

Invest in Diverse Teacher Recruitment



Problem Overview

Having a diverse teacher workforce sets high expectations and reduces implicit bias. A diverse teacher workforce supports students' academic, social, and emotional outcomes as students of color see themselves represented and identify with them as role models.

While the diversity of students of color continues to grow, the diversity of teachers of color continues to shrink. An estimated 7 percent of the teacher workforce is estimated to be Black. Nine percent are Hispanic and less than 3 percent are Asian American and Pacific Islander (American Federation of Teachers, July 2022).

A diverse teaching workforce has far-reaching implications for students' academic well-being and success, particularly for minority students. Research indicates that teachers of color can positively impact the academic performance of students of color; reduce discriminatory assignment to gifted and talented programs; decrease chronic absenteeism, suspensions, and expulsions; and foster a more welcoming learning environment for students of color (Carver-Thomas, 2018; Grissom & Redding, 2016).

Research shows that teachers of color improve reading and math performance, graduation rate, and readiness to attend college for students of color. In fact, research also shows that recruiting diverse teachers in schools may prevent individual diverse teachers from feeling isolated or lonely (Carver-Thomas, D., 2018).

Shortages of teachers of color has been a challenge for many states and districts nationwide. There is a significant focus on diversity in urban districts; however, a lack of diversification in rural districts means that many students, being smaller minorities in their schools and classrooms, remain vulnerable to the bias associated with a lack of diversity in the workforce (Kebede et al., 2021).

Factors contributing to the shortage include obstacles to entering and completing college, discriminatory hiring practices, and high rates of attrition among teachers of color. The latter can be attributed to inadequate teacher preparation, lack of mentoring and induction programs, and accountability pressures, among other factors. These typically are more prevalent in low-performing urban schools, where many teachers of color are employed (Carver-Thomas, 2018).

Strategy Summary

Research suggests that to achieve the goal of attracting diverse educators to the profession, we must remove some barriers, such as student debt, and improve the hiring and retention process for teachers of color.



- Partner with teacher preparation programs at institutions that serve Black and other minority students to build a more diverse teacher workforce. Such collaboration will help produce diverse student teacher candidates with whom school leaders could build a positive relationship that leads to early access to excellent teachers of color
- Provide financial support to currently uncertified staff of color (tutors, paraprofessionals, etc.) who are interested in being certified teachers to help eliminate the financial barriers.
- Make sure there are diverse members on hiring committees in schools to move toward a more equitable hiring process and encourage teacher candidates of color to join the school district workforce. Share your goal of implementing inclusive hiring practices with that committee to make a difference. [Research](#) shows that both White and students of color benefit from teachers of color.
- Offer leadership opportunities to diverse teachers to help ensure diverse teacher recruitment and retention. Research shows that compared to White principals, Black principals are more likely to hire candidate teachers of color (Rice-Boothe, Mary, July 5, 2022).
- School leaders who acknowledge and reflect the significant work done by teachers of color during their teaching evaluation process can help retain those high-achieving teachers
- Avoid disproportionately asking highly effective teachers of color (who spend extra time working behind the scenes) to complete all the extra duties like committees, after-school programs, awards assemblies, class sponsors, etc.

Examples

Thirty-seven percent of Boston Public Schools are teachers of color. The [Boston Public School High School to Teacher Program](#) has effectively increased the diversity of teacher workforce.

Sources

Rubin, A., (2018). [How Schools Can Attract and retain teachers of Color](#).

Carver-Thomas, D. (2018). [Diversifying the teaching profession: How to recruit and retain teachers of color](#). Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

[Here Today, Gone Tomorrow?](#) Report from the AFT Teacher and School Staff Shortage Task Force, July, 2022.