indigenous language and culture. In Chile, for example, collaborative teaching is a strategy adopted as part of the country's Programme for Intercultural Bilingual Education to incorporate Indigenous language subjects into the curriculum. Schools form a pedagogical team made up of a traditional teacher and a mentor teacher, with the former bringing knowledge of Indigenous language and culture and the latter providing pedagogical skills and knowledge of the educational system (Santiago et al., 2017[101]).

Dedicated advisory or support workers can provide valuable support and guidance to teachers and school leaders in supporting the learning and well-being of diverse students. Learning support teachers are, for

instance, used in several education systems to support students with SEN. Support teachers focus on the provision of supplementary teaching to students who require additional help (Mezzanotte, 2020[12]). Cultural mediators with a Roma background are also employed in a number of European countries to both support and increase the performance of Roma students and improve their well-being, as well as to build trust and sustained relationships between schools and Roma families (Rutigliano, 2020[102]). Similarly, an increasing trend in Chile is the use of language facilitators to provide mother tongue language support in mainstream classrooms and to facilitate relationships between schools and parents and guardians who may not speak Spanish (Guthrie et al., 2019[103]). In Canada, dedicated Indigenous support staff work directly with teachers on their teaching strategies and practices, lead improvements in the curriculum and learning activities to build cultural competencies, and serve as a connecting point with Indigenous parents (OECD, 2017[18]).

To be effective, collaborative initiatives both within and across schools need to be supported by both pedagogical leadership and resources (OECD, 2022[24]). This can be facilitated at the system level through, for instance, regulating teachers' working time in a way that provides space for collaborative learning, funding or additional staff resources, and/or official guidance (ibid.). In Austria, for instance, the New Secondary School Reform has led to a variety of measures to facilitate and support teachers' collaboration. These include the creation of new roles within schools and the introduction of a team teaching approach, which, in addition to allowing teachers within schools to learn from each other by working together, enables teachers from different schools and education levels to come together and share best practices (Nusche et al., 2016[90]; OECD, 2022[24]). Korea also encourages the sharing of knowledge among teachers by funding action research by teachers and counting these efforts towards their professional development requirements. Funding is made available to individual schools and to groups of teachers from across several schools who wish to undertake joint research (OECD, 2014[104]). In Australia, the Department of Education and Training in the state of Victoria has developed guidelines and resources to support schools in developing professional learning communities to facilitate teachers' and school leaders' engagement in team learning. These include a Framework for Improving Student Outcomes, which encourage teachers and school leaders to make use of student learning data to design and implement differentiation strategies to support individual students' needs (Brussino, 2021[16]; State of Victoria Department of Education, 2020[105]).

Designing and implementing teacher evaluation for equitable and inclusive teaching

Using teacher evaluation to promote and support teachers' learning

Teacher evaluation processes can serve as a key tool in preparing and supporting teachers to address the needs of all learners and promote equity and inclusion in education. To enable them to fulfil this function, it is important that they are designed and implemented in a way that supports and encourages teachers to acquire the competences and knowledge necessary for equitable and inclusive teaching (Brussino, 2021[16]). Frameworks for teacher evaluation in relation to diversity, equity and inclusion are, however, currently lacking in many education systems across the OECD (Brussino, 2021[16]). More generally, data from the TALIS 2018 survey suggest there is a need across the OECD to improve teacher evaluation processes so that they better support and promote teachers' learning and development, as only 55% of teachers who had reported receiving feedback considered that it had led to a positive change in their competencies (OECD, 2019[45]).

Clear and well-structured teaching standards are a powerful mechanism to define what constitutes good teaching and to align the various elements involved in developing teachers' knowledge and skills (OECD, 2005[106]), and can thus serve as a reference point for school-level teacher evaluations (Révai, 2018[69]; OECD, 2022[24]). Incorporating competences and knowledge related to diversity, equity and inclusion into teaching standards is therefore a key strategy to ensure that teacher evaluations are more effective as a tool in preparing and supporting teachers for inclusive teaching. New Zealand and Australia offer examples

of how diversity and inclusion can be incorporated into teacher professional standards and, more broadly, of how teacher appraisal processes can be designed and implemented to support and promote teachers' professional learning (see Box 4.2).

Box 4.2. Standards to promote teachers' professional learning in Australia and New Zealand

Australia: Professional Standards for Teachers and Teacher Self-Assessment Tool

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) inform teachers' voluntary certification for advanced teaching career stages and provide a framework to assist in planning teachers' on-going professional learning. The APST consist of seven standards, which teachers have to meet at different levels (graduate, proficient, highly accomplished and lead), depending on their career stage and level of experience. Within each Standard, focus areas set out what teachers are required to demonstrate in terms of knowledge, practice and professional engagement. Some of the focus areas specifically concern what teachers are required to show to support the inclusion of diverse students, including students with diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socio-economic backgrounds; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; and students with disabilities. More broadly, the APST also contain specific standards in relation to differentiated teaching and the creation of inclusive learning environments.

New Zealand: Professional Growth Cycle for Teachers

In early 2021, New Zealand began to implement the Professional Growth Cycle for Teachers in substitution of its former teacher performance appraisal system. Through a holistic approach centred on professional growth and school-staff collaboration, the cycle aims to focus how teachers meet and implement the Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession in their daily teaching practices. The Standards include developing a culture "characterised by respect, inclusion, and empathy", understanding each student's "strengths, interests, needs, identities, languages and cultures", and implementing adaptive teaching. School leaders design teachers' annual cycle of professional growth based on the Standards (in collaboration with the teacher) and support teachers in engaging with the professional growth cycle throughout the school year. School leaders provide teachers with a statement at the end of the school year as to whether they meet these standards and support teachers in the areas identified for improvement.

Sources: Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (n.d.[107]), Understand the Teacher Standards, https://www.aitsl.edu.au/teach/standards/understand-the-teacher-standards (accessed 13 April 2022); Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (n.d.[108]), Documentary evidence examples – Proficient teachers, Education Services Australia https://www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/defaultsource/general/documentary_evidence_proficient_teachers.pdf?sfvrsn=d90ce33c_0 (accessed 09 June 2022); Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand (2021[109]), Professional Growth Cycle, https://teachingcouncil.nz/faqs/faqs-professional-growth-cycle/ (accessed 09 June 2022).

Researchers in the United States, together with the American Federation of Teachers and five school districts, have developed a set of principles that can serve as a basis for reflection on how evaluations can be designed in a way that promotes teachers' development with respect to equitable and inclusive teaching practices (Brussino, 2021[16]; Fenner, Kozik and Cooper, 2017[110]).

i.   **Committing to equal access for all students:** Teachers know and share the laws and regulations to provide full and equal access to public education for all. Teachers outline the needs of all students, including those with unique learning needs, and how these needs are included and met in the classroom.

ii. **Preparing to support diverse students:** Teachers show knowledge and understanding of individual students' experiences and identities, and value diversity as an asset. Strategies to

support individual needs and learning styles are implemented along the rationale of individualisation included in the Universal Design for Learning (see Chapter 5).

iii. **Evidence-based reflective teaching:** Teaching practices are adapted to students' needs and identities through individualised, student-centred approaches. These are appropriately challenging and founded upon evidence-based practices.

iv. **Promoting a collaborative classroom environment with a sense of community:** Teachers engage in creating active and solid partnerships with diverse stakeholders, including students, families, teachers and other community services.

Classroom observation and post-observation feedback can be effective in improving teachers' teaching practices, both through enabling teachers to receive post-observation feedback from peers and to learn by observing other teachers (Brussino, 2021[16]; Hendry, Bell and Thomson, 2014[111]). Peer observation can be particularly important in supporting the development of equitable and inclusive teaching strategies among teachers, and for this reason is a common feature of professional learning communities (Brussino, 2021[16]). Despite growing interest in peer observation, observing other teachers and providing post-observation feedback is not yet a mainstream practice across OECD countries (ibid.). Indeed, on average across OECD countries, only 15% of teachers in PISA 2018 reported providing feedback based on their observation of other teachers more than four times per year (OECD, 2020[46]). There are, however, examples of policies and practices to promote peer observation in some OECD education systems, which can be useful in informing the further development and facilitation of peer observation processes among teachers (Brussino, 2021[16]). In Canada, for instance, the University of Toronto has developed guidelines to mainstream peer observation across its faculty members, which include "Creating an inclusive classroom" as one of the key observation areas. The guidelines set out how different peer observation models can be used to assess various aspects of teaching in terms of diversity and inclusion (Brussino, 2021[16]; Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation, 2017[112]). The Department of Education and Training in Victoria, Australia, has also published a guide to support the implementation and embedding of peer observation in schools, in line with its focus on creating a culture of working collaboratively to continuously improve teaching and learning (State of Victoria Department of Education and Training, 2018[113]). As a starting point for planning peer observations, the guide sets out a series of instructional strategies thar promote student learning which include "differentiated teaching to extent the knowledge and skills of every student in the class, regardless of their starting point" (ibid.).

Ensuring teachers are fairly evaluated

A further issue to be addressed in relation to teacher evaluation is the fact that evidence indicates that diverse teacher groups and teachers working in disadvantaged schools tend to score disproportionately lower in teacher evaluations (Bailey et al., 2016[114]). This can involve a degree of rater or evaluator bias (i.e., the tendency of raters to be influenced by non-performance factors when rating), which has long been recognised as an issue in teacher evaluation or appraisal processes (Milanowski, 2017[115]). Evaluators' perceptions of teacher performance may, for instance, be influenced by stereotypes or preconceptions regarding certain groups or by the socio-economic profile of the students being taught (ibid.). Tying teacher performance ratings to student performance is another issue in teacher evaluation processes that raises concerns from an equity perspective. As students' socio-economic status impacts on their academic performance (Ikeda, 2022[116]), tying teacher ratings to student performance can discriminate against teachers working in disadvantaged schools (Brussino, 2021[16]; Newton et al., 2010[117]), in which, as discussed above, teachers from diverse backgrounds are often over-represented. As teacher evaluation can affect tenure, progression and pay, bias in teacher evaluation processes can further be a driver in teacher turnover (Johnson, 2015[118]; Brussino, 2021[16]) and thus impact on the diversity and inclusivity of the teacher workforce.

Further research is needed regarding strategies that are effective in addressing evaluators' bias in teacher evaluation processes (Brussino, 2021[16]). Training teacher evaluators on how to recognise and address conscious and unconscious bias in the classroom is, however, likely to be a key element. Avoiding bias and reporting evidence in an objective manner are among the areas on which prospective evaluators are trained and assessed in the Cincinnati Public Schools District in Ohio, the United States. Prospective evaluators complete a rigorous training programme, which includes undertaking live teacher evaluations in partnership with a qualified mentor (Leahy, 2012[119]).

Addressing equity issues associated with tying teacher evaluation to student performance is complex, with diverse factors falling to be considered. One potential strategy to improve fairness towards teachers working in more disadvantaged settings is to adjust evaluation ratings depending on classroom composition characteristics (Milanowski, 2017[115]). The National System for Performance Evaluation in Chile (*Sistema Nacional de Evaluación de Desempeño*), for example, is structured in a way that takes into account the characteristics of the school in determining the financial awards for teachers (Brussino, 2021[16]; Santiago et al., 2017[101]). The System evaluates school performance on a range of specified, weighted factors, and rewards teachers and education assistants working in schools that perform well. To ensure greater fairness, schools in each region are ranked within groups of schools that are considered broadly comparable. The variables that are used to define the groups are: geographical area (urban or rural), level and type of education, position on the Schooling Vulnerability Index, average household income of students' families, and the average schooling level of students' parents or guardians (Santiago et al., 2017[101]).

Building capacity among school leaders to promote equity and inclusion

School leaders are key actors in shaping the ethos of schools and in ensuring that policies and legislation for equity and inclusion in education are carried into effect through practices tailored to the local context of the school and community (Cerna et al., 2021[1]; European Agency for Special Education Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021[120]; OECD, 2017[18]). From an equity perspective, school leadership has been recognised as an important factor in influencing student learning outcomes (OECD, 2022[2]), and the starting point for improving student achievement in disadvantaged schools (OECD, 2012[25]). School leadership also plays a crucial role in the development and implementation of inclusive instructional programme, as well as in creating collaborative school environments that promote inclusive teaching practices and serve the needs of all students (Brussino, 2021[16]; European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2020[121]; UNESCO, 2020[122]; OECD, 2022[24]). Indeed, an international literature review found that schools with inclusive cultures tended to have leaders who were "committed to inclusive values and to a leadership style that encourages a range of individuals to participate in leadership functions" (Ainscow and Sandill, 2010[123]).

Particular forms of leadership have been recognised as being effective in promoting equity and inclusion in schools through facilitating "more powerful forms of teaching and learning, creating strong communities of students, teachers and parents, and nurturing educational cultures among families" (Ainscow and Sandill, 2010[123]). The Supporting Inclusive School Leadership project developed by the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education identified three core functions of "inclusive school leadership" (i.e. leadership that promotes equity and inclusion in education) (European Agency for Special Education Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021[120]; European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2018[124]):

- **Setting direction**. This involves identifying and articulating a shared vision of inclusive education, setting expectations for staff and building acceptance of group goals in line with this vision, monitoring performance, and communicating with stakeholders.

- **Organisational development**. This involves creating and facilitating professional learning opportunities, supporting and motivating teachers, facilitating reflective practice, and focusing on learning.
- **Human development**. This involves creating and sustaining an inclusive school culture, developing collaborative practices, building partnerships with parents and the community, and distributing leadership roles.

According to the Supporting Inclusive School Leadership project, these core functions translate into a number of specific roles and responsibilities at the individual, school, community and system levels. These are set out in the table below (European Agency for Special Education Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021[120]).

Table 4.1. School leadership roles and responsibilities to promote equity and inclusion

Individual level	School level	Community level	System level
Support innovative and evidence-based pedagogies and practices in the classroom	Guide and influence the organisation of school resources in ways that promote equity	Build partnerships with support agencies and other schools in the community	Influence the development of system-level policies on equity and inclusion in education through consultation and communication
Monitor classroom practices	Engage the school community in self-review processes and reflect on data to inform on-going school improvement	Build school capacity to respond to diversity through research engagement and collaborative professional development activities (for example, with universities)	Translate and implement policies in ways appropriate to the particular school context, and manage school-level change relating to curriculum and assessment frameworks, professional development, funding and resource allocation, and quality analysis and accountability
Develop a culture of collaboration through promoting positive and trusting relationships	Provide and facilitate professional learning opportunities for school staff	Foster a sense of commitment to a shared vision of inclusion	
Use data to inform teachers' on-going professional learning	Ensure the curriculum and student assessment processes meet the needs of all learners	Manage financial resources to meet the needs of the whole school community	
Promote learner-centred teaching practices	Ensure that both staff and learners feel supported		
	Actively engage all families		

Source: Adapted from European Agency for Special Education Needs and Inclusive Education (2021[120]), Supporting Inclusive School Leadership: Policy Messages, https://www.european-agency.org/sites/default/files/SISL%20Policy%20Messages-EN.pdf (accessed 16 December 2022).

UNESCO has also emphasised the importance of school leaders being able to build consensus and a sense of commitment among the school community for implementing the values of equity and inclusion, and to establish an environment where stakeholders feel able to challenge discriminatory, inequitable and non-inclusive educational practices (OECD, 2022[47]; UNESCO, 2017[74]). This requires them to be able to analyse their own contexts, identify local barriers and facilitators, and to foster collaboration among school staff, among other competences. Previous OECD work has further highlighted the need for school leaders

to be equipped with the specialised competences and knowledge necessary to drive the improvement of student learning outcomes in disadvantaged schools (OECD, 2012[25]). These knowledge and competence areas include factors influencing student motivation and achievement, effective teaching strategies for disadvantaged and/or low performing students, fostering a positive and caring school culture, and engaging parents or guardians and the wider community as active allies for school improvement (OECD, 2012[25]).

To develop the knowledge and competences required to be able to promote equity and inclusion in education, school leaders need access to professional learning and resources, along with the support of and opportunities to collaborate with colleagues and other stakeholders (European Agency for Special Education Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021[120]). The OECD TALIS 2018 survey included a question on lower secondary school leaders' perceived need for professional development for "promoting diversity and equity". As shown in Figure 4.3 below, 13% of school leaders on average across the OECD reported a need for professional development in this area, though with variation across countries. 26% of school leaders (on average across the OECD) also reported a high need for professional development in developing collaboration among teachers and 24% reported a high need for training in using data for school improvement - (OECD, 2019[45]) – both of which have been identified among the roles and responsibilities of school leaders in promoting equity and inclusion in education (see Table 4.1) (European Agency for Special Education Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021[120]; UNESCO, 2020[122]).

Figure 4.3. Percentage of lower secondary school leaders reporting professional development needs for promoting diversity and equity

Based on school leaders' reports
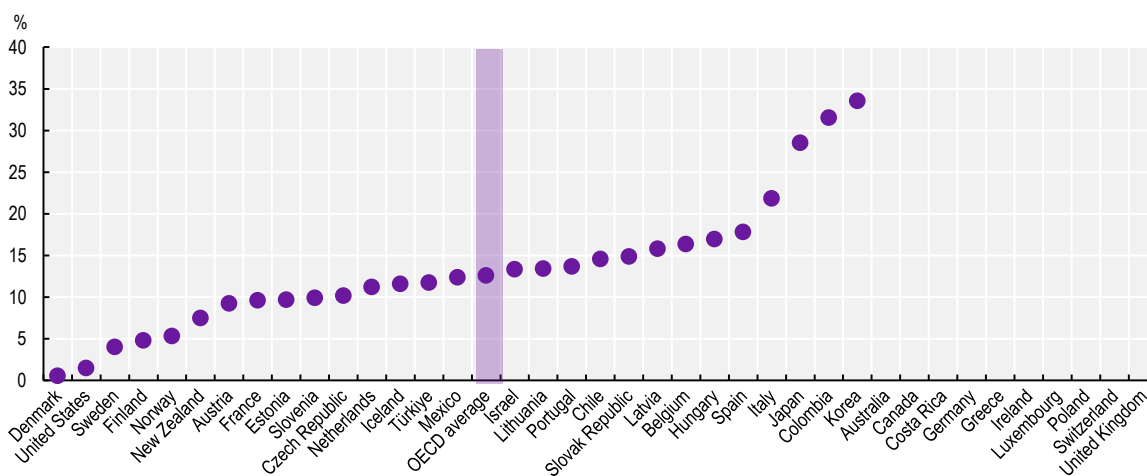
Source: OECD (2020[125]), TALIS 2018 Results (Volume II): Teachers and School Leaders as Valued Professionals, Table I.5.32, https://doi.org/10.1787/19cf08df-en.

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The School Leadership Toolkit published by the European Policy Network on School Leadership also notes that equity considerations are "relatively neglected" in school leadership training programmes, and emphasises the importance of redesigning school leaders' initial education and on-going learning curricula and activities to better "integrate methods and techniques for promoting fairness and inclusion in school practice" (European Policy Network on School Leadership, 2015[126]). In this vein, the Toolkit proposes a

set of five general principles for designing training programmes and activities so as to build school leaders' capacity for promoting equity and inclusion (European Policy Network on School Leadership, 2015[126]):

- School leadership programmes and activities should seek to develop school leaders' capacity for evidence-based critical reflection on the conditions and factors influencing teaching, learning and equity in the local context of their schools.
- School leadership programmes and activities should seek to promote a holistic approach to school leadership, which includes the attainment of both equity and learning goals.
- School leadership programmes and activities should stimulate the recognition of and reflection on diversity in students' perspectives, experiences, knowledge, values and ways of learning.
- School leadership programmes and activities should "[t]arget whole school leadership capacity building, focusing on democratic, collaborative and innovative school leadership methods".

A promising example of leadership training to promote equity and inclusion can be found in Estonia. Continuous professional learning programmes are being offered to school leaders (as well as teachers) as part of the "Inclusive School" pilot project launched by the Ministry of Education and Research in 2015. These programmes, which have the implementation of education as their cross-cutting priority, aim to improve the capacity of school leaders to respond to diverse learning needs and to foster students' individual development and creativity (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2018[127]).

In addition to formal training and continuous professional learning programmes and activities, providing opportunities for school leaders to support, collaborate with and learn from one another can be an effective strategy to build capacity for promoting equity and inclusion (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2020[121]; OECD, 2022[47]). In Iceland, all school leaders in the Akureyri municipality meet every month as part of a professional learning community to discuss practices and learn from each other (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2020[121]). In Northern Ireland (United Kingdom), head teachers from schools in West Belfast, one of the country's most socio-economically disadvantaged communities, have established a professional learning community to improve student learning outcomes. School leaders work together to identify common issues and areas for improvement across all schools, establishing dedicated sub-groups to work on the specific points identified. School leaders also have the opportunity to visit schools where identified good practices are occurring, and can participate in joint training. The increased collaboration among schools has been associated with improvements in student learning outcomes (West Belfast Area Learning Community, n.d.[128]).

The importance of mutual learning and collaboration was highlighted in an action learning study carried out by Harris et al. (2017[129]) in the state of Queensland, Australia, in which school leaders from a network of schools came together to explore how school leadership could promote the interpretation and use of various forms of evidence to enhance equity in student learning. Through a series of network meetings and action learning projects, school leaders were able to discuss, reflect on and learn from one another's perspectives and experiences on how to promote more equitable learning outcomes for students. The leaders viewed one another as sources of mutual support and saw the action learning projects as a process through which their leadership practices could be strengthened (Harris et al., 2017[129]). In addition to learning from each other, school leaders had the opportunity to engage with the varied views of students, community members and university researchers in ways that challenged their existing practices and led to collaborations to promote more equitable learning outcomes (Harris et al., 2017[129]; OECD, 2022[47]). Collaboration between school leaders and university researchers is also a key aspect of Sweden's *Samverkan för bästa skola* (Collaboration for School Improvement) programme, which was established by the National Agency of Education to support schools with low student achievement scores and graduation rates in improving student learning outcomes (Glaés-Coutts and Nilsson, 2021[130]). As part of the programme, school leaders and school boards work in partnership with the National Agency for Education

and universities to develop school improvement plans, and receive guidance and support from university researchers in the plans' implementation (Glaés-Coutts and Nilsson, 2021[130]; Brussino, 2021[16]).

Coaching and mentoring programmes can also help ensure that new school leaders are supported in implementing best practices regarding equity and inclusion in education, while also enabling experienced school leaders to share their experiences and gain new insights (OECD, 2012[25]; European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2018[124]). Coaching and mentoring programmes involve pairing a novice school leaders with experienced school leaders, ideally from schools that share similar characteristics (such as socio-economic profile) (OECD, 2012[25]). They can play a key role in supporting school leaders to gain new skills and learn strategies to respond to their own school challenges (Gorham, Finn-Stevenson and Lapin, 2008[131]), as well as increasing their well-being (OECD, 2012[25]; Stichter and al, 2006[132]). In a study undertaken in Alberta and New Brunswick (Canada), mentoring was identified as being a key strategy to help school leaders working in culturally diverse schools acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to create inclusive learning environments. According to the study, those who are best placed to provide mentoring support to leaders working in diverse schools are those with a strong theoretical grounding in intercultural pedagogies and leadership approaches and professional experience working in culturally diverse contexts (Hamm, 2017[133]). Policies and/or official guidance at the system level can support the development of school leadership styles that promote equitable and inclusive learning. In New Brunswick, Canada, for example, Policy 322 establishes a series of specific requirements with the objective of ensuring that all New Brunswick public schools are inclusive (New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2013[134]). As part of this, the policy sets out what school leaders must do in providing leadership for inclusive schools. This includes fostering school- and community-level partnerships in order to achieve the growth goals specified in each student's personalised learning plan, as well as ensuring that all academic and behavioural interventions implemented within the school have the aim of supporting diverse students' needs and learning styles. In New Zealand, guidelines published by the New Zealand Schools Trustees Association outline the responsibilities of school management boards to lead inclusive schools (New Zealand Ministry of Education Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2022[135]). The guidelines set out key areas of action for promoting diversity and more inclusive learning environments for all students (with a focus on students with SEN), providing guiding questions for boards to reflect on in their work (New Zealand School Trustees Association Te Whakarōputanga Kaitiaki Kura o Aotearoa, 2013[136]).

Recruiting and retaining teachers from diverse backgrounds

Ensuring diversity of school staff is crucial in creating more equitable and inclusive learning environments in which all students can thrive

Ensuring diversity of school staff has increasingly been considered an important policy lever in advancing equity and inclusion in a context of increasing student diversity (Brussino, 2020[11]). Enhancing diversity of school staff, especially teachers, can have positive impacts on multiple dimensions of student well-being, from learning to broader socio-emotional outcomes (Brussino, 2021[16]), both for students from particular diverse groups and for the student body as a whole (OECD, 2022[47]).

Positive impacts for diverse students

Research from the United States suggests several positive impacts of teacher-student congruence in terms of shared belonging to ethnic groups or national minorities (Brussino, 2021[16]). Black teacher-student ethnic congruence has been shown, for example, to have a small but significant positive impact on reading and mathematics performances across the United States (Clotfelter, Ladd and Vigdor, 2007[137]; Dee, 2004[138]; Egalite, Kisida and Winters, 2015[139]), particularly for lower-performing students (Egalite, Kisida and Winters, 2015[139]). Research also shows that having teachers with an immigrant background can

boost the overall academic performance and improve mathematics and reading test scores of students who also have an immigrant background (Carver-Thomas, 2018[140]; Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond, 2017[141]; Gershenson et al., 2022[142]; OECD, 2022[47]). Beyond improving academic outcomes, teacher-student ethnic congruence can also have positive impacts on students' well-being, engagement and participation in education. There is, for instance, an established body of research literature from the United States showing "how Black teachers contribute to the social and emotional development of their Black students" (Anderson, 1988[143]; Bristol and Martin-Fernandez, 2019[144]; Foster, 1997[145]; Ladson-Billings, 2009[146]). Assigning a Black male student to a Black teacher at a certain stage of primary education (ISCED level 1) has also been noted as appearing to have a significant effect on reducing the likelihood that the student drops out of school, particularly for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds (Gershenson et al., 2022[142]; Brussino, 2021[16]). Similarly, researchers in the United States have long documented how Latinx teachers can respond to and support the social and emotional needs of Latinx students, as well as their learning outcomes (Bristol and Martin-Fernandez, 2019[144]; López, 2016[22]; Ochoa, 2007[147]). Evidence from the United States further shows that teacher-student ethnic congruence (Delhommer, 2022[148]; Varsik and Gorochovskij, Forthcoming[50]; Bristol and Martin-Fernandez, 2019[144]) and congruence in terms of immigrant background (Carver-Thomas, 2018[140]; Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond, 2017[141]; Gershenson et al., 2022[142]; OECD, 2022[47]) can have positive impacts on upper secondary graduation rates and enrolment in higher education.

Teacher-student congruence in terms of gender has also been found to improve students' academic performance and teachers' perceptions of student performance and engagement (Dee, 2004[138]; Brussino, 2021[16]). However, this research is also limited to the United States. Further analysis from other educational contexts and with a more multi-dimensional and intersectional approach to diversity would be beneficial in deepening the understanding of the how teacher-student congruence can positively impact on the various dimensions of student well-being and thus promote equity and inclusion in education.

More generally, diverse teachers can serve as role models for[2] and can help instil a sense of belonging among students from diverse backgrounds or embodying a particular dimension of diversity. Teachers with disabilities can, for instance, be important role models for students with disabilities, particularly in light of the challenges they may have faced or overcome in their educational and professional life (Brussino, 2020[11]; Ferri, Keefe and Gregg, 2001[149]), as well as contributing to the deconstruction of negative representations of disability and the development of more positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities among the school population generally (Neca, Borges and Pinto, 2020[150]). In interviews conducted as part of an OECD study in Australia, Canada and New Zealand, some Indigenous students also emphasised the importance of having Indigenous school staff in terms of creating a sense of belonging among Indigenous students (OECD, 2017[18]). Similarly, the presence of LGBTQ+ teachers who are open at school about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity can serve as a source of support and may provide a sign of a more accepting school climate for LGBTQ+ students (Kosciw et al., 2018[151]) – particularly as research indicates that teachers who identify as LGBTQ+ are more likely than non-LGBTQ+ teachers "to engage in LGBTQ+-inclusive and affirming best practices" (GLSEN, 2022[152]).

Teacher diversity can also be important in terms of awareness and identification of the needs of students from diverse groups (Varsik and Gorochovskij, Forthcoming[50]). Referral rates of ethnic minority students into gifted programmes have, for instance, been shown to be significantly higher when their teacher shared their ethnic background. Increasing the share of ethnic minority teachers in schools could thus help in mitigating the underrepresentation of students from ethnic minority backgrounds in gifted education programmes (Grissom, Rodriguez and Kern, 2017[153]; Grissom and Redding, 2016[154]; Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021[5]; Varsik and Gorochovskij, Forthcoming[50]).

Benefits for the classroom environment and student population as a whole

More broadly, greater diversity among teachers can promote more equitable and inclusive classroom environments, with positive impacts for the student body as a whole. The increased presence of diverse teachers in the classroom can strengthen the promotion of values of diversity, equity and inclusion at school and help dispel myths and stereotypes (OECD, 2022[47]). For example, evidence indicates that a more gender-balanced teaching workforce across education levels can have positive influences on students (OECD, 2020[155]), including by helping to challenge gender stereotypes and promote alternative perspectives to traditional and fixed conceptions of gender identities (Hutchings et al., 2008[156]; Brussino, 2021[16]). The increased representation of teachers with disabilities can also help to promote greater acceptance of students with SEN and social cohesion in the classroom (Brussino, 2020[11]).

There is also some evidence to suggest that teachers from diverse backgrounds tend to have more multicultural awareness, which can help stimulate student engagement and participation (Banks, 2010[157]; Ladson-Billings, 2009[146]; OECD, 2022[47]) and result in more cohesive classroom environments (Cherng and Davis, 2017[158]). Teachers from more diverse backgrounds may also be more inclined to speak about topics relating to inequities and social justice (Cherng and Halpin, 2016[159]). This can help facilitate environments that are conducive to constructive conversations on issues related to equity and inclusion (OECD, 2022[47]).

While it is envisaged that there may be further positive impacts of increasing diversity among teachers in terms of other dimensions of diversity (such as gender identity and sexual orientation, and SEN), analysis in this area is hindered by a lack of available data, both for teachers and for students. As discussed in Chapter 6, despite considerable progress, there remains a lack of data for many dimensions of diversity in education. In some education systems, for instance, legislation prohibits collecting information from an individual regarding their race or ethnicity (Balestra and Fleischer, 2018[160]). Sexual orientation and gender identity has also traditionally not featured in national systems for collecting data on society (Bell, 2017[161]). A lack of data on particular dimensions of diversity - for both teachers and students - makes it challenging to fully assess the impacts of enhancing teacher diversity.

There is currently a lack of diversity in the teaching profession across OECD countries

Many OECD countries are currently facing challenges in terms of widespread teacher shortages and high teacher turnover and attrition (OECD, 2019[45]). These issues, which hinder the provision of quality education for all learners and thus impact on educational equity, are compounded by a widespread lack of diversity among teachers across OECD countries, with evidence showing imbalances in terms of representation across various dimensions of diversity (Brussino, 2021[16]).

Data show, for instance, the persistence of gender imbalances among those entering and staying in the teaching profession. Female teachers are particularly over-represented in lower education levels, making up 82% of primary teachers on average in OECD countries in 2019, compared to 63% at secondary level and 44% at tertiary level (OECD, 2021[162]). While they are over-represented in the teaching workforce, however, they are comparatively under-represented in school leadership roles (47% on average across OECD countries) (OECD, 2020[155]).

Teachers in many OECD countries tend largely to come from the dominant cultural groups in their countries, while increasingly teaching to non-dominant cultures and minorities (Forghani-Arani, Cerna and Bannon, 2019[15]). In the United States, for example, Black males represent only 2% of the teaching force whereas African Americans account for at least 13.4% of the total population (United States Census Bureau, 2020[163]; Brussino, 2021[16]). Only 12% of all prospective teachers in England (United Kingdom) and 6% of all prospective teachers in Wales (United Kingdom) have an ethnic minority background, compared to 29% of primary school and 25% of secondary school students. This is an issue in terms of inclusive education as teachers from non-minority backgrounds may have only partial, biased and filtered

understandings of the experiences lived by individuals from non-dominant cultures (Forghani-Arani, Cerna and Bannon, 2019[15]). Having a majority of teachers from the dominant culture can make it more likely that teachers' dominant norms and values largely shape the classroom environment (OECD, 2022[47]). Given that students are often rewarded for conforming to prevailing school norms (Chambers et al., 2014[164]), having predominantly monocultural learning spaces can enable the reproduction of power and privilege (Moore and Bell, 1995[165]) and contribute to perpetuating "a cycle of inequity" (OECD, 2022[47]).

While there is a lack of official figures regarding Indigenous teachers and non-official figures are hard to verify (United Nations, n.d.[166]), teachers belonging to Indigenous communities or national minority backgrounds are also likely to be under-represented in the teaching profession across several countries. This is reflected in the existence of targeted policies in countries such as Canada to recruit more Indigenous teachers to the profession (Oloo and Kiramba, 2022[167]). As noted above, research indicates that the presence of Indigenous teachers is important for Indigenous students' feelings of belonging (OECD, 2017[18]).

Statistics on teachers with disabilities or SEN are similarly scarce (Brussino, 2021[16]). There is, however, a widespread understanding that, despite the existence of non-discrimination laws and policies in many OECD countries, teachers with diverse abilities continue to be under-represented across OECD education systems (Brussino, 2020[11]). This hinders efforts to promote diversity and inclusion on both sides of the classroom (Brussino, 2021[16]).

Similarly, as discussed above, sexual orientation and gender identity has traditionally not featured in national systems for collecting data on society (Bell, 2017[161]), which means that it is difficult to obtain a clear picture on the representation of LGBTQI+ persons in the teaching workforce.

There are multiple factors that come into play when considering the reasons for lack of diversity in the teaching profession. These include financial issues, which, while being a reason for the lack of attractiveness of the teaching profession generally, can particularly affect potential teacher candidates from diverse backgrounds (Brussino, 2021[16]). In the United States, for example, student debt represents a key deterrent for potential prospective Black students, who, being more likely to take out student loans to pay for their education (Fiddiman, Campbell and Partelow, 2019[168]) would likely enter the teaching profession with a higher pay penalty[3] than others (Allegretto and Mishel, 2019[169]; Brussino, 2021[16]). Recruitment and admissions procedures for ITE may also have the effect of indirectly discriminating against teachers from diverse backgrounds by assessing teacher candidates on the basis of their education history rather than their knowledge and competences (Brussino, 2021[16]).

Attracting diverse candidates into ITE as a foundational step towards enhanced diversity in the teaching workforce

Attracting and retaining more diverse candidates in ITE is a key first step to achieving greater diversity in the classroom and promoting equity and inclusion in education (Brussino, 2021[16]; OECD, 2022[47]). Education systems across the OECD have adopted a variety of initiatives to try to attract more diverse candidates into ITE. Strategies implemented as part of these initiatives include:

   i.   Investigating reasons for the underrepresentation of certain groups in ITE;
   ii. Disseminating information about teaching to groups who are under-represented in the teaching workforce;
   iii. Promoting positive teacher role models from diverse backgrounds or groups;
   iv. Providing financial assistance or incentives;
   v.   Offering career counselling and support in partnership with schools or higher education institutions;
   vi. Establishing support networks for prospective teacher candidates; and
   vii. Offering alternative teacher certification programmes.

Conducting research into the reasons that may be behind the comparatively low enrolment rates of candidates from diverse backgrounds and groups in ITE programmes in a particular education system is a crucial first step to identifying policy measures that can improve the diversity of the teaching workforce. In England (United Kingdom), the South East Black and Minority Ethnic Project is a regional collaboration bringing together a number of ITE institutions to generate knowledge regarding the low recruitment rates of Black and ethnic minority teachers and strategies to address this. Factors identified through the research as contributing to the low recruitment rates include lack of awareness of the application process for ITE, lack of support networks and lack of access to shadow teaching experiences, as well as the low prestige and low salaries associated with the teaching profession (Brussino, 2021[16]; Donlevy, Rajaina and Meierkord, 2016[170]).

Conducting outreach activities and proactively engaging with young adults from particular communities or groups has also been employed in several education systems as a strategy to attract more diverse candidates into ITE programmes. In Germany, *Schülercampus – mehr Migranten werden Lehrer* (Campus for Pupils – More migrants are becoming teachers) is a nationwide programme implemented by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, in partnership with the ZEIT Foundation and local universities, to provide targeted career counselling for upper secondary students with an immigrant background who are interested in pursuing a teaching career. The programme offers four-day intensive, residential workshops to enable students to explore the opportunities of and requirements for becoming a teacher and to provide a foundation for local support networks (Brussino, 2021[16]; Donlevy, Rajaina and Meierkord, 2016[170]). Similarly, an ITE institution in Salzburg, Austria, organises and holds information days (called "We want you!") in co-operation with migrant associations to introduce secondary students with an immigrant background to teaching as a career option (Donlevy, Rajaina and Meierkord, 2016[170]). An ITE institution in Stockholm, Sweden, also runs information days as part of its objective of recruiting student teachers from economically disadvantaged suburbs, which also tend to be ethnically diverse (Donlevy, Rajaina and Meierkord, 2016[170]). In the United States, Pathways2Teaching is a programme run by the University of Colorado Denver designed to give upper secondary school students, and particularly those from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds, the opportunity to explore teaching as a potential career choice while reflecting on issues related to educational equity. As part of the programme, students participate in weekly field experiences in primary schools, learn skills to assist them in applying to higher education programmes, engage with current student teachers, and learn about how teaching can challenge existing inequities and advance social justice. Approximately 50% of upper secondary students who participate in the programme go on to study teaching (Barber, 2018[171]).

Financial incentives can be an effective tool to promote diversity in the teaching body (Bireda and Chait, 2011[172]; Brussino, 2021[16]), particularly in light of the fact that the low monetary attractiveness of the teaching profession can deter many individuals, especially those from diverse backgrounds from pursuing a teaching career (Fiddiman, Campbell and Partelow, 2019[168]). A number of European countries, for example, have scholarship programmes to attract prospective teacher students from minority, immigrant or lower socio-economic backgrounds (Brussino, 2020[11]; European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, 2017[57]). Scholarships are also provided in various states in the United States, by ITE providers and/or official local education institutions, as a means of attracting candidates from diverse backgrounds into ITE. The Minority Teacher Incentive Grant Program in Connecticut, for example, provides up to USD 5 000 per year for the final two years of full-time study to undergraduates of colour enrolled in a Connecticut teacher preparation programme (Connecticut's Official State Website, 2022[173]).

Alternative teacher certification programmes can provide quicker, more flexible and more affordable routes into the teaching profession than traditional ITE programmes and can therefore serve as a strategy for attracting more diverse teacher candidates (Brussino, 2021[16]; Rafa and Roberts, 2020[174]). Following the mass migration in 2015 from specific war zones to Europe, several European countries developed re-qualification and preparation programmes for newly arrived migrant teachers to address teacher

shortages and respond to the increasing diversity of the student body (Cerna et al., 2019[64]; OECD, 2019[45]). The project Basics of Educational Studies for Displaced Teachers, for example, provides a re-qualification certificate programme to enable displaced teachers to re-enter the teaching profession in Austria, while also undertaking research and collecting data on the educational background and the professional needs of displaced teachers. The project responds to the need to receive, include and integrate newly arrived students in the Austrian education system and recognises the crucial role of teachers who speak the native languages of the newly arrived students in facilitating this process (Cerna et al., 2019[64]). Similar initiatives were also undertaken in Germany and Sweden (Ibid).

Several European countries, such as Estonia, Greece and Hungary, also offer specific alternative certification programmes for prospective teachers belonging to national minority groups (Brussino, 2021[16]; European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, 2017[57]). It is important, however, that such programmes are complemented by initiatives to address potential gaps in terms of ITE and to support teachers' successful integration into the teaching workforce, in order to ensure that all students have access to quality teachers, which, as noted above, is key for equity in education (OECD, 2022[24]). Effective induction and mentoring programmes (see below) can play a critical role in this respect.

Retaining diverse teachers to promote equity and inclusion in education

In addition to the issues that may impact on the recruitment of diverse candidates into the teaching profession high attrition in the early years of teaching, particularly of diverse teachers, represents a key challenge for education systems across the OECD that impacts on efforts to advance equity and inclusion in education (Brussino, 2021[16]).

High attrition and turnover rates among teachers generally are an issue across OECD countries (OECD, 2019[45]). Among the reasons for this is the fact that teaching can be a stressful and demanding career (OECD, 2020[125]), even more so in light of the additional expectations on teachers arising from increased diversity in schools (Brussino, 2021[16]) and from external events and developments such as the COVID-19 pandemic. TALIS 2018 data collected from schools at the primary and secondary levels prior to the pandemic showed that an average of one out of six teachers at the primary and secondary level reported feeling a "lot" of stress in their work in TALIS 2018 (OECD, 2021[175]). High stress levels can contribute to teachers' desire to leave the profession (OECD, 2020[125]), with regression analyses from TALIS 2018 data showing that teachers who reported feeling a lot of stress in their work are more likely to report wanting to leave the profession in the next five years in almost all participating countries and economies (OECD, 2021[175]). High turnover has implications in terms of stability, continuity and expertise within the teaching workforce and schools' ability to implement and sustain equity and inclusion measures (OECD, 2022[47]).

There is limited research focusing specifically on the turnover of teachers from diverse backgrounds or who embody a dimension of diversity – though studies have revealed higher attrition rates for teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds in both England (United Kingdom) and the United States (Cerna et al., 2021[1]; Ingersoll, May and Collins, 2017[176]; Tereshchenko, Mills and Bradbury, 2020[177]). High attrition rates among Indigenous teachers have also been identified as an area of concern in Canada (Burleigh, 2016[178]; Mueller et al., 2013[179]) and in Australia (Perkins and Shay, 2022[180]). On top of the stress and challenges associated with the general demands of the teaching profession, teachers from diverse backgrounds may also experience feelings of isolation and disconnection from their peers (Cerna et al., 2021[1]), receive limited support for their professional development, and/or feel unsafe in their school environment due to discrimination, microaggressions or harassment (Gist et al., 2021[181]). They may also be expected to take on additional work or responsibilities without formal recognition or support. Indigenous teachers for instance, are sometimes asked to take on a liaison role with all Indigenous parents or guardians in the school community, rather than just those of the students they themselves teach (OECD, 2017[18]), as well as being expected to explain Indigenous customs and protocol to other staff and/or

organise cultural events, without support or recognition (O'Callaghan, 2021[182]). In a similar vein, teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds have also reported feeling that they are regarded as "cultural support staff" or as experts on (inter-)cultural questions or matters (Bressler and Rotter, 2017[183]; Basit and Santoro, 2011[184]). Black male teachers interviewed in a study undertaken by Bristol and Mentor (2018[185]) also described being expected to take on the responsibility of managing or discipling misbehaving students and feeling that their colleagues perceived them as disciplinarians first and educators second (Bristol and Mentor, 2018[185]).

Teachers who identify as LGBTQ+ can face additional challenges, including discrimination and harassment, a feeling that their concerns are not heard or respected by school leadership, and stress due to fear of potential job loss on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity (Davis, 2022[186]; GLSEN, 2022[152]; Wright, Smith and Whitney, 2019[187]). In a study undertaken in the United Kingdom, for instance, one in four of the LGBT teachers surveyed reported that they believed that their sexual orientation or gender identity had been a barrier to promotion (Lee, 2019[188]). The existence of prejudice and stereotypes within school communities has also been noted as a key challenge facing teachers with disabilities, along with difficulties associated with a lack of support, both in terms of physical resources (such as materials in Braille for teachers with visual impairment) and human support (assistance, tutoring and peer support) (Neca, Borges and Pinto, 2020[150]).

Understanding the experiences teachers from diverse backgrounds and groups is crucial for identifying and implementing effective policies and strategies to support the retention of a diverse teaching workforce (Davis, 2022[186]; GLSEN, 2022[152]). However, comparatively little attention has so far been given to teachers from diverse backgrounds and groups in research on inclusive education, both in terms of the extent to which they are represented in the teaching workforce and in terms of the specific challenges they may encounter (GLSEN, 2022[152]; Neca, Borges and Pinto, 2020[150]). Further research is necessary in order to obtain a more fulsome picture of the diversity (or lack thereof) in the teaching profession, of the factors that may contribute to diverse teachers deciding to leave, and of the measures that are likely to be effective in supporting their retention. This should be grounded in the perspectives of current and former teachers from diverse backgrounds and groups (Gist and Bristol, 2021[189]; Perkins and Shay, 2022[180]). It is also important that such research take an intersectional approach, recognising the multiple identities of teachers from diverse backgrounds and groups and considering the complex ways these identities may be experienced within different socio-political and geographic contexts (Gist et al., 2021[190]).

Strategies to support diverse teachers: mentoring and communities of practice

One strategy that has been recognised as having the potential to support the retention of teachers from diverse backgrounds and groups is teacher mentoring. Teacher mentoring can take various forms. While mentors tend to be more experienced teachers working at the same school as the teacher being mentored, mentoring can also be provided by external teacher trainers or professionals working in the school's general locality (Gist et al., 2021[191]). Teacher mentoring frequently takes place in the form of a one-to-one relationship, but can also be provided to small groups of teachers as part of a broader induction curriculum (ibid.).

Research has highlighted the importance of mentoring for new teachers generally, as a key tool to support their successful entry into the profession and to help them navigate the challenges may face in their first few years of teaching (Brussino, 2021[16]; Ingersoll and Strong, 2011[192]; OECD, 2022[24]). Empirical evidence shows that teachers' participation in mentoring programmes is beneficial for student learning, helping new teachers to become more competent and more effective more quickly (OECD, 2019[45]). As new teachers tend to work in schools with a higher concentration of students from a socio-economically disadvantaged background and students from an immigrant background (OECD, 2022[2]), mentoring can in this respect be an important strategy for advancing equity in education (OECD, 2012[25]).

Studies have suggested that providing mentoring programmes designed specifically to meet the needs of teachers from ethnic minority or Indigenous backgrounds can be very valuable in addressing the specific challenges these teachers may face and in improving retention rates (Gist et al., 2021[191]). For instance, a mentoring or peer support network created for non-white male teachers in Boston (United States) was found to be successful in "providing both valuable social and emotional support and useful opportunities for participants to discuss and share effective teaching strategies", with the model subsequently being adopted by public schools across the entire district as part of a larger effort to improve the retention rates of non-white male teachers (Gist et al., 2021[191]). A study on the impacts of a programme for Indigenous teachers in the United States also found that the quality of the mentoring offered had been key to the programme's success in boosting Indigenous teacher retention rates, through helping participants cope with the everyday challenges of teaching and reinforcing their motivation to stay in the profession (Gist et al., 2021[181]). In England (United Kingdom), a study by Callender and Miller (2018[193]) found mentoring to be a key facilitating factor in the progression of teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds into leadership roles, with mentoring from leaders with similar backgrounds and who were able to relate to the experiences of their mentees being particularly powerful. In New Zealand, the *Te Whatu Kura* mentoring initiative introduced by the Ministry of Education was found to have positive impacts in addressing the significantly low retention rates of new teachers in the Māori-medium education sector (with 90% of participating teachers remaining in the Māori-medium sector over the three years of the programme, compared to the previous 30% retention rate) (Newbold, Trinick and Robertson, 2016[194]).

The provision of on-going effective mentoring support has also been recognised as being important to support overseas-trained teachers in transitioning to a new sociocultural environment and in acquiring the educational knowledge that is specific to their new country, as well as having positive impacts on their professional development (Yan, 2021[195]). A case study of immigrant teachers in Australia showed that mentoring can help newly arrived teachers develop feelings of belonging and a sense of professional identity, as well as facilitating contact and co-operation with other teaching colleagues (Peeler and Jane, 2005[196]).

To ensure they are effective in supporting diverse teachers, it is important that mentoring initiatives and programmes are sensitively contextualised to suit the specific needs of the particular school and its teachers (Gist et al., 2021[191]; Tereshchenko et al., 2022[197]). Researchers have also emphasised the importance of "critical mentoring" practices, which recognise and centre the personal and professional experiences teachers from ethnic minority and Indigenous backgrounds bring to teaching (Gist et al., 2021[191]). Critical mentoring involves a more horizontal relationship in which the mentor teacher recognises their role as a co-learner and "focuses attention on topics related to racial identity, encourages efforts to build informal mentoring networks, and explicitly addresses teachers' experiences with racial aggressions in their early careers" (ibid.). A study undertaken in the United States showed that this type of mentoring to have positive impacts in terms of developing new ethnic minority teachers' sense of confidence, agency and sense of professional identity (ibid.). Research has also highlighted the importance of effectively preparing mentors to provide culturally responsive support to teachers from ethnic minority and Indigenous backgrounds, including by offering mentors a space to come together and discuss the needs of their mentees (Ibid.).

While the topic of mentorship for teachers from diverse backgrounds is receiving increased focus, there is a need for further research on how teachers from different groups may benefit from different forms of and approaches to mentoring, and on how to effectively prepare mentors in light of this (Gist et al., 2021[191]). Existing research in this area also tends to focus on teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds in the context of England (United Kingdom) or the United States, with limited information being available as to how mentoring can effectively support teachers embodying other dimensions of diversity, in various geographical contexts.

In addition to mentoring, dedicated professional support groups – sometimes referred to as communities of practice or affinity groups – can also help to mitigate feelings of isolation among and support teachers

from diverse backgrounds (Gist et al., 2021[191]). Communities of practice or affinity groups serve as spaces where teachers with shared demographic characteristics can come together to share their experiences, give and receive social and emotional support, and discuss strategies for navigating challenges in their work environment (Bristol et al., 2020[198]; Connecticut's Official State Website, 2022[173]). Research in the context of the United States has shown that affinity groups can help to develop or strengthen a sense of belonging for teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds and support them in achieving their professional learning goals, as well as providing an avenue for teachers to give feedback to school leaders that can contribute to shaping a more equitable and inclusive working environment (Bristol et al., 2020[198]; Mosely, 2018[199]; Pour-Khorsid, 2016[200]).

The importance of professional support networks for LGBTQ+ teachers was also highlighted in a study examining the impacts of the Courageous Leaders programme in the United Kingdom, which provided LGBTQI+ teachers with the opportunity to share their experiences and learn from each other through a series of workshops. While the primary aim of the programme was to support LGBTQ+ teachers in obtaining leadership positions, the main reason cited by the majority of those surveyed for participating in the programme was the absence of any form of specific LGBTQ+ teacher support network in their school communities. Participating teachers reported that the programme had been important in helping them feel part of a community and in reducing feelings of isolation, as well as facilitating greater self-acceptance and self-confidence (Lee, 2019[188]).

Fostering positive relationships among students

In addition to teachers and school leaders, students are central actors in shaping and setting the tone of the classroom environment, and can play an important role in fostering well-being in schools (OECD, 2018[6]). Cultivating an appreciation for diversity and values of acceptance, respect and understanding among students is therefore a crucial aspect in creating learning spaces in which all students feel a sense of belonging and can achieve their educational potential (Cerna et al., 2021[1]). A key strategy for achieving this is encouraging the development of positive relationships among students through activities and programmes both in and outside the classroom. Research shows that having students work together and learn from each other through, for instance, co-operative learning strategies supported by teachers and school staff fosters positive intergroup attitudes and relationships among diverse groups of students, in addition to promoting greater academic success (Tropp and Saxena, 2018[201]). Fostering positive relationships among students through peer-mentoring programmes has also been identified as a policy lever for advancing equity for education in the sense that it can improve student well-being (OECD, 2018[6]) and thus support students in achieving their educational potential. In such programmes, student mentors are matched with one of their peers in order to provide an additional source of guidance and support. Several studies indicate positive self-reported outcomes for mentees (the supported students), including greater self-esteem and confidence, and improved social skills and school behaviour (OECD, 2018[6]; Coleman, Sykes and Groom, 2017[202]). For instance, there is evidence to suggest that mentoring schemes can help facilitate the adjustment of refugees and students with an immigrant background to the new school and education system (Crul, 2017[203]), as well as helping them to develop key competences and build their confidence (European Commission, 2020[204]; Koehler, Palaiologou and Brussino, 2022[14]). Research also shows that mentoring schemes can have positive effects on gifted students' motivation, self-worth and achievement (Ball, 2018[205]), particularly for students from a disadvantaged background and gifted minority students who can be more isolated than others (Bisland, 2001[206]; Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, 2019[51]; Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021[5]).

Mentoring programmes have also been found to have positive impacts for the students who act as mentors, such as improved self-confidence and relationships with other students, as well as contributing to a more positive school climate overall (OECD, 2018[6]; Coleman, Sykes and Groom, 2017[202]). Evaluation reports of the Buddy Programme (*Patenschaftprogramm*) implemented in Germany, for instance, indicate that

peer-mentoring programmes can be effective not only in facilitating the integration of refugee children and young people but also in terms of strengthening intercultural reflection, decreasing prejudice and promoting empathy and mutual understanding among the host country mentors. Financed by the German Federal Ministry of Family and Youth and run by the NGO *Stiftung Bildung*, the programme works with schools and early childhood education centres to match refugees between the ages of 4 and 19 with young people without a refugee background who act as peer mentors (Koehler, Palaiologou and Brussino, 2022[14]; Schulz and Sauerborn, 2019[207]). The programme aims to facilitate the integration of young refugees through personal interactions with peers as well as fostering intercultural learning, exchange and peer learning (Stiftung Bildung, 2021[208]; Koehler, Palaiologou and Brussino, 2022[14]). Mentor or "buddy" teams undertake a variety of activities together, including language learning, participating in educational trips and playing sports (Koehler, Palaiologou and Brussino, 2022[14]; Schulz, 2018[209]). Almost all of the mentees who were surveyed as part of the evaluations of the first two years of the programme reported that they considered that the programme had helped them to adjust to their new environment in Germany (96% in 2016 and 93% in 2017) (Koehler, Palaiologou and Brussino, 2022[14]; Sauerborn, 2017[210]; Schulz, 2018[209]). The evaluations also found that the programme had been effective in promoting values of acceptance and empathy, in fostering the development of mutual understanding, and in contributing to the reduction prejudicial and stereotypical views and attitudes. Among the positive impacts noted in the report, 43% of mentees and 62% of mentors reported that they found it easier to accept different opinions and ways of living through participating in the programme. Evaluations of the programme found improvements to the broader school climate and increased interest of non-participants to become engaged in the programme in the future, suggesting that the mentor students had served as multipliers of a culture of integration   (Koehler, Palaiologou and Brussino, 2022[14]; Sauerborn, 2017[210]; Schulz, 2018[209]; Schulz and Sauerborn, 2019[207]). The programme's scope broadened to include young people who are disadvantaged as a result of their socio-economic status, learning needs or immigration background (Koehler, Palaiologou and Brussino, 2022[14]; Patenschaftsprogramm, 2021[211]).

Mentoring is also feature of the Language Friendly School programme, which was initiated in 2019 by a NGO in the Netherlands to address increasing multilingualism in schools and has since been implemented in schools in Canada, the Netherlands and Spain. As part of the programme, newcomer students are mentored by a language ambassador – a student who speaks the newcomer students' mother tongue who accompanies them and eases their adjustment into their new school environment (Koehler, Palaiologou and Brussino, 2022[14]; Pichon-Vorstman and Kambel, 2021[212]). In addition to providing important support for the newcomer student, this initiative serves to recognise, respect and celebrate the knowledge and language of the language ambassador student (Pichon-Vorstman and Kambel, 2021[212]). In some OECD education systems, mentoring programmes have also been implemented to improve the learning outcomes of Indigenous students (OECD, 2017[18]) and students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. In New Zealand, for example, the Mentoring and Tutoring Education Scheme supports students in low disadvantaged schools who have been identified as being at risk of not reaching their academic potential, with the majority identifying as Māori and/or Pasifika (NZ Youth Mentoring Network, n.d.[213]; Great Potentials Foundation, n.d.[214]). Students receive support with academic learning and guidance on future pathways through a combination of weekly one-to-one mentor-mentee meetings and group workshops (Great Potentials Foundation, n.d.[214]).

Research undertaken on peer-mentoring programmes indicates that students and schools benefit most from peer-mentoring programmes that have a clear focus and are actively supported by school management and the broader school staff (OECD, 2018[6]; Coleman, Sykes and Groom, 2017[202]). Studies have highlighted the importance of training for both school coordinators and peer mentors, on topics such as communication and active listening, ensuring a non-judgmental attitude, recognising personal limits and when it is appropriate to refer the student to a staff member, and confidentiality and ethnical issues. Funding can be a further important factor, particularly if an external organisation is involved in the training of staff and/or students. Finally, a number of studies have emphasised the value of giving students the opportunity to participate in shaping the development of peer-mentoring programmes and of the

collaboration between learners and school staff in their implementation (Coleman, Sykes and Groom, 2017[202]).

Raising awareness of diversity in education among stakeholders

While teachers are the primary actors in students' learning, the perceptions and attitudes of a range of stakeholders feed into shaping the classroom environment and the extent to which it supports the learning and well-being of all students. What students hear and are exposed to in their broader home and community environments contributes to shaping their beliefs and worldviews, which they then bring into the classroom. Raising awareness of diversity among parents, guardians and community members is thus crucial to mitigate stereotypical or discriminatory beliefs that may, through their externalisation, negatively impact on diverse students and hinder efforts for equity and inclusion in education. Research indicates, for instance, that students with an immigrant or refugee background frequently encounter discrimination in school settings that may stem from negative attitudes among members of the host population towards refugees (UNICEF, 2016[215]; Spears Brown, 2015[216]; Mezzanotte, 2022[217]). Prejudicial views also result in some LGBTQI+ students encountering harassment, threats and violence on a frequent basis (Human Rights Campaign, 2013[218]; Mezzanotte, 2022[217]; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2020[219]). Awareness-raising has also been recognised by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOCHR) as being key to address the negative attitudes and stereotypes that contribute to the marginalisation of persons with disabilities and hinder their full inclusion in society (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2019[220]). More positively, parents, guardians and members of the broader community can play a crucial role in supporting, driving and promoting the successful implementation of equitable and inclusive education policies and practices (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation; Global Education Monitoring Report; IGLYO, 2021[221]). In light of this, raising awareness of diversity in society and what it means for education is a foundational step in advancing equity and inclusion in education (Cerna et al., 2021[1]). Building awareness of diversity in society more broadly is also important to complement ITE and continuous professional learning in promoting teachers' receptivity to equitable and inclusive educational approaches, as well as addressing potential biases and prejudicial views that may impact on the way they interact with students in the classroom (Brussino, 2020[11]). Similarly, raising awareness among school leaders is key in terms of their ability, willingness and motivation to promote an inclusive and collaborative school environment that promotes the development of inclusive teaching practices and where diverse teachers feel supported and valued (Neca, Borges and Pinto, 2020[150]).

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has provided guidance to governments on a human rights-based approach to developing awareness-raising actions and programmes. While the guidance has been written specifically in relation to persons with disabilities, the recommendations can apply to awareness-raising regarding other dimensions of diversity. The key principles that can be drawn from the guidance are set out below (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2019[220]):

- As attitudes towards persons with disabilities are complex, interventions designed to change them must be wide-ranging.
- Awareness-raising actions and programmes should be based on and promote an understanding of the diversity of lived experiences of persons with disabilities, which vary depending on both the cultural context and the nature of impairments.
- Given that positive changes in attitudes tend to be more durable and tend to occur at a faster pace when personal connections or ties are generated, the direct involvement of persons with disabilities is crucial to give a human dimension to awareness-raising programmes and better enable the correction of misrepresentations and stereotypes.

- The active engagement and involvement of persons with disabilities and the communities targeted by awareness-raising actions and programmes is also important to ensure that persons with disabilities are "recognised as equals from the outset" and that discriminatory attitudes and/or treatment is framed as an issue affecting society as a whole.

- To promote effective change, awareness-raising actions and programmes should appeal emotionally to their target audiences so that they understand discrimination and exclusion as something that is unfair and unjust for society as a whole and not just persons with disabilities.

- Mobilising action will often require a multi-stakeholder approach involving a range of community figures and members, the media and advocacy groups, as well as persons with disabilities and their families.

- Formal legal and policy frameworks play a fundamental role in framing attitudes and behaviour towards persons with disabilities and provide legitimacy for awareness-raising actions.

- Monitoring attitudes towards persons with disabilities is important to both inform the design of awareness-raising actions and programmes and to assess the extent to which they are effective.

Information campaigns

Information campaigns can be an effective strategy to help challenge negative attitudes, stereotypes and prejudices, and have been implemented by government agencies and national institutions in several education systems across the OECD. Positive impacts were associated, for instance, with a public campaign implemented by the government of Slovenia to raise awareness regarding the rights of persons with disabilities and anti-discrimination legislation (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2019[220]). A national online campaign was also launched by Ireland's Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth as part key of the Government's LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy. The campaign focused on compiling stories that celebrate LGBTI young people and those who positively contribute to their everyday lives to show how LGBTI young people "are visible, valued and included in culture, society and sport" (Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, 2020[222]). In Belgium, the Inter-Federal Centre for Equal Opportunities is an independent public institution that works to address discrimination on various grounds and in different contexts, including discrimination on the ground of disability in the context of education. In addition to providing advice and assistance to families and students with SEN, the Centre engages in advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns for inclusive education that are co-designed and co-developed with and for people with disabilities (UNIA, n.d.[223]; Brussino, 2020[11]). In. New Zealand, the Human Rights Commission, an independent entity funded through the Ministry of Justice (Human Rights Commission, n.d.[224]), has been running an on-going campaign since 2016 to raise awareness of and challenge racism in New Zealand society (Human Rights Commission, 2017[225]; Devoy, n.d.[226]). In 2018, the campaign was expanded to include an initiative (developed in partnership with the New Zealand Teaching Council) specifically addressing teachers, encouraging and supporting them to have productive conversations with their students about racism (Unteach Racism, 2021[227]).

Non-governmental organisations play a key role in many OECD education systems in raising awareness and in efforts to challenge negative attitudes and perceptions relating to different dimensions of diversity. Campaigns can be directed at particular stakeholders (for example, educators and school staff) or at the general public. In the United Kingdom, for instance, the national non-governmental organisation Mencap advocates for the inclusion of students with SEN by running information campaigns (Brussino, 2020[11]; Mencap, n.d.[228]). In Germany, the *Trägerkreis Junge Flüchtlinge e.V.* (Young Refugees Support Group) association carries out a variety of awareness-raising initiatives among key stakeholders on issues concerning young refugees, in addition to running dedicated programmes to support schools in responding to the needs of refugee students in diverse classrooms (Koehler, Palaiologou and Brussino, 2022[14]; Trägerkreis Junge Flüchtlinge e. V., n.d.[229]). NGOs also play a key role in raising awareness on giftedness

and on the needs of gifted students (Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021[5]) and on the issues faced by LGBTQI+ students (McBrien, Rutigliano and Sticca, 2022[39]). The Australian Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented, for example, runs a national Gifted Awareness week to "raise awareness of the identification, support and learning needs of gifted children" and to celebrate stakeholders who are making a difference in their lives (Australian Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented, 2021[230]). In Canada, the NGO Egale runs multiple awareness-raising campaigns on a number of issues affecting 2SLGBTQI[4] persons, which have included a series of free live webinars for educators and school staff (Egale, n.d.[231]). As noted above, NGOs advocating for specific diverse groups can bring greater expertise and understanding of the particular issues facing diverse groups. However, NGOs may not always have an understanding of the issues to consider in the implementation of policies and practices for inclusive education. Awareness-raising campaigns specifically targeted at teachers and school staff may therefore be more effective when supported by, or implemented in partnership with, education agencies.

Further evidence is needed to understand the extent to which different campaigns are effective in raising awareness and promoting values that are crucial to the successful implementation of inclusive education policies and practices, including on whether campaigns led or supported by government agencies and/or national institutions tend to have greater reach and impact. There is some evidence to suggest that anti-bullying campaigns with a specific focus on bullying against LGBTQI+ students can have positive impacts (Kull et al., 2016[232]; McBrien, Rutigliano and Sticca, 2022[39]), although this is currently limited to the context of the United States (McBrien, Rutigliano and Sticca, 2022[39]).

Resources and information tools

In addition to running campaigns, NGOs, government agencies and national institutions in education systems across the OECD, as well as international organisations, have developed resources and tools to raise awareness among teachers, students, parents and/or community members regarding different dimensions of diversity. The United States' Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, for example, provides online factsheets about supporting intersex students and on addressing LGBTQI+ discrimination in schools (US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, 2021[233]). At the international level, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) provides online resources and suggestions for parents of adolescents to support gender-responsive parenting, offering guidance on topics such as mitigating gender stereotypes and biases and raising awareness on the effects of harmful gender socialisation and on providing positive models of gender behaviours (Brussino and McBrien, 2022[234]; UNICEF, 2021[235]). Resources and learning materials are also produced by the Spanish Institute for Women and for Equal Opportunities (which is an autonomous body attached to the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality) to raise awareness among teachers, parents and students on issues related to gender inequalities (Spanish Ministry for Equal Opportunities, n.d.[236]). Resources and guidance on the needs of gifted students and students with SEN have also been developed and disseminated by various national and regional organisations and/or networks throughout the OECD (Brussino, 2020[11]).

Pointers for policy development

The final section of this chapter provides a series of policy options that education systems can consider to build capacity to address diversity and promote equity and inclusion in education. These have been developed on the basis of the analysis of different policies and practices developed in this chapter, which draws on available research and policy evidence along with experiences discussed in country-specific work of the Project and other OECD work.

Embed equity and inclusion as cross-cutting themes into ITE curricula

Initial teacher education (ITE) plays a critical role in shaping teachers' values, competences and knowledge before their entry into the profession. Ensuring that equity and inclusion are embedded as core, underlying themes within ITE curricula is crucial to ensure that teachers have the knowledge and competences required to create inclusive learning environments that enable all learners to achieve their educational potential. To facilitate this, education systems should consider explicitly incorporating competences related to equity and inclusion as part of the standards that set out what teachers need to know and be able to demonstrate at the completion of ITE. Drawing on the research on teacher training for inclusive education, it is important that objectives and standards are not just focused on addressing the needs of particular groups, but are framed in a way that promotes content designed to equip prospective teachers with the tools and competences to create learning environments that are inclusive of all learners. These include a strong theoretical knowledge of differentiated instruction and the skills to put this into practice, as well as critical reflection, the capacity to recognise and reflect on (un)consciously-held biases, global competence, and the ability to promote a growth mind-set among students. Frameworks such as the Universal Design for Learning and intercultural education (which are discussed in Chapter 5) can serve as guidance in the development of ITE objectives and competences that facilitate the embedding of equity and inclusion within ITE curricula, as can the examples discussed above.

Provide opportunities for teachers to continue developing knowledge and competences for equitable and inclusive teaching throughout their career

Ensuring that teachers have opportunities to update and refresh their knowledge and reflect on best practices for equitable and inclusive teaching is crucial in a context of increasing student diversity and other global trends that are changing the nature of the classroom environment. It is therefore important that teachers are provided with high-quality professional learning that allow them to develop and strengthen the knowledge and competences required to identify and effectively respond to the varied needs of diverse learners in evolving and uncertain contexts.

A key aspect of this is ensuring the availability of formal professional learning opportunities – such as courses and seminars – on pedagogical knowledge areas for equitable and inclusive teaching. These include concepts such as culturally sustaining pedagogy, pedagogical approaches and techniques to support learners with various SEN and how to effectively use digital technologies to include all learners, which are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. In addition, teachers need to have the opportunity to develop their understanding of different dimensions of diversity and of how they intersect, and of the historical, social and cultural contexts of the communities in which they teach.

In addition to formal professional learning offerings related to equity and inclusion, facilitating opportunities for reflection and the sharing of good practices among teachers both within and across schools (such as professional learning communities and collaborative teaching approaches) is increasingly being recognised as an important strategy to foster equitable and inclusive teaching practices. Strong pedagogical leadership and resources, particularly time, are both important to facilitate and ensure the effectiveness of collaborative initiatives within and across schools. This involves providing coaching and training programmes for school leaders (of which there is currently a lack across OECD countries) and addressing workload issues that may mean they currently lack the time to engage in effective pedagogical leadership and training. School-wide professional learning days can also serve as an effective strategy to promote collaboration among teachers, particularly when supported by guidance at the system level as to how schools can effectively use these days to facilitate staff engagement in team learning.

Promote greater diversity in the teaching workforce by considering targeted measures to attract more diverse candidates into ITE

Enhancing the diversity of the teaching workforce can have positive impacts on multiple dimensions of student well-being, from learning to broader socio-emotional outcomes, for both learners from diverse groups and for the student body as a whole. However, lack of diversity among teachers is a challenge faced by many OECD education systems, with evidence showing imbalances in representation across various dimensions of diversity. This may be due to a range of factors, including financial issues (which can particularly affect teachers from diverse backgrounds), indirect discrimination or bias in the recruitment and admissions procedures for ITE, and lack of access to information about teaching or support networks. Addressing this issue therefore involves considering a variety of policy measures to attract and retain diverse candidates in ITE, based on research regarding reasons for the underrepresentation of certain groups in the teaching workforce of the particular education system. These may include partnering with local schools or associations to provide targeted information sessions regarding teaching for under-represented groups, providing students from diverse backgrounds with the opportunity to shadow diverse teachers, and targeted scholarship programmes. Alternative teacher certification programmes may also serve as a strategy for attracting more diverse teachers through providing quicker, more flexible and more affordable routes into the profession – although, as the initial training provided by such programmes tends to be shorter than that provided by traditional ITE courses, it is important that they are complemented by initiatives to support teachers' successful integration into the teaching workforce, in order to ensure that all students have access to quality teachers.

Support the retention of diverse teachers through teacher mentoring and professional support networks

High attrition and turnover negatively impact on the stability and expertise of staff within schools, which has implications in terms of the successful implementation of measures to promote equity and inclusion. While research focusing specifically on the turnover rates of teachers from diverse backgrounds or groups is limited, literature indicates that these teachers may experience additional challenges on top of the stress associated with the general demands of the teaching profession – such as feelings of isolation, discrimination and harassment, and lack of appropriate support.

Teacher mentoring has been recognised as a strategy that has the potential to improve the retention of teachers from diverse backgrounds and groups. Studies have indicated that mentoring programmes designed specifically to meet the needs of teachers from diverse backgrounds can play a crucial role in providing social and emotional support to these teachers, as well as helping them develop strategies to address the general challenges they may encounter in their initial years of teaching. Literature in this area has emphasised that, to be effective in supporting teachers from diverse backgrounds, such initiatives and programmes need to recognise and centre the personal and professional experiences of teachers from diverse backgrounds, and be sensitively designed to reflect and respond to the particular context of the school.

In addition to teacher mentoring programmes, education systems and schools can promote the retention of teachers from diverse backgrounds and groups by facilitating and supporting the development of professional support networks or communities of practice. Professional support networks and communities of practice can help to develop or strengthen a sense of belonging and mitigate feelings of isolation among teachers from diverse backgrounds and groups through providing a safe space where they can come together to share their experiences. They have also been recognised as having the potential to support diverse teachers in achieving their professional learning goals and providing an avenue through which teachers can provide school leaders with feedback on how the school environment can be made more equitable and inclusive.

Promote values of respect and understanding among students to create an inclusive environment

Students, in addition to teachers, are central actors in shaping and setting the tone of the classroom environment, and can play a key role in fostering well-being in schools. Cultivating an appreciation for diversity and values of acceptance, respect and understanding among students is therefore a crucial aspect in creating learning spaces in which all students feel a sense of belonging and can achieve their educational potential.

A key way in which education systems and schools can promote values for equity and inclusion among students is through initiatives that foster positive relationships among students. Peer-mentoring programmes, in particular, have been identified as a policy lever for advancing equity in education, with positive impacts for mentee and mentor students for the overall school climate. To enhance their effectiveness, peer-mentoring programmes should be actively supported by school leaders and the broader school staff. It is also important that schools have the resources and capacity to provide training for programme coordinators and the students who act as peer mentors on topics such as communication and active listening, ensuring a non-judgmental attitude, recognising personal limits and when it is appropriate to refer the student to a staff member, and confidentiality and ethnical issues. At the school level, giving students the opportunity to participate in shaping the development of programmes and promoting the collaboration between learners and school staff have also been recognised as factors that can contribute to the success of peer-mentoring initiatives.

Raise awareness of diversity among different stakeholders to build support for equitable and inclusive education policies and practices

The classroom environment, and the extent to which it supports the learning and well-being of all students, is shaped not only by the actions of teachers and school leaders but also by the attitudes and perceptions of a parents, guardians and community members. Raising awareness of diversity in society is thus an important foundational step in advancing equity and inclusion in education, both to mitigate stereotypical or discriminatory beliefs and to ensure that a range of stakeholders support and contribute to the successful implementation of equitable and inclusive policies and practices.

To be effective in promoting durable attitudinal change, awareness-raising actions and programmes should be based on and promote an understanding of the range of lived experiences of persons embodying the particular dimension of diversity in question, and appeal emotionally to their target audience(s) so that discrimination and exclusion are perceived as issues that negatively impact on society as a whole (rather than just a particular group). The active engagement and involvement of persons embodying the particular dimension of diversity in question is also crucial to give a human dimension to awareness-raising programmes and to support the correction of misrepresentations and stereotypes.

Information campaigns can be an effective strategy in raising awareness and promoting attitudinal change in society. While further research is needed as to the factors and features that contribute to a campaign's success (both in terms of reach and impact), a clearly defined focus and message appear to be important elements, as is the active involvement of persons embodying the particular dimension of diversity in question in the development and implementation of the campaign. Resources and information tools developed and disseminated by national and regional organisations and/or networks on particular dimensions of diversity can also support the mitigation of stereotypes and the promotion of values of acceptance and inclusion, and may play a very valuable complementary role to both campaigns and official anti-discrimination legislation and policy.

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Notes

[1] Continuous professional learning is not mandatory in 14 of the 38 countries and economies who participated in the OECD Indicators of Education Systems 2019 Survey on requirements related to examination days and professional development (OECD, 2020[155]).

[2] There is a body of literature exploring the positive impacts of role modelling on students with teachers sharing similar personal characteristics. However, there is a growing branch of literature that highlights the limitations of the traditional, one-dimensional conceptualisation of role modelling and that emphasises the need for a more multi-dimensional and intersectional understanding to teachers and students' identities (Alexander, 2006[237]; Brockenbrough, 2012[244]; Lewis, 2006[238]; Lynn and Jennings, 2009[239]; Rezai-Rashti and Martino, 2010[243]; Bristol, 2020[242]).

[3] Pay penalty for teachers refers to the fact that, when entering the profession, teachers can face considerable amount of student debt to be paid but, compared to other professions requiring similar levels of education, teachers may find it harder to repay the debt because of considerably lower salaries (Allegretto and Mishel, 2019[240]; OECD, 2019[45]).

[4] The acronym "2SLGBTQ" is used in Canada and stands for Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or questioning). Two-Spirit is an identity that some Indigenous people hold (Becoming Education & Advocacy, n.d.[241]).
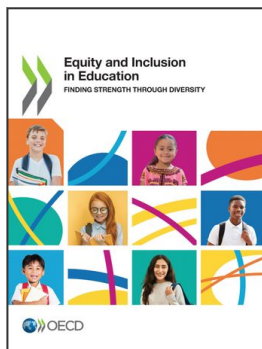
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Access the complete publication at:
https://doi.org/10.1787/e9072e21-en