THE NEED FOR MORE TEACHERS OF COLOR
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APRIL 23, 2022  FDR PARK  #RFATEACHIN
The Need for More Teachers of Color

On behalf of Research for Action (RFA), thank you for attending our first Teach-In: The Need for More Teachers of Color. For 30 years, RFA has been conducting research to improve equity and outcomes for students and families in Philadelphia and nationwide. But we know that all too often, research can get shelved because it does not directly speak to those who stand to benefit most from it. In this 30th year, RFA is on a mission to conduct community-engaged research in partnership with educators, families, nonprofit and advocacy partners, and schools and systems to affect meaningful change.

As part of that work, this Teach-In is intended to create and support a structure for participants to connect with research, practitioners, and field leaders to share collective knowledge about the need for more teachers of color. Research tells us that all students benefit from teachers of color, yet initiatives to attract, train, retain, and reward teachers of color fall short in Philadelphia and across the state. We hope that this book and the Teach-In provide context and resources for learning more about this pressing need and a path to use our research for action and change.

In the 1960s, Teach-Ins were tools to galvanize student activism on college campuses during the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War and to share knowledge and perspectives about critical issues. Teach-Ins are intended to be practical, participatory, empowering, and action-oriented. In that spirit, we hope you find RFA’s Teach-In to be a source of information that inspires you to use research to make an impact in your community, for your community, for teachers of color and students in Philadelphia and beyond.

Saxon Nelson
Director of Community Engagement
April 2022
Why We Need More Teachers of Color

Research has documented extensive evidence of how teachers of color enhance educational experiences.

For all students teachers representing diverse racial backgrounds are associated with...

- Increased learning outcomes;
- Positive social and emotional outcomes.

For students of color, having a teacher of color is also linked to...

- Higher expectations for success;
- Improved school quality and student experiences, including reduced absenteeism, increased enrollment in Advanced Placement courses, higher rates of representation in gifted and talent programs, and reduction in discriminatory disciplinary practices and disproportionate referrals for special education; and
- Improved academic outcomes when taught by a teacher of the same race or ethnicity.

A diverse teaching staff can also reduce feelings of isolation, increase sense of belonging, and improve retention of other teachers of color.
THE NEED FOR MORE TEACHERS OF COLOR

A Data Walk

For many decades, advocates across the country have led efforts to increase teacher diversity. RFA began conducting statewide research on teacher diversity in 2018, inspired by the work of Sharif El-Mekki and by the renewed attention to the issue by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Our first publication, *Patching the Leaky Pipeline: Recruiting and Retaining Teachers of Color in Pennsylvania*, highlighted known strategies for improving teacher diversity that can be targeted by schools, districts, institutions of higher education, state departments of education, and/or state legislatures.

Since that time, RFA’s contribution to the field has expanded to include multiple studies of teacher diversity in Pennsylvania, including a recent evaluation of Aspiring to Educate, the teacher diversity pilot from the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

One key observation from this research was the dearth of public information about teacher demographics. While student demographics are widely reported, little is known about teacher race or ethnicity. RFA has been working to address this information gap by requesting and analyzing unpublished Pennsylvania teacher demographic data annually and also sharing the data in accessible formats to inform policies, programs, parents, and communities about disparities in teacher demographics across the state and in every county, school district, and public school in Pennsylvania.

This booklet provides highlights of findings from RFA’s past studies, newly updated with 2020-21 data to provide the most recent analysis of the state of teacher diversity in Pennsylvania as a whole and more specifically in Philadelphia. We also include several new analyses to fill in existing knowledge gaps.

We hope these data can foster conversations at the Teach-In and we encourage you to join us on this “data walk” through the pages that follow...
In Pennsylvania, nearly half of schools and more than one-third of school districts have zero teachers of color...

In 2020-21, over 1,400 Pennsylvania schools (48% of all schools) and 178 entire school districts (36% of all districts) employed zero teachers of color:¹

2020-21 represents a slight improvement from 2013-14, when 56% of schools and 39% of districts employed only White teachers.

There are 109,102 students of color and 521,442 White students enrolled in Pennsylvania schools that have zero teachers of color.

¹ When describing the race and ethnicity data of students or teachers we use the term "of color," a grouping which includes students or teachers reported by the Pennsylvania Department of Education as American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and two or more races.
In eight years from 2013-14 to 2020-21, the percentage of students of color in Pennsylvania public schools increased from 30.5% to 36.6%.

In contrast, over that same time the percentage of teachers of color only increased from 5.4% to 6.2%.

In 2020-21, the percentage of students of color in Pennsylvania was 5.9 times greater than the percentage of teachers of color. This reflects an increased disparity compared to 2013-14.

In contrast, nationally there were 52.4% students of color and 20.7% teachers of color in 2017-18, meaning the percentage of students of color was only 2.5 times greater than the percentage of teachers of color.2

2 See national rates of students of color at https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d19/tables/dt19_203.70.asp and national rates of teachers of color at https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ntps/tables/ntps1718_fltable01_t1s.asp in the most recent data available for the National Teacher and Principal Survey (2017-18).
STUDENT AND TEACHER RACE/ETHNICITY IN PENNSYLVANIA, 2020-21

...for every race or ethnicity subgroup, teachers of color are underrepresented compared to students of color, while white teachers are overrepresented...

- Black, Hispanic, Asian, and other teachers of color are all underrepresented in Pennsylvania schools, compared to Black, Hispanic, Asian, and other students of color.\(^3\)

- The largest disparity is between the percentage of Hispanic students (13.1%) and the percentage of Hispanic teachers (1.1%).

- In contrast, the percentage of White teachers (93.8%) is nearly 50% greater than the percentage of White students (63.4%).

Sources: Future Ready PA Index, School Fast Facts for SY 2020-2021; Pennsylvania Department of Education, Professional Personnel Individual Staff Report, 2020-21

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3 Race or ethnicity categories are included as reported by PDE’s Professional Personnel Individual Staff Report. RFA uses the term Hispanic to align with the original data but recognizes that the meaning is narrow and excludes people from Latin American countries and territories where Spanish is not the primary language. Other includes American Indian or Alaskan Native, two or more races, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.
Among the 120,186 Pennsylvania teachers in our analysis, 73.8% are women and 69.1% are White women.  

Gender-based gaps in teaching exist for all race or ethnicity groups. 

Together, men of color make up only 1.5% of Pennsylvania’s teacher workforce. 

In all of Pennsylvania in 2020-21, there were only 1,118 Black men, 354 Hispanic men, 199 Asian men, and 165 other men of color teaching in public schools. In contrast, there were 29,686 White male teachers. 

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4 Pennsylvania data does not reflect other gender identities, such as non-binary. 

5 Teacher counts are the full-time equivalent (FTE) of teachers at every school. For example, a teacher who worked 50% FTE (half-time) at two separate schools would be counted as ½ of a teacher (i.e., ½ FTE) at each of the two schools but one FTE teacher in the state analysis.
THE LEAKY PIPELINE OF TEACHER DIVERSITY IN PENNSYLVANIA

Pennsylvania’s teacher pipeline is leaking thousands of potential teachers of color.

Leaks are occurring in K-12 schools, teacher preparation programs, and the certification process, as well as at the recruitment, hiring, and retention stages.

This updated version of the Leaky Pipeline graphic includes a new pipe to show a modest influx of candidates from out-of-state teacher preparation programs or from emergency certification. This explains why there is a greater percentage of first-year teacher hires of color than there are graduates of color from Pennsylvania teacher preparation programs.

More than half (54%) of Pennsylvania’s teachers of color are employed in Philadelphia County’s district and charter schools. Philadelphia County’s students of color only comprise 26% of the state’s students of color. Philadelphia County’s teachers as a whole comprise only 10% of the state’s total teacher workforce.

Also, in Philadelphia schools, Black, Hispanic, Asian, and other teachers of color are similarly underrepresented compared to enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian, and other students of color.

Sources: Future Ready PA Index, School Fast Facts for SY 2020-2021; Pennsylvania Department of Education, Professional Personnel Individual Staff Report, 2020-21
Teacher race and ethnicity rates are similar in the School District of Philadelphia (SDP) and the Philadelphia charter school sector.

Historically, SDP had a greater percentage of Black teachers and of teachers of color overall compared to the city’s charter schools. However, the percentage of Black teachers in SDP dropped from a high of 34.2% in 2001-02 to 23.5% in 2020-21.

The Philadelphia charter sector had a high of 28.1% Black teachers in 2007-08, then dropped to a low of 19.1% in 2015-16 and has since risen to 24.1% in 2020-21, slightly higher than SDP.

The representations of Hispanic teachers, Asian teachers, and other teachers of color have only slightly increased over time in both the district and charter sectors.

Sources: School district data from 2000-01 to 2012-13 are from the School District of Philadelphia. Philadelphia charter school data for 2000-01 to 2006-07 are not available and data from 2007-08 to 2012-13 are from the Shankar Institute. All teacher data for 2013-14 to 2020-21 are based on Professional Personnel Individual Staff Reports from the Pennsylvania Department of Education.
The number of Black teachers in Philadelphia has declined precipitously in the last 20 years, even as the number of teachers in every other race or ethnicity subgroup has increased...

There are nearly 1,200 fewer Black teachers in Philadelphia public schools (district and charter combined) than there were 20 years ago.

Meanwhile, the total number of teachers has increased for every other race or ethnicity subgroup and remained stable for the total number of teachers.

### School Year and Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year and Sample</th>
<th>All Teachers</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total TDC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000-01 (12,051 District Teachers)(^6)</td>
<td>12,051</td>
<td>7,453</td>
<td>4,059</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>4,598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020-21 (7,747 District Teachers and 4,335 Charter School Teachers)</td>
<td>12,082</td>
<td>8,035</td>
<td>2,866</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>4,047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Year Change</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>582</td>
<td>-1,193</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>-551</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^6\) Charter school teacher data is not available for 2000-01. Philadelphia had many fewer charter schools 20 years ago. However, if charter schools’ data were included it is likely that the loss of Black teachers would be even more significant.
Now What?

Research on the need to diversify the teaching corps in Philadelphia and throughout Pennsylvania is clear. Strategies to reverse the trends explored in our data walk must be built on a better understanding of the obstacles preventing students from becoming teachers and the forces pushing teachers of color out of classrooms. Why are there nearly 1,200 fewer Black teachers in Philadelphia today than there were 20 years ago?

RFA is seeking to provide research-based answers to that question through a current study of Black teachers in Philadelphia. At the Teach-In, we will gather with scholars, school leaders, advocates, students, and other community leaders working to address systemic barriers to diverse representation in the teaching force. Just as with the original Teach-Ins, together we can learn from each other and use what we learn to galvanize efforts to address the need for more teachers of color.

Endnotes


2 Learn more about RFA’s Black Teacher Study at https://www.researchforaction.org/news-events/k-12/black-teacher-study/.


10 The most recent data on teacher demographics is available for download at https://www.researchforaction.org/research-resources/k-12/teacher-diversity-in-pennsylvania-from-2013-14-to-2019-20/.
Dr. Camika Royal is the Associate Professor of Urban Education at Loyola University Maryland. Her debut forthcoming book, *Not Paved For Us: Black Educators and Public School Reform in Philadelphia*, is available for pre-order now and will be released in May of 2022 from Harvard Education Press. She is a highly requested speaker, consultant, and professional developer on issues of school context-based racism and other forms of oppression through ideologies, policies, and practices. Dr. Royal earned her bachelor of arts degree in English Literature at North Carolina Central University in 1999, her master of arts in teaching degree at Johns Hopkins University in 2001, and her doctor of philosophy in urban education at Temple University in 2012.

Launched in June 2019, the Center for Black Educator Development is revolutionizing education by dramatically increasing the number of Black educators so that low-income Black and other disenfranchised students can reap the full benefits of a quality public education. The Center seeks to reclaim power and honor the legacy we inherited from those who struggled to commit the deeply subversive, ultimately liberating, act of teaching.

To push back against systems of racism and oppression and to provide opportunities for students The Center works diligently to:

- Increase the number of effective Black educators
- Increase the number of years Black educators remain in the profession
- Improve the culturally responsive practices of all educators
- Advocate for critical public policies that advance educational justice
M. KATE CALLAHAN, Ph.D.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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A former public school teacher in Philadelphia, Dr. M. Kate Callahan provides strategic oversight and leadership across all facets of RFA’s research and administrative enterprises. Prior to being appointed Executive Director in October 2021, Dr. Callahan served in leadership roles throughout RFA, as Interim Executive Director, Chief Research Officer, Director of Quantitative Research, and earlier in her career, as a mixed-methods researcher and project director on many national research projects, particularly examining issues of equity, access, and success in the K-16 educational pipeline. Dr. Callahan has a Ph.D. in Urban Education from Temple University.

SAXON NELSON
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
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Saxon Nelson provides leadership, strategic planning, and visioning for RFA to expand meaningful and deep community engagement within its research portfolio and projects. Prior to joining RFA, Nelson was a Contractor for Special Projects for the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education where he focused on efforts to diversify Pennsylvania’s teacher workforce, convening counselors, and managing PDE grants and scholarships. Nelson also served as a Technical Assistance and Capacity Coordinator for the Mayor’s Office of Education and its Community Schools Initiative. Nelson previously worked for the United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey (UWGPSNJ) where he managed the quality improvement system for out-of-school time programs, and developed a local/regional/national early warning response system.

DAVID LAPP
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David Lapp oversees a range of projects at the nexus of education research and policy. He leads RFA’s Pennsylvania Clearinghouse for Education Research (PACER) project to inform state education policy discussions through objective research and analysis. He also provides oversight direction to RFA’s ACER project (Allegheny County Education Research), a local education policy research project. Lapp recently oversaw creation of RFA’s Educational Opportunity Dashboard, a tool to examine disparities in access to educational opportunity by student race and income from the Civil Rights Data Collection. Prior to joining RFA, Lapp served as staff attorney at the Education Law Center-PA and taught high school social studies for nine years in two Philadelphia charter schools.

LEANA CABRAL
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE
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Leana Cabral leverages her mixed methods training as a Ph.D. candidate at Teachers College in Sociology and Education in support of her projects at RFA. She is leading RFA’s Educator Diversity study, which examines the root causes of Black teacher attrition in Philadelphia and promising practices in teacher diversification efforts. She also serves on the Out-of-School Time (OST) Coordination: Infrastructure for Supporting Healthy OST Ecosystems project, which explores how city-level OST coordination can contribute to community, family, and youth resilience moving forward from the COVID-19 pandemic. Cabral has extensive experience in out-of-school settings as an educator and administrator, as well as in school settings as a researcher. Her research interests include the racial politics of public education, K-12 educational inequality and educational program evaluation. She is broadly committed to educational and racial justice and equity for all students.
As Philadelphia’s public university, Temple University educates many of the city’s pre-service and in-service teachers from early childhood education to K-12. In particular, Temple University Center for Professional Development in Career & Technical Education (CTE) provides CTE teacher certification services CTE teachers.

The Pennsylvania Educator Diversity Consortium (PEDC) is a grassroots organization of Early Childhood-grade 12, higher education, non-profit, community, and government leaders striving to increase the number of teachers of color as well as culturally responsive and sustaining educators in Pennsylvania. Our current membership includes over 170 individuals from nearly 80 different organizations across the Commonwealth.

Over the last two and a half years, Consortium members (previously affiliated with PDE’s Aspiring to Educate initiative) have collaborated to co-develop Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Education Competencies for Pennsylvania educators; write toolkits that describe various efforts to recruit, retain, and mentor teachers of color; create and advocate for state-level policy changes; and host two-day public virtual summits during which stakeholders around the Commonwealth meet to learn, share, and strategize about challenges and opportunities. Scan the QR code and become a member today!

The Mayor’s Office of Education (MOE) provides leadership to improve education in the City of Philadelphia. To achieve this mission, MOE:

- Advances key educational policy.
- Forges diverse partnerships to strengthen the local education landscape and increase opportunities for Philadelphians.
- Supports the Mayor-appointed Board of Education of the School District of Philadelphia.
- Oversees new initiatives between the City and the Community College of Philadelphia.
- Supports efforts to enhance and scale a pipeline of diverse educators across Philadelphia.

The Friends of FDR Park is a community-led nonprofit organization dedicated to stewarding and advocating for FDR Park. We are committed to achieving our vision of building one of the greatest urban parks in America, rooted in the ideals of diversity, inclusion, and environmental sustainability.
Acknowledgements

This Teach-In would not have been possible without the generous support from RFA’s funders of this work, including the Barra Foundation, the William Penn Foundation, and The Heinz Endowments. We would also like to thank our partners who have generously donated their time to help RFA connect the community to this important issue. Those partners include Dr. Camika Royal, Sharif El-Mekki, Mimi Woldeyohannes and the staff of the Center for Black Educator Development, Otis Hackney and Sarah Hollister at the Mayor’s Office of Education, Dr. Patience Lehrman from Temple University and Dr. Juliet Curci and Dr. Donna-Marie Cole-Malott from Pennsylvania Educator Diversity Consortium, and Justin DiBerardinis from FDR Park.

Also, our gratitude to the RFA staff who contributed to the writing of this book, including Dr. Kate Callahan, Saxon Nelson, David Lapp, Leana Cabral, and Mary Eddins. The book was designed by Samantha Slade and Hailey Myers. Thanks as well to the many members of RFA’s staff who helped to produce this event.

Finally, we would be remiss without acknowledging the contributions of all of the teachers in Philadelphia and throughout the Commonwealth, but particularly the Black and other teachers of color, who work hard each day in schools and classrooms to provide students with a high-quality education.

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