



Educators for America Act

Senator Mark Kelly (D-AZ)

Background:

In the early 1980s, men made up 33 percent of public school teachers. Today, they account for just 23 percent. In middle and high schools, male teachers account for 36 percent of the workforce, down from 48 percent in 1987; in elementary schools, men make up just 11 percent of the teaching pool. Only 17 percent of bachelor's degrees in education are earned by men.¹ With 1 in 8 teaching positions nationwide unfilled or filled by non-fully certified teachers,² growing the American teacher workforce must be an all-hands-on-deck effort. That means exploring all available talent pools—especially re-engaging men.

The American education system is facing an “education recession” of low test scores, surges in AI and screen use in schools, and increased rates of anxiety and depression in young people. These issues are particularly acute for boys, who are more likely to be viewed as disruptive in school, are more likely to be suspended, and tend to lag behind girls academically. Research suggests more men in the classroom could help.

Research indicates that having a male teacher may help boys perform better in school. For the roughly one-quarter of American children growing up without a father in the home,³ a teacher may be one of the few consistent adult male role models they encounter each day.

About the Legislation:

Preparation programs that offer stipends or pay have higher participation rates among men, who are more likely to enter teaching as a career change. By supporting paid teacher residency programs through the Teacher Quality Partnership program, the Educators for America Act will strengthen the male educator pipeline. Teacher residency programs allow teachers to earn as they learn how to teach, reducing barriers for teacher candidates while setting them up for success in the classroom. The bill ensures residency programs make a proactive effort to recruit male teachers, helping to address staffing needs in schools and reenergizing student learning.

¹ <https://aibm.org/research/7-key-facts-about-male-teachers/>

² <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/overview-teacher-shortages-2025-factsheet>

³ <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/families/children.html>