THE IMPERATIVE AND CHALLENGES OF BUILDING AND SUSTAINING A SKILLFUL DIVERSE TEACHING FORCE

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Teachers of color: 19.9% of teaching force in the U.S.
Children of color: 51% of school age-population

![](chart.png)
How did we get to this?
Before 1954, 82,000 Black teachers taught 2 million Black children

85% of Black teachers taught in the South

38,000 Black teachers and principals lost in the 17 southern states between 1954 and 1965

1.8% of Black teachers taught in desegregated schools, not one teacher in Alabama, Louisiana, or Mississippi

Compound effect: Not seeing Black teachers, Black children did not see themselves in the role

“We cannot take lightly the responsibility that is ours... as I see it our task is one among if not the greatest because we are builders of men and women.”

Why (and how) does diversity matter for the quality of teaching?
WHAT REASONS ARE OFTEN GIVEN FOR WHY WHO THE TEACHERS ARE MATTERS?

- Children should have teachers with whom they can identify (e.g., role model effect).
- The demographics of the teaching force should reflect the demographics of our nation’s population of children.
- Disproportionate assignment of children of color to special education and gifted programs
- Disproportionate and harsher punishment of children of color

Let’s look more closely, inside an example.
DIVERSITY AND QUALITY IN TEACHING: LOOKING INSIDE A CLASSROOM
CONTEXT: SAX CANTOR RIFF

Students in a high school English class have viewed and are discussing their reactions to HBO Subway Stories: “Sax Cantor Riff,” directed by Julie Dash.
VIEWING FOCUS FOR VIDEO OF EXCERPT “SAX CANTOR RIFF”

- What do you notice here?
- What from your experiences are you using to make sense of the story?
VIDEO: EXCERPT FROM “SAX CANTOR RIFF”
VIEWING FOCUS FOR VIDEO OF CLASS

- How would you conceptualize “diversity” and “quality” as you watch this clip?
- What does your viewing suggest about how diversity and quality are interrelated in the work of teaching?
VIDEO: CLASSROOM DISCUSSION OF EXCERPT FROM “SAX CANTOR RIFF”
VIEWING FOCUS FOR VIDEO OF CLASS

- How would you conceptualize “diversity” and “quality” as you watch this clip?
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TWO DECADES OF FOCUS ON “TEACHER QUALITY” AND “DIVERSITY”
Required that by 2005–06 every child be taught by “a highly qualified teacher”:

- Hold a Bachelor’s degree
- Have certification without any requirements waived
- Demonstrate competency in subject matter according to Federal criteria
TEACHER QUALITY CENTRALLY FOCUSED ON ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS

“The world’s top performing school systems . . . recruit 100% of their teacher corps from the top third of the academic cohort . . . In the U.S. . . . just 23% come from the top third and only 14% in high-poverty schools” (p. 5)
SOME EFFORTS TO INCREASE DIVERSITY
RECRUITING ROLE MODELS

“...assigning a black male to a black teacher in the third, fourth, or fifth grades significantly reduces the probability that he drops out of high school, particularly among the most economically disadvantaged black males. Exposure to at least one black teacher in grades 3–5 also increases the likelihood that persistently low-income students of both sexes aspire to attend a four-year college.”

(Gershenson, et al., 2017)
UNEXAMINED ASSUMPTIONS OF RECRUITING AS ROLE MODELS

- Seen as “necessary role models for K-12 students of color, but not as potentially effective pedagogues for all students.”
- “…entrap these teachers to one specific role and helps to mask the actual ways that they might make a pedagogic difference for both K-12 students of color, as well as for their White counterparts.”

Keffrelyn Brown (2014)
AN EXCLUSIVE FOCUS ON ROLE MODELS IGNORES CRUCIAL FACTORS

- Black teachers’ skills in relating to children, connecting to families and communities, providing critical perspectives (Brown, 2014; Irvine, 2004)
- Inhospitable working conditions and costs (Bristol, 2019; Carver-Thomas, 2018)
- The need for professional training for teachers of color (Irvine, 2004)
WHEN QUALITY AND DIVERSITY ARE SEPARATE POLICY EFFORTS

Why might this be?

In 2003-04, 47,600 people of color entered the teaching profession.

By the following year, 56,000 teachers of color had left.

We need to get serious — and fast — about recruitment and retention.

Visit The Equity Line to learn more about what's behind the declining rates of teachers of color.

Data Source: The State of Teacher Diversity in American Education, The Albert Shanker Institute, September 2015
• Recruitment is not enough.
• Retention matters.
• And retention is related to satisfaction.
WHEN QUALITY AND DIVERSITY ARE SEPARATE POLICY EFFORTS

WHY DO TEACHERS LEAVE?
- Compensation
- Preparation
- Mentoring and induction
- Teaching conditions

WHY DO TEACHERS OF COLOR LEAVE?
- Racial discrimination and stereotyping
  - Seen only as disciplinarians, not teachers
- Dissatisfaction with administration;
  - Bias in evaluations
- Dissatisfaction with test-based accountability systems;
- Lack mentoring and support;
- Racial isolation; and
- Lack of autonomy and influence.

“Simply recruiting more teachers of color but doing nothing to change the current system would be a failure. Instead, this model would expect teachers of color to come into a system that has historically failed them as students. Why would one expect this same system to do anything other than fail them as teachers?”

(Haddix, 2014, p. 145)
HOW (CAN) POLICY STRATEGIES EFFECTIVELY INTERTWINE DIVERSITY AND QUALITY?
LOTS OF POLICY IDEAS!

- Improve teacher preparation, challenging its whiteness
- Attend to financial burdens in costs of preparation and income
- Improve school contexts and working conditions
- Stronger school leadership
TEACHER RESIDENCY PROGRAMS: ONE POPULAR IDEA

A NATIONAL EFFORT TO RECRUIT, DEVELOP, AND RETAIN BLACK EDUCATORS

NCTR’s Black Educators Initiative is a response to an urgent and pressing challenge: Black students who have just one Black teacher in elementary school are more likely to graduate from high school and consider going to college, yet just 7 percent of teachers are Black. As the nation’s students become more diverse, teacher residencies are best able to prepare the next generation of teachers.
INVESTIGATING TEACHER RESIDENCIES

NCTR PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- Targeted recruitment and selection of residents
- Rigorous selection and support of teacher mentors
- Intensive pre-service preparation focused on the specific needs of teachers in diverse schools
- Aligned induction support
- Strategic hiring of graduates

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INVESTIGATING TEACHER RESIDENCIES

With a partner, investigate to what extent you see NCTR’s structure addressing key factors related to recruitment and retention of skilled Black teachers.

- Does NCTR move beyond the role model effect?
- What are the ways that NCTR is considering quality and diversity?
- How and in what ways does NCTR’s structure address reasons teachers of color leave the profession?
- What would enactors need to know and be able to do in order to implement the program with fidelity?
- What are possible negative consequences?
HOW DO WE WEAVE TOGETHER QUALITY AND DIVERSITY?

- Research from and about the particular needs of specific populations.
- Questioning our long-held assumptions about why individuals go into and stay in teaching.
- Working for systemic changes, not just representational ones.
ED 772 POLICY CONFERENCE APRIL 7 AND 14
YOU ARE INVITED!

Presentations by University of Michigan graduate students in education, public policy, and law

POLICY CONFERENCE
ADVANCING DIVERSITY AND QUALITY
IN TEACHING AND TEACHER EDUCATION
April 7 and 14, 2020
Brownlee, SEB Room 2327
School of Education • University of Michigan

This conference will focus on the challenges of promoting quality teaching in a diverse society.
Topics include:

- The recruitment and retention of a diverse quality teaching force
- The professional education of beginning teachers who can teach skillfully and who are prepared to teach in historically marginalized communities
- Professional learning and development of practicing teachers to intervene on inequity in young people’s opportunities to learn
- Incentives (e.g., merit pay) to reward quality teaching with minoritized groups
- Evaluation systems focused on quality and diversity
- Other systematic approaches to improve diversity and quality in teaching
MOVING FORWARD

“And by education I do not mean hobbling the mind, but liberating it; by education I do not mean passing on monologues, but engaging in dialogues. Listening, assuming sometimes that I have a history, a language, a view, an idea, a specificity. Assuming that what I know may be useful, may enhance what you know, may extend or complete it. My memory is as necessary to yours as your memory is to mine….In the business of education there are no minorities, only minor thinking.”

...the whole process of education occurs within a social framework and is designed to perpetuate the aims of society...The purpose of education, finally, is to create in a person the ability to look at the world for himself, to make his own decisions, to say to himself this is black or this is white, to decide for himself whether there is a God in heaven or not...But no society is really anxious to have that kind of person around. What societies really, ideally, want is a citizenry which will simply obey the rules of society. If a society succeeds in this, that society is about to perish. The obligation of anyone who thinks of himself as responsible is to examine society and try to change it and to fight it—at no matter what risk. This is the only hope society has. This is the only way societies change.

THANK YOU!
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Data for graph on slide 2:

Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d18/tables/dt18_203.50.asp

Image on slide 2:
Photo from “White teachers hate their black students–Study” from AfricanGlobe.
Retrieved from https://www.africanglobe.net/headlines/white-teachers-hate-black-students-study/
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Image on slide 2:
Photo from “Teach For America Accused of Sending Idealistic Young White People Into School Districts They Don't Understand,’ by Manny Otiko in Atlanta Black Star. Retrieved from https://atlantablackstar.com/2015/10/15/teach-for-america-accused-of-sending-idealistic-young-white-people-into-school-districts-they-dont-understand/

Image on slide 4:

Image on slide 5:
Image on slide 6:

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Image on slide 6:
CREDITS

Image on slide 18:

Image on slide 18:

Image on slide 19:
Image on slide 20:
Photo of President Obama surrounded by Black men as part of the My Brother’s Keeper Alliance.
Retrieved from https://www.obama.org/mbka/

Image on slide 20:
Photo from “Seen, heard, reflected: A look at California’s Teacher of Color shortage,” by Ed Trust-West, Nov 5, 2019.

Image on slide 20:
Flyer from Teacher of Color Recruitment Fair, 2018.
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Image on slide 21:
Photo from “Why it is crucial for Black men to become teachers,” in *Thy Black Man*, July 23, 2018.

Image on slide 22:
Photo from “I had two Black teachers from kindergarten through 12th grade and even that little bit made a difference,” by Panama Jackson for *The Root*, November 29, 2018.
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Graphic from “Fact fact: The declining rate of teachers of color” by Ed Trust, October 1, 2015.

Image on slide _30:
Screenshot from the National Center for Teacher Residencies’ website.
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Magnolia Pictures/Ringer illustration. [Photo of James Baldwin].
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