

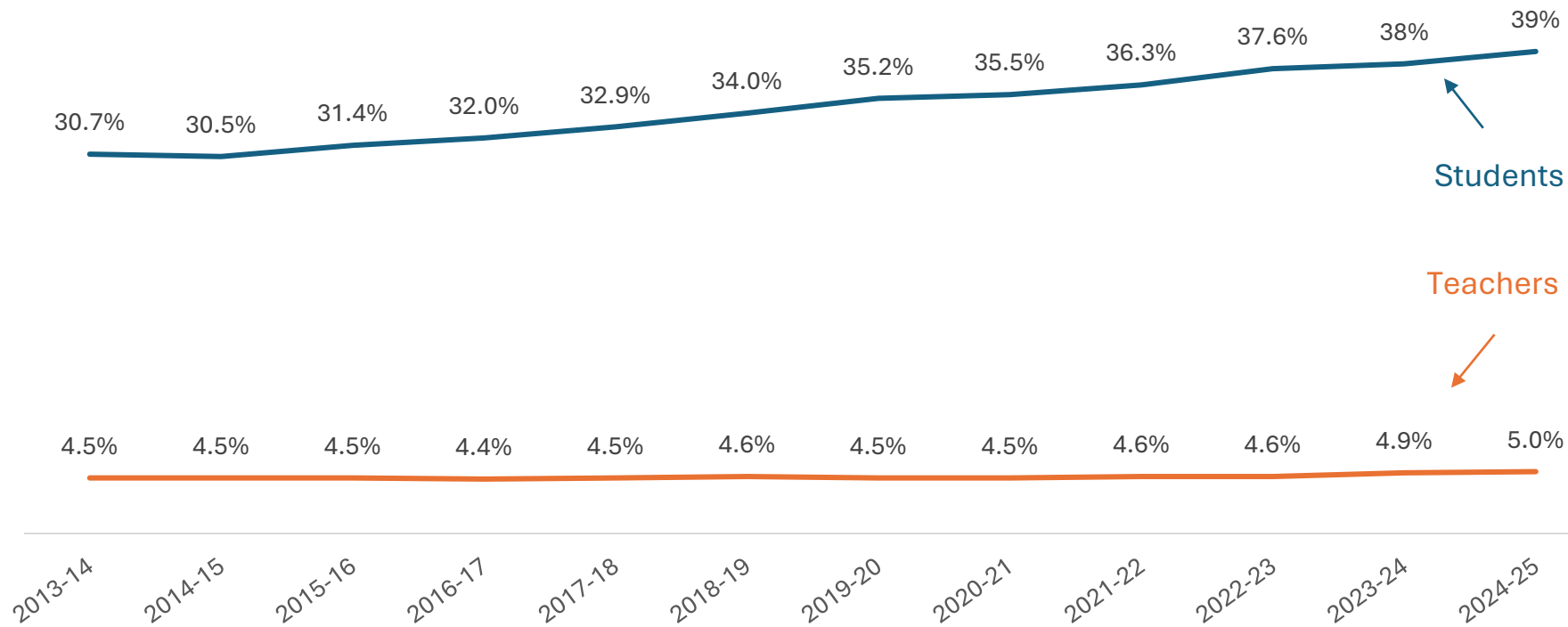
Roots & Resistance: A Black Educator Audio Experience

May 29, 2025
Virtual Listening Party and Community Conversation



The Need for More Teachers of Color in Allegheny County

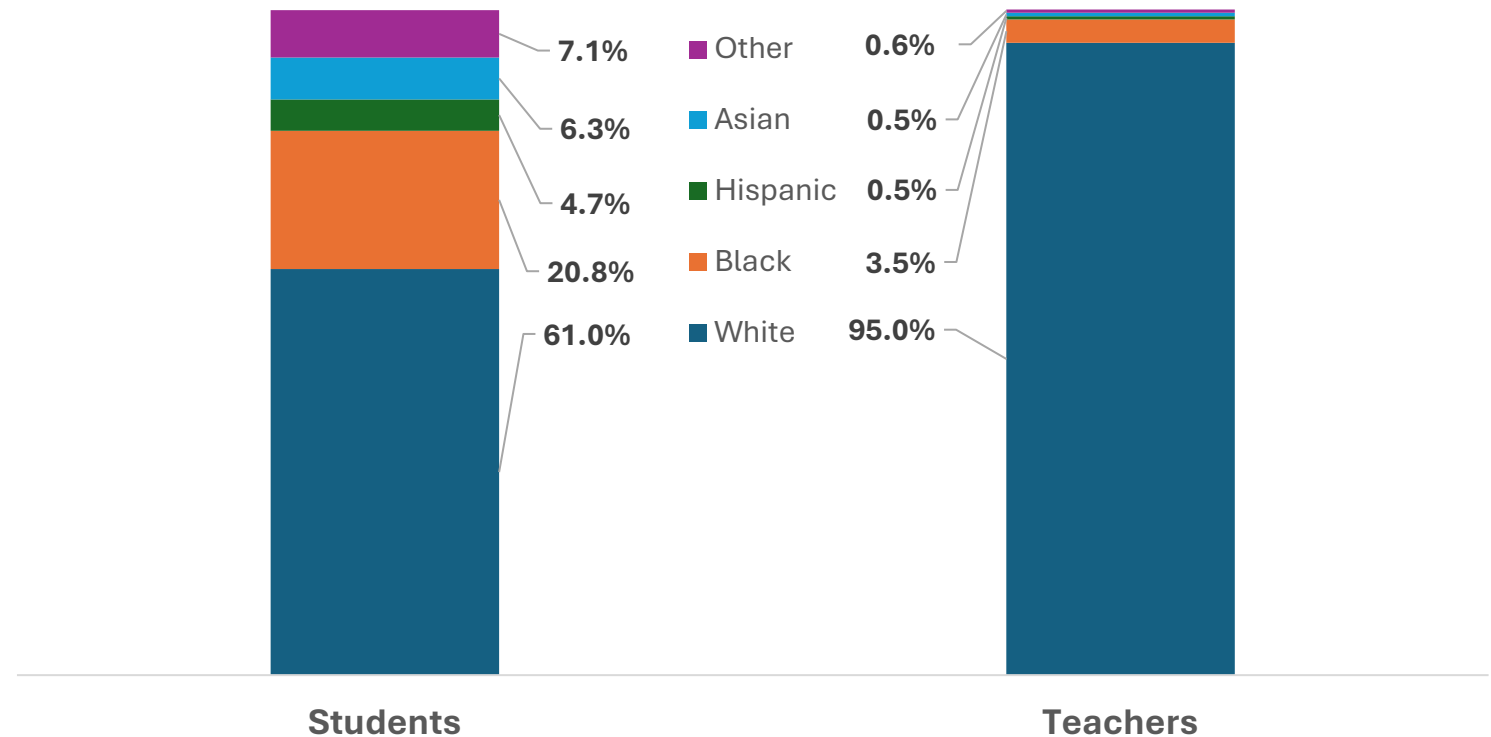
Change in Percentage of Students and Teachers of Color in Allegheny County,
2013-14 to 2024-25



Windows and Mirrors for Allegheny County's K-12 Students

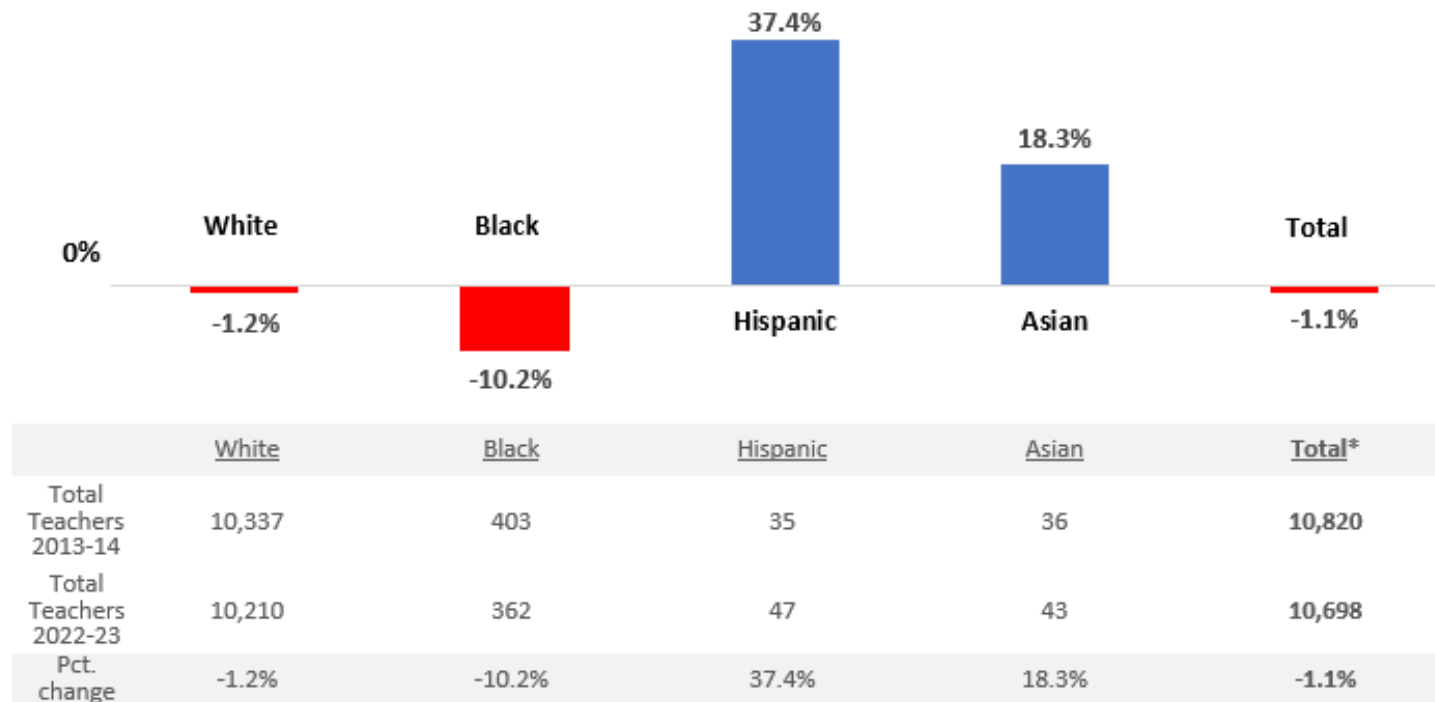
- Allegheny County has 43 public school districts and 25 charter schools serving approximately 145,000 students.
- 92 schools and four entire districts have zero teachers of color in the county.
- 81 schools and seven entire districts have only one teacher of color.

Allegheny County Student and Teacher Race and Ethnicity,



The Decline of Black Teachers

10-Year Percent Change in Number of Teachers in Allegheny County by Race or Ethnicity, 2013-14 to 2022-23



* Total includes teachers identified as American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and two or more races.

The "Small But Mighty" Study

- RFA conducted a community-informed mixed-methods research project designed to identify barriers to recruitment and retention of Black educators in Allegheny County's public schools.
- The study, "Small but Mighty: Lessons from Black Teachers' Experiences in Allegheny County", centers in-depth exploratory qualitative research to understand the experiences and perspectives of Black educators and those leading educator diversity initiatives.
- Additional resources made it possible to build upon the initial products this past summer and fall to create an audio documentary with consulting support from the founders of the "Diseducation" podcast further exploring themes that emerged through the data presented in the "Small but Mighty" report.

"Small but Mighty" Audio Documentary

- Hosted by Sam Reed and Kevin Burgess
- We spoke with 3 Black educators from Allegheny County about their classroom experiences.
 - We also spoke with 3 Black students from the region
- Their experiences closely mirror what we saw in the broader research.
 - Each educator shared anecdotes centering on the three key takeaways emerging from the Small But Mighty study.
 - **Key Takeaway 1:** Black teachers make unique, irreplaceable contributions
 - **Key Takeaway 2:** Black teachers confront unique challenges
 - **Key Takeaway 3:** Specific conditions serve to keep Black teachers in the classroom

Listening Session



Share your reactions to the findings in real time!

What stood out to you from the findings?
How do you think we can best address/lift that up collectively?

Click on the link in the chat to access the Slido website where you can record your thoughts to these questions above..



Key Takeaway 1: Unique Contributions

Black teachers offer Allegheny County students and schools several unique and important contributions, which are informed by both their identity and their purpose for choosing this profession.

Special connections with Black students

- Shared cultural backgrounds, experiences and communities
- Intentional investment of time and energy
- Representation and role-modeling

Unique pedagogies and practices

- Culturally relevant pedagogies and practices
- Maintaining high expectations
- Alternative discipline strategies



Black Students Thrive with Black Teachers

- As you heard, Black teachers make a special impact on their Black students
 - It is part of their mission.
- The original study did not include Black student perspectives on their teachers.
- For the audio documentary, we also spoke with 3 Black students from Allegheny County – adding their voices to the conversation about the unique contributions their Black teachers make.



Key Takeaway 2: Challenges

Black teachers in Allegheny County face many challenges that impact their experiences as educators. Participants shared that they experience both systemic and interpersonal racism, which work together to create and maintain an environment that poses the following challenges:

- **Racial microaggressions**, including unwanted touching or offensive comments
- **Harm caused by White colleagues**, through condescending or demeaning interactions, exclusion
- **Unjust treatment and retaliation from White district and school administrators**, including unnecessarily punitive behavior and unwarranted retaliation
- **Heavier workloads**, as Black teachers felt they were assigned and took on more responsibilities than white peers
- **Racism toward students**, demonstrated by White teachers and administrators who exhibit deficit perspectives

$$\sum_{k=1}^n k = (n+1)n/2$$

$$(a+b)^3 = a^3 + 3a^2b + 3ab^2 + b^3$$

$$P_i = \frac{y_i}{N} \quad (x + \sin(\frac{\pi}{17}))$$

$$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$$

$$\Delta = b^2 - 4ac$$

$$\vec{AB} = B - A = (b_1 - a_1, b_2 - a_2)$$

$$\log[1-x] \left(\frac{1}{1-x} \right)$$



Microsite Launch



Community Conversation

