

# SEE OUR TRUTH



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The Education Trust–New York

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## The State of Teacher and School Leader Diversity in New York, and Why It Matters for Students, Educators, and Our Future

When Aneth moved to New York from Ecuador in the second grade, she remembers feeling isolated and alone.

“There wasn’t anyone at the school I could connect with,” Aneth said.

It wasn’t until she was a junior in high school, nearly a decade later, that Aneth first took a class with a Latina teacher who inspired and understood her.

“She sets an example for us — she’s a Hispanic woman in a predominantly White field,” Aneth explained. “She shared with us that even some times she gets nervous, or intimidated, but she pushes through. That’s encouraging because I’ve been in places where I feel nervous or I feel uncomfortable. I feel like I can be as great as her because she is this powerful Hispanic woman who I aspire to be.”

Across New York State, Aneth’s story is too often the rule rather than the exception.<sup>1</sup> As we describe in greater detail throughout this report, there is not a single Latino or Black teacher in one-third of all New York schools, and nearly 200,000 Latino and Black students attend schools with no or just one same-race or same-ethnicity teacher.<sup>2</sup>

When we listen to students, teachers, and school and district leaders, as well as the research, it is clear that to ensure *all* students receive the high-quality education they deserve — one that prepares them for success in college, careers, and civic life — New York State must do a better job improving equitable access to strong educators who are well-prepared, well-supported, *and* diverse.

“All of us have experienced certain things,” said José\*, an educator in the Rochester City School District. “Even our own experience itself — being doubted and not being

looked upon as someone who can succeed. It’s that internal passion to show our students this is possible. It comes back to understanding where our children are coming from and the struggles that take place.”

In this report, The Education Trust–New York provides a first-ever detailed look at unpublished school-level data on teacher and school leader diversity collected by the New York State Education Department (NYSED), alongside the results of interviews and focus groups with students, teachers, principals, superintendents, and other experts.<sup>3</sup> By drawing on both original data and the experiences and perspectives of students and educators, we hope to spotlight why teacher and school leader diversity matters, the facts about educator diversity — or the lack thereof in New York — and the steps the state can take to lead on this critical issue. We also recognize that this is a national challenge, and that New York is far from unique.

Through all of our conversations, we heard consistent themes from students and educators alike. Their message, rooted in their experiences and aspirations, was clear: **See Our Truth**. In so doing, together we can raise the level of attention and urgency on this critical issue and recognize the assets and strengths that strong and diverse educators bring to bear:

**Passion. Skill. Empathy. Resilience. Authority. Trust.**

**VISIT [WWW.SEEOURTRUTH.ORG](http://WWW.SEEOURTRUTH.ORG) TO...**

**LEARN MORE** about this important equity issue

**EXPLORE** the data behind this report

**READ** personal stories from educators and students

**WATCH** short interviews with district leaders

# WHY TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADER DIVERSITY MATTERS



You begin to empower them to believe that they can dream. They can achieve. When you start doing that... and I think trust is a factor. They have to trust you. – **Paula\*** | retired Buffalo teacher



I think it was when I heard my first Black teacher in sixth grade that I changed as a student and really opened up and owned my own voice. My seventh grade teacher was a Black man who would always say stuff like, 'Oh, my gosh your braids are so fly.' That affirmation, that totally changed the game for me in terms of how I interacted in educational spaces. – **Danitra\*** | New York City education non-profit administrator and former teacher



It's really important for children of color to see people like them in places of power and leadership so that they can aspire to those positions. – **Veronica\*** | New York City school leader



The critical role that strong teachers, school leaders, and other professionals play in student success is central to closing achievement and opportunity gaps for students at all levels.

Powerful national research reinforces the importance of highly skilled, well-trained, and diverse educators. This begins, of course, with ensuring teacher and school leader effectiveness. Further, studies indicate that for students of color, having a teacher of color during their educational experience can have a positive impact on improving student performance in reading and math, increasing the likelihood that Black students are identified as gifted, reducing suspension rates, decreasing dropout rates, and improving students' hopes of attending college.<sup>4</sup>

In our New York City student focus group and additional interviews with Latino and Black students from across the state, we heard how students felt a connection with their Latino and Black teachers because of their shared experiences and that they felt more comfortable going to Latino and Black teachers with their concerns. Students told us:

**"We all came from the same struggle. Even though there are all different struggles, in the end it's the same struggle."** – **Iman** | *New York City student*

**"Teachers of color are like the parents you don't have at school with you every day. They see themselves like you."** – **Lisette** | *New York City student*

**"Different teachers can teach you different things because they've had different experiences."** – **Ralph\*** | *Buffalo student*

**"You have that teacher you can relate to. One of these people who look like me. A young Black male like me. I know that if I say something about the experience I have as a Black male, he will understand me."** – **Wesley** | *Long Island student*

**"I was comfortable there. I never felt like an outsider. The more diverse a school can be the more everyone feels comfortable."** – **Deidre\*** | *Buffalo student*

As a result, students often described feeling more engaged in classes taught by Latino and Black teachers and feeling that these teachers had higher expectations for them. Students told us:

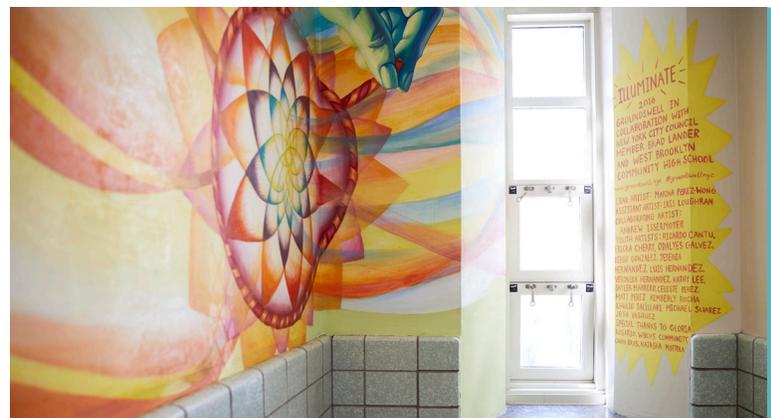
**"Students... hold back because they see teachers they can't relate to."** – **Wesley** | *Long Island student*

**"[T]eachers of color are harder on me. As teachers of color, they know a lot of students of color tend to slip through the cracks... They were particularly hard on me because they wanted me to succeed."** – **Frantzy** | *New York City student*

**Teachers of color "really pushed me to go beyond what I thought I could settle for."** – **Iman** | *New York City student*

An important context for this analysis of teacher and school leader diversity is New York's status as the most segregated education system in the country — with most Latino and Black students attending schools where the vast majority of their classmates are also students of color.<sup>5</sup> The distribution of educators largely reflects the system's overall segregation. As described in greater detail below, Latino and Black teachers are more heavily concentrated in schools where the majority of students are students of color. White students in New York State are likewise likely to complete their education with minimal contact with students, teachers, or school leaders of color. One student told us:

**"People of color play a tremendous role in education, not just for students who look like them, but for White students as well. If White students have more Black and Latino teachers, they can't have as many prejudices."** – **Wesley** | *Long Island student*



Interacting with diverse students, teachers, and school leaders on a daily basis can help reduce student prejudice towards people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. Providing students with exposure to teachers and school leaders of color serves the important function of demonstrating from a young age to both students of color and White students that people of color can and should hold positions of authority in our society. Improving staff diversity also promotes more — and more representative — voices at the table when important decisions are made about curriculum and instruction, so that teaching and learning better reflects the experiences and history of all groups of students. These issues are vital in all types of communities in New York State — especially outside of major urban school districts in areas that have become much more diverse in recent years.

As Urban Institute researcher Constance Lindsay has said:

**“You could make that argument both from a student outcomes perspective and as a democratic goal — we should have a diverse public school teacher workforce.”<sup>6</sup>**

## WHERE DOES EDUCATOR DIVERSITY POLICY FIT IN?

Teacher and school leader diversity is at the intersection of two of the most important current issues in education policy: improving equitable access to strong educators and addressing school integration.

All students need and deserve access to effective educators who are highly skilled, well-prepared, and diverse. Simultaneously, building diverse schools and inclusive school cultures is a pillar of the push for greater integration.

Policies that improve teacher and school leader diversity are an opportunity to advance both of these critical needs.





# DIVERSITY MUST BE PAIRED WITH EQUITY AND INCLUSION



You already know how microaggressions go. 'Are you really a teacher? You don't really belong here.' It starts to weigh on you a little bit. – **Tiffany\*** | Buffalo teacher



We're not being heard. We're not being seen. For all those people who say we don't see color, they need to see color and they need to see ethnicity. – **Barbara\*** | Rochester educator



Our teachers of color get disrespected a lot. Like they're not good enough. – **Aneth** | New York City student

Achieving a more diverse education workforce is not simply a matter of improving preparation or hiring practices, although both are certainly necessary. It also requires commitment and action to establish school cultures that welcome, esteem, and fully incorporate educators of color. Schools and district offices are no different than any other employer in the country: the work environment that they establish — starting with their governing body, typically a school board — reflects their organizational values, sending implicit and explicit messages of inclusion or exclusion.

As a recent study by Promise54, a new non-profit that partners with organizations to cultivate and maintain healthy, equitable, and inclusive environments, found: “While the data shows important differences in the practices of organizations with greater diversity, a singular focus on diversity without a commensurate focus on equity and inclusion will not maximize the potential benefits. We see striking evidence that organizations that approach diversity, equity, and inclusion in parallel have the greatest likelihood of realizing the benefits, such as staff engagement and staff retention.”<sup>7</sup>

In their landmark report, *Through Our Eyes*, based on extensive focus groups with teachers of color throughout the nation, our colleagues at The Education Trust summarized this issue succinctly: “Simply recruiting more teachers of color only gets them in the door; we must pay equal attention to creating the conditions to keep them.”<sup>8</sup>

Our focus groups and interviews indicate that teachers of color in New York experience many of the same things as their colleagues across the country said in *Through Our Eyes*, including:

- **Educators of color told us that they see themselves as able to establish important authentic relationships with students of color and their families.** The educators we interviewed emphasized that they see part of their role as providing an essential bridge to encourage students to explore and connect with their own culture, and to serve as role models for high academic and career achievement. For many educators, understanding and empathizing with each student’s circumstance was central to modeling

success — it not only allowed them to work with each student as an individual, it encouraged students to identify and embrace their own strengths. This served as a powerful counterweight to the lowered expectations set for students of color in the education system. Educators of color told us:

**“For me personally, as a Black woman, this is emotional for me. I’m invested in it. I’m an advocate for social justice. I’m not sure how many White educators feel this way about themselves. It’s important that my students feel proud culturally and that they’re active citizens in the world and have an opinion on what is going on in the world around them.”** – **Danicka\*** | *New York City principal*

**“You need to believe that’s what you expect them to do. It’s more than a word. You have to feel it, you have to breathe it, you have to believe it. And you have to live it and make sure they understand it. I think that’s why those of color are able to keep that high expectation because they know what it’s like to struggle. They’ve seen it. They know what it feels like.”** – **David\*** | *Buffalo teacher*

**“So, it starts with affirming, and if I can get you to love yourself so much already in kindergarten and to know these things so hard that when you go to first grade [if] somebody ever tries to enact that violence on you, you are like, ‘Uh-uh, I love myself too much to let you do that to me.’”** – **Alicia\*** | *New York City teacher*

- **Educators of color report that the relationships they are able to build with students can also have negative professional repercussions.** Many educators of color shared that their relationships with students were often positively reflected in classroom behavioral management. Yet, those same educators expressed concern that colleagues and administrators would turn to them exclusively as disciplinary enforcers, as opposed to educators with a robust skill-set including academics — and reported concern over how this could impact the way students perceive them. Furthermore, educators reported feeling

overwhelmed, and frustrated, by being asked to bridge cultural gaps for other colleagues and administrators. Latino and Black educators told us:

**“When there are Black men they are usually in disciplinary roles or coaches.” – Arnold\* | New York City teacher**

**“They see us as a ‘bouncer.’ We’re supposed to go into the most difficult schools and make them safe, not necessarily high-achieving.” – Raúl\* | New York City principal**

**“I go in and I’m the answer to the troubled black male students. The, ‘Oh you can connect with them.’” – Damon\* | Buffalo teacher**

**“I think there’s also a burden — going off the model minority — not only are you teaching your students, but you are also teaching your co-workers and teaching parents, teaching administrators who aren’t people of color and just don’t understand teaching students of color. So, you are often forced to have multiple duties of teaching throughout the day, which is another burden.” – Dean\* | New York City teacher**

**“From a Latino standpoint you get those who say to me, ‘What is it about this Latino thing? I don’t understand why they don’t send their kids to school. I don’t understand why they go to Puerto Rico in the middle of the school year.’ You almost try to become like a spokesperson.” – Herber\* | Rochester educator**

- **Educators of color told us they face unique career challenges due to prejudice.** Educators of color identified racism as a daily challenge. This discrimination manifested and presented itself in myriad ways. For many educators, discrimination presented itself in the way colleagues and administrators interact, perceive, and question educators and students of color. This reality often takes an emotional toll and puts a strain on their well-being. To complicate things further, it is often impossible for educators to receive support from colleagues and administrators — as they are

perpetuating the harm. Many educators reported creating informal networks of support to help with this issue. Beyond confronting racism and improving self-care, educators of color also reported a lack of support and mentorship for career advancement. Educators of color told us:

**“Sometimes it was a little hard as a Black woman and science teacher. People wanted to know what my credentials were. When I went to workshops, because there weren’t many women of color in these workshops, it was almost questioned, ‘Are you teaching outside of your license area?’” – Irene\* | New York City assistant principal**

**“I can’t be as outspoken as the only one, I’m representative. I have to be careful. I have to smile a lot and make people feel comfortable.” – Arnold\* | New York City teacher**

**“There was resentment. There was resentment for [one-for-one hiring]. There was a lot of resentment in that. And just because that was how you got hired, somehow I’m not qualified. I’m not supposed to be here. So you go in. You’ve got to be better. You’ve got to be better and you’ve got to do better.... That was my personal challenge. I tried not to make the same kinds of mistakes as I saw my colleagues make. I always tried to make sure I was straight and above board all the time, because I already had some things working against me. I didn’t need anything else.” – Paula\* | retired Buffalo teacher**

**“But, when I, as a Black woman... people tend to doubt your capabilities. They tend to doubt who you are and what you have to offer to their children and I see that — I’ve had incidents where parents have asked, ‘Well, who is the lead teacher?’ Or, ‘Who’s the... certified teacher?’ It’s like, ‘I am.’ They are having a hard time believing.” – Natalie\* | New York City teacher**

- **Educators of color told us they, like many teachers, are frustrated by an educational system that does not put students first.** Educators of color expressed

a passion and commitment to the high achievement of all students and, particularly, students of color. However, they are disappointed by the lack of mutual commitment to that goal by other colleagues and administrators — both White and non-White — and the education system itself. Teachers reported concerns with both the pedagogy and Euro-centric curriculum they are asked to implement, frequently mentioning the need for culturally responsive curricula and teaching strategies. Additionally, educators feel that they are either ignored, labeled as troublemakers, or otherwise silenced when trying to advocate for positive change. Educators felt that internal politics take precedence over doing what is right by students. Educators of color told us:

**“We don’t want you for so long in our schools because you cause too much trouble, you ask too many questions, you expect children to have solid units of study, you expect children to be fully bilingual, you expect too much.”** – **Crystal\*** | *New York City teacher*

**“I think that we still have a lot of work to do as a city, in thinking about what does education look like for our children of color and particularly, how are we giving them equal access to education and equal access to opportunities that White children, White privileged children are having.... It just makes me think a lot about the pedagogy and the approach to pedagogy that we need to improve upon.”** – **Angela\*** | *New York City teacher*

**“Our kids want to learn, too, but our teachers don’t make it accessible.”** – **Tiffany\*** | *Buffalo teacher*

**“What I think about in terms of the curriculum... it’s making our histories non-existent to the eyes of our students of color and therefore, they feel like they don’t have a history. Like they don’t have any accomplishments to look up to, to empower them.”** – **Kassandra\*** | *New York City teacher*

These powerful reflections from teachers and students are made even more urgent by the lack of educator diversity in many of New York’s schools.



# EDUCATOR DIVERSITY IN NEW YORK: BY THE NUMBERS

Simply put, New York's educator workforce does not come close to representing the rich diversity of the state's students, leaving many Latino and Black students without access to teachers or school leaders of the same race or ethnicity.



Across New York State, Latino and Black students together make up 43 percent of total enrollment, while Latino and Black teachers are 16 percent of the teacher workforce (see Figure 1).

Latino educators are especially under-represented in New York’s teacher workforce. While the share of the Black teacher workforce (8 percent) is half that of Black student population (17 percent), the Latino teacher workforce (7 percent) is approximately a fourth of the Latino student population (26 percent).<sup>9</sup>

Examining the data more closely, we identified the following key findings:

**FINDING 1: More than 115,000 Latino and Black students attend schools with no teachers of the same race or ethnicity and an additional 80,000 Latino and Black students attend schools with just one teacher of the same race or ethnicity.**

**“It’s hard to imagine what it would be like with more Black and Latino teachers because there are so few. If there were more teachers of color in school, I would have more options if I had a problem or wanted to**

**discuss something and I wouldn’t hesitate to do so because people around me are like me.” – Wesley | Long Island student**

**“I went to three different elementary schools. They were all predominantly White with predominantly White teachers. And me as the other. It was difficult for me not having that adult figure I could look up to.” – Iman | New York City student**

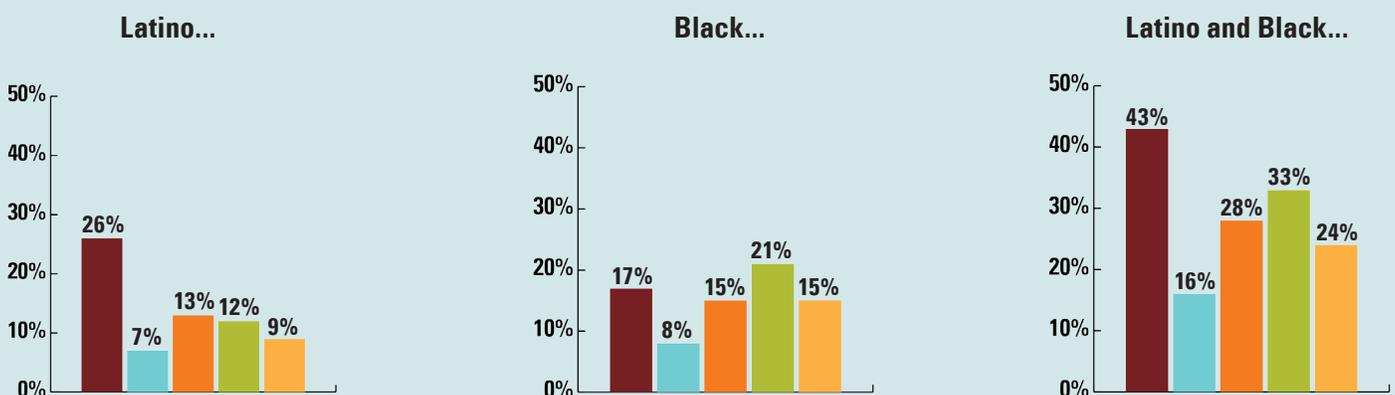
Ten percent of Latino and Black students in New York State attend school with no teachers of the same race or ethnicity. That figure rises to 17 percent of Latino and Black students — or nearly 1 in 5 — with no or just one teacher of the same race or ethnicity.

In addition, it is important to remember that a diverse education workforce benefits all students.<sup>10</sup> White students across New York State also lack access to Latino and Black teachers. In fact, nearly half of all White students — 48 percent, or more than 560,000 White students — are enrolled in schools without a single Latino or Black teacher. This is a further symptom of New York’s hyper-segregated education system.

**Figure 1: Latino and Black students together make up 43 percent of total enrollment, far surpassing the share of Latino and Black educators**

**STATEWIDE SHARES OF..**

■ Students   ■ Teachers   ■ Other Professional Staff   ■ Assistant Principals   ■ Principals



Source: New York State Education Department. Student enrollment data downloaded from [data.nysed.gov](http://data.nysed.gov). Educator information is based on unpublished 2015-16 data. Analysis conducted by The Education Trust–New York. The category ‘Other Professional Staff’ includes administrators (except principals and assistant principals), guidance counselors, school nurses, psychologists, and other professionals who devote more than half of their time to non-teaching duties.

**FINDING 2: Latino and Black students outside of the Big 5 school districts are nearly 13 times more likely than their Big 5 peers to have no exposure to a same-race/ethnicity teacher. As a result, nearly 98,000 Latino and Black students in district-run schools outside of the Big 5 attend school without a single same-race/ethnicity teacher, compared to less than 16,000 Latino and Black students in Big 5 school districts.**

“In some ways, in small cities like mine and [in] the rural districts, the issues may be magnified. In [large urban districts] there is an effort and a sense of urgency in everything you do. Here it can be overlooked.” – **Luvelle Brown** | *Ithaca School District superintendent*

“If it’s only talked about as a poor city problem, then people will say it’s just a poor city problem. It’s a problem for all of us.” – **Oliver Robinson** | *Shenendehowa School District superintendent*

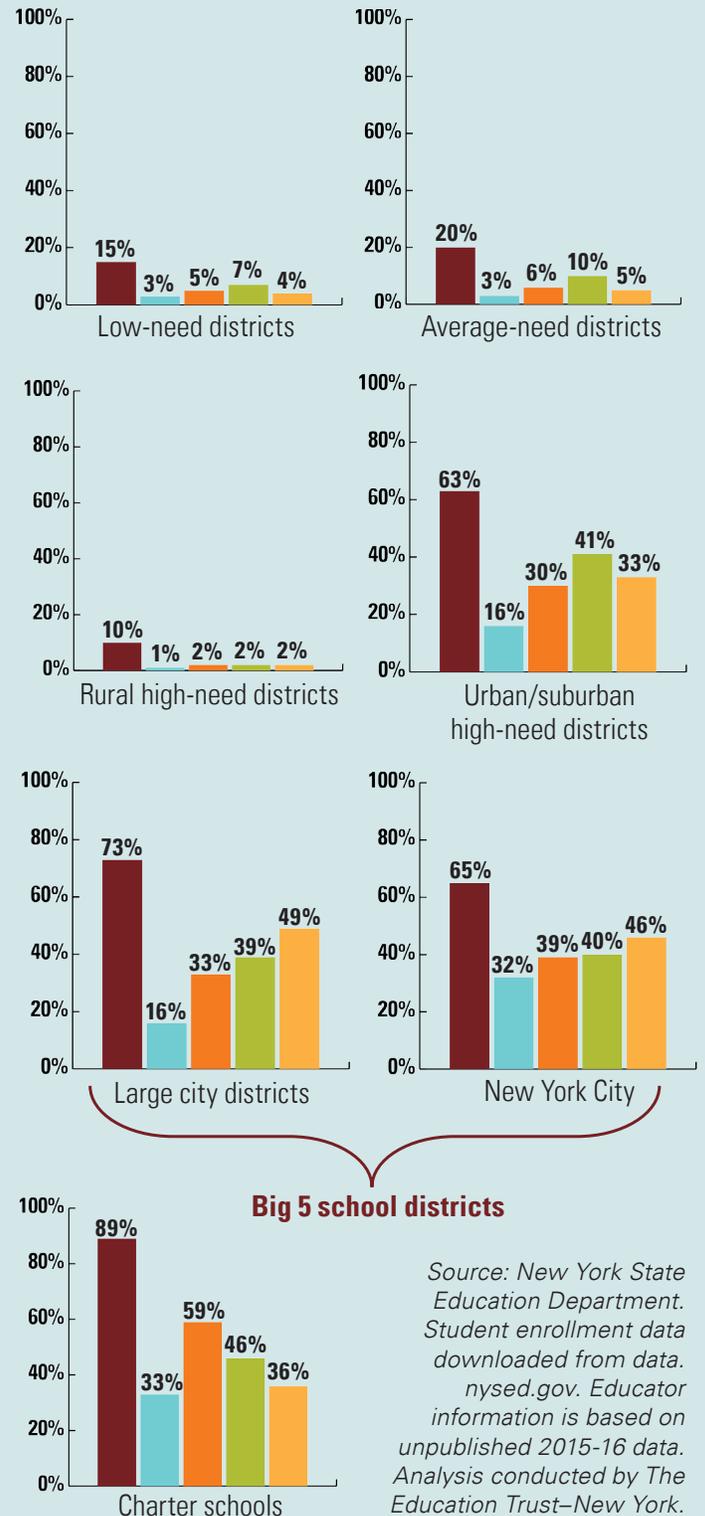
While the lack of teacher diversity is sometimes thought of as a “big city” issue, the data tell a very different story (see Figures 2 and 3).



**Figure 2: Latino and Black students in low- and average-need districts are less likely to attend school with a teacher of the same race or ethnicity than their peers in Big 5 school districts**

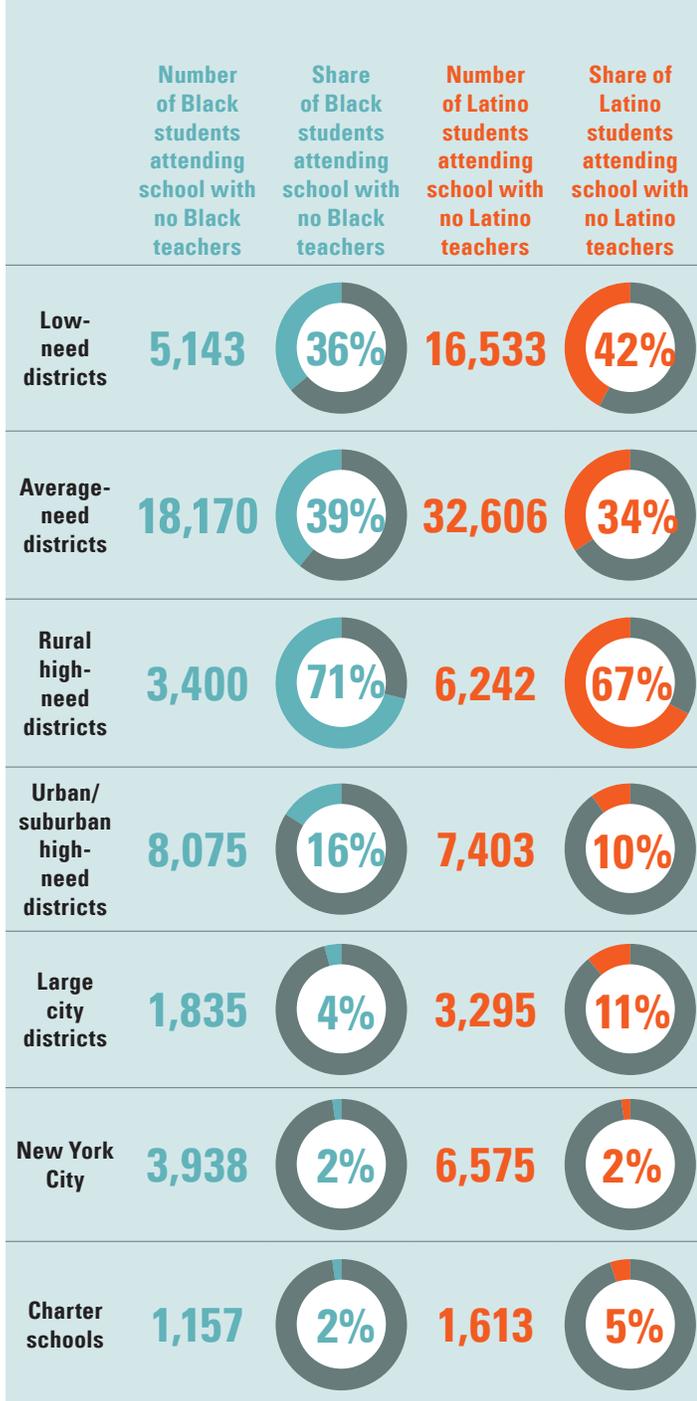
■ Students ■ Teachers ■ Other Professional Staff  
 ■ Assistant Principals ■ Principals

**SHARES OF LATINO AND BLACK...**



Source: New York State Education Department. Student enrollment data downloaded from data.nysed.gov. Educator information is based on unpublished 2015-16 data. Analysis conducted by The Education Trust–New York.

**Figure 3: The vast majority of Latino and Black students in schools with no same-race/ethnicity teacher attend schools outside of the Big 5 school districts**



Source: New York State Education Department. Student enrollment data downloaded from data.nysed.gov. Educator information is based on unpublished 2015-16 data. Analysis conducted by The Education Trust—New York.

**A NOTE ON NEW YORK STATE TERMINOLOGY...**

The Big 5 school districts are Buffalo, New York City, Rochester, Syracuse, and Yonkers.

School districts are also classified by law into need/resource capacity categories based on their levels of poverty, local wealth, and population density. The six categories are:

- New York City
- High-need large city districts (the other Big 5 school districts)
- High-need urban/suburban districts
- High-need rural districts
- Average-need districts
- Low-need districts

In some respects, New York is a tale of three states:

**New York City.**<sup>11</sup> In New York City district-run schools, Latino and Black students represent approximately two-thirds of total enrollment, and Latino and Black teachers make up one-third of the educator workforce. While that discrepancy leaves many students without a significant number of teachers of color in their schools (and varies highly by geography within the city) it is far better than any other class of school districts in New York State. Nearly all Latino, Black, and White students in New York City are enrolled in schools with at least one Latino or Black teacher.

**Other Big 5 Districts.**<sup>12</sup> With the exception of Yonkers, fewer than 1 in 5 teachers in the other Big 5 school districts are Latino or Black (see Figure 4). Eleven percent of Latino students in Big 5 school districts outside of New York City are enrolled in schools with no Latino teachers, compared to 4 percent of Black students in schools without Black teachers.

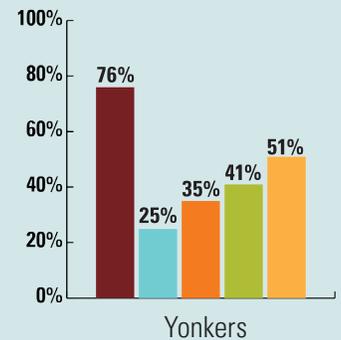
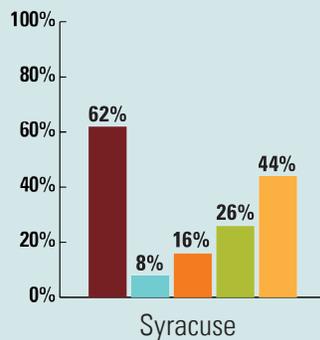
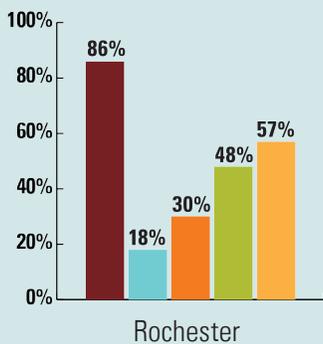
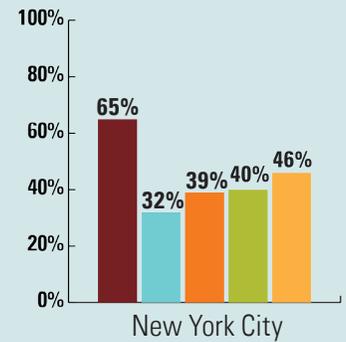
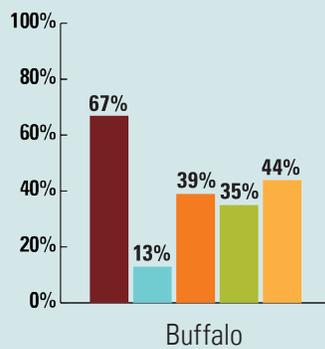
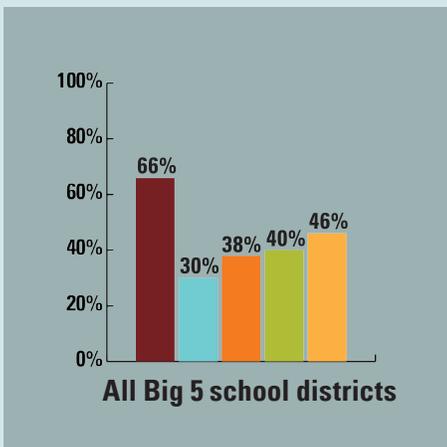
In Syracuse, approximately 1 in 3 Black students and more than half of Latino students attend a school with one or no



**Figure 4: In three of the Big 5 school districts, fewer than 20 percent of teachers are Latino or Black**

### SHARES OF LATINO AND BLACK...

■ Students    
 ■ Teachers    
 ■ Other Professional Staff    
 ■ Assistant Principals    
 ■ Principals



Source: New York State Education Department. Student enrollment data downloaded from [data.nysed.gov](http://data.nysed.gov). Educator information is based on unpublished 2015-16 data. Analysis conducted by The Education Trust–New York. Chart is limited to district-run schools.



same-race/ethnicity teachers. In Yonkers, approximately 1 in 5 Black students attend a school with one or no same-race teachers. And in Rochester, more than 1 in 4 Latino students attend a school with one or no same-ethnicity teachers.

**The Rest of the State.** The data suggest that far more attention should be paid to educator diversity in school districts outside of the Big 5. School districts outside of the Big 5 enroll 33 percent of the state’s Latino and Black students but employ just 17 percent of the Latino and Black teacher workforce. While teacher diversity in these school districts may often be overlooked because of their relative small individual size, far more of their Latino and Black students attend schools without a single same-race/ethnicity teacher than in the Big 5 school districts. Low- and average-need districts together enroll 62 percent of all Latino and Black students in the state who do not have a single same-race/ethnicity teacher in their school. In fact, in school districts designated as low- or average-need, the average school employs fewer than two Latino and/or Black teachers (see *Figure 5*).

White students in school districts throughout the rest of the state likewise lack access to teachers of color. Fifty-seven percent of White students in school districts outside of the Big 5 are enrolled in schools with no Latino or Black teachers.

**FINDING 3: Latino and Black educators are better represented in school leadership at the principal and assistant principal levels than in the classroom — but major gaps in the pipeline exist for Latino principals in New York City and for Latino and Black principals in the rest of the state.**

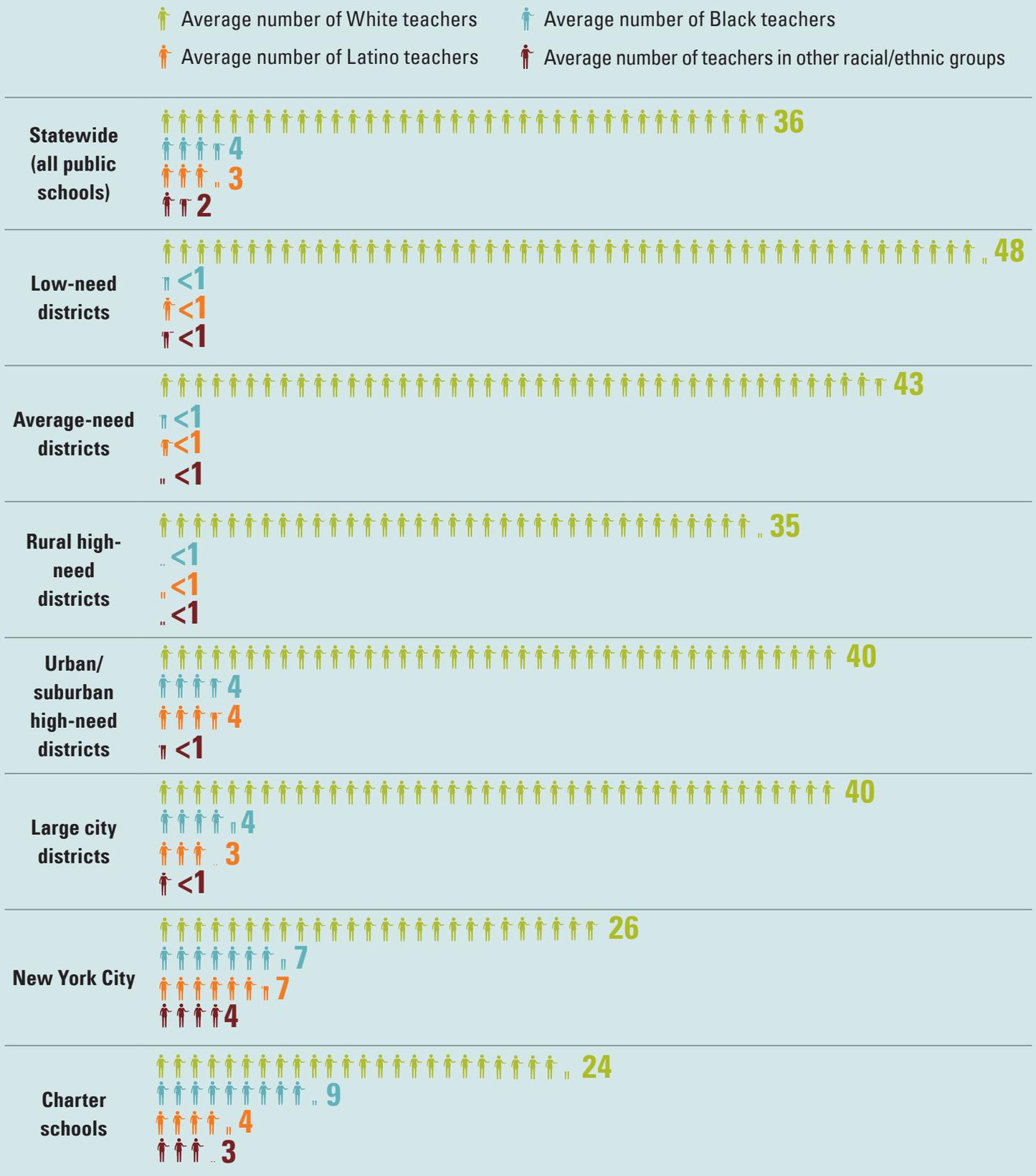
**“Typically, our role is around dealing with the community, or personnel services. It’s very rare you will see a person of color in what’s seen as the coveted roles.”** – **Shaun Nelms** | *University of Rochester Educational Partnership Organization at East superintendent (Rochester)*

**“All of the principals I ever met [in elementary school] were, first of all, White. Second of all, older. Third, they all left.”** – **Mark\*** | *New York City student*

As Figure 1 shows, Latino and Black assistant principals together represent 33 percent of the workforce — double the share of teachers — and 24 percent of the principal workforce.

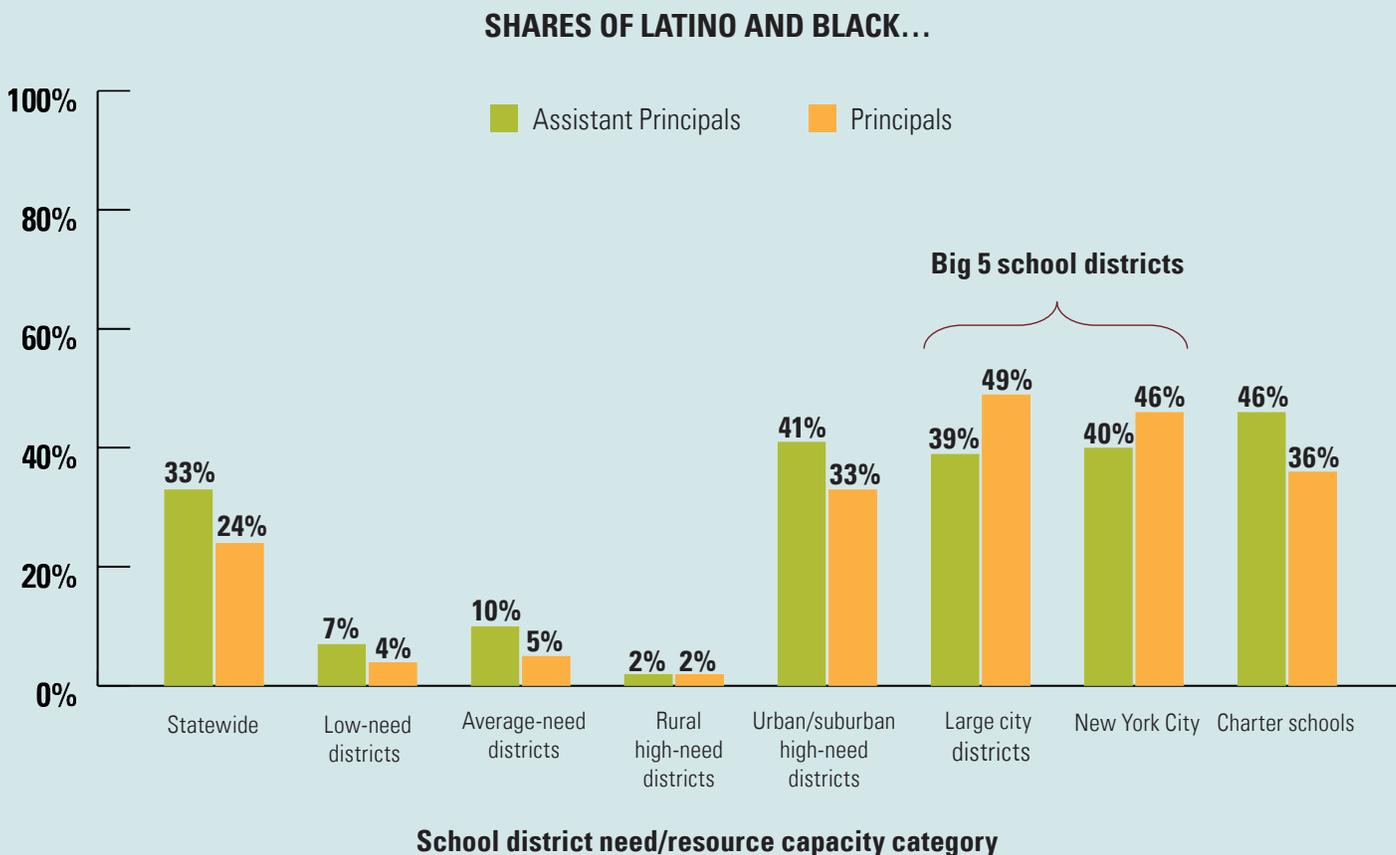
Consistent with the findings for teachers, representation at the assistant principal and principal levels is greater for Black educators than for Latino educators. This difference is particularly notable in New York City. There, Black

**Figure 5: Average number of teachers per school by race/ethnicity by need/resource capacity category and for charter schools**



Source: New York State Education Department. Unpublished 2015-16 data. Analysis conducted by The Education Trust–New York.

**Figure 6: There are fewer Latino or Black principals than assistant principals in all types of school districts outside of the Big 5**



Source: New York State Education Department. Unpublished 2015-16 data. Analysis conducted by The Education Trust–New York.

teachers represent 17 percent of the teacher workforce, increasing to 23 percent of assistant principals and 26 percent of principals. Latino administrators do not see as significant an increase in their share of the workforce: they represent 15 percent of New York City teachers, 16 percent of assistant principals, and 20 percent of principals.

Looking across the state, another important pipeline challenge emerges. In the Big 5 school districts, the percentage of Latino and Black principals is greater than the share of Latino and Black assistant principals, suggesting that educators of color have a pipeline to the principalship proportionate to their participation at the assistant principal level. However, in all other types of school districts, there are fewer Latino or Black principals than assistant principals (*see Figure 6*), raising questions about whether Latino and Black administrators are too

often relegated into disciplinary or student support roles that do not provide them with the opportunity to gain and demonstrate academic leadership as part of their career advancement. On the other hand, the greater share of assistant principals of color also represents an opportunity to significantly diversify the ranks of future school and district leaders.

Not surprisingly, this career pathway challenge for Latino and Black teachers and administrators is further reflected at the highest level of the field: the superintendency. According to a survey conducted by the New York State Council of School Superintendents (the Council) in 2015, 95 percent of respondents were White; 2 percent were Black; and 2 percent were Latino; that means the total number of Latino and Black superintendents, out of nearly 700 school districts in the state, is likely in the 20's or 30's.<sup>13</sup> While the

Council’s report notes that “there may be a discrepancy between the actual numbers of superintendents with a race/ethnicity other than White as compared to the actual numbers reported,” it is clear that Latino and Black educators are vastly under-represented in the senior-most school district leadership positions (and the Council has formed a Diversity Task Force to increase representation). This is also consistent with national data, which indicate that 6 percent of district superintendents in the United States are people of color.<sup>14</sup>

**FINDING 4: Schools with a Latino or Black principal are more likely to have a greater share of Latino and Black teachers and to have higher enrollment of students of color and low-income students.**

Consistent with national research, schools with the greatest share of Latino and Black teachers are more likely to enroll students in poverty and students of color.<sup>15</sup> Sixty-one percent of Latino and Black teachers in our analysis work in schools where at least three-quarters of students are low-income, compared to just 21 percent of White teachers.

In addition, the New York State data reveal that Latino and Black principals are far more likely than their White peers to work in schools with significant numbers of Latino and Black teachers.

**In schools where all full-time principals are White:<sup>16</sup>**

- Latino and Black teachers represent an average of 9 percent of the teacher workforce
- Latino and Black students represent an average of 32 percent of the student body
- Low-income students represent an average of 47 percent of the student body

**In schools with at least one full-time Black principal:**

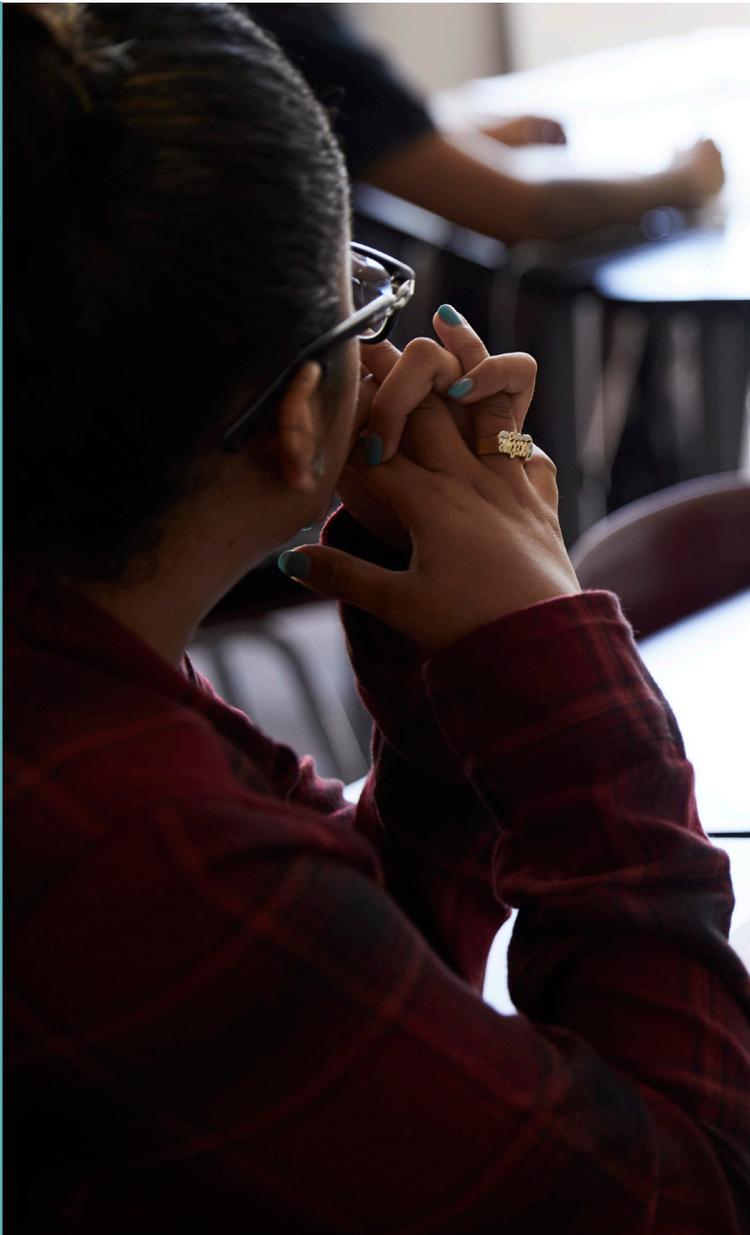
- Latino and Black teachers represent an average of 39 percent of the full-time teacher workforce
- Latino and Black students represent an average of 79 percent of the student body
- Low-income students represent an average of 73 percent of the student body

**In schools with at least one full-time Latino principal:**

- Latino and Black teachers represent an average of 36 percent of the full-time teacher workforce
- Latino and Black students represent an average of 78 percent of the student body
- Low-income students represent an average of 75 percent of the student body

These patterns are consistent across geography (Big 5 and the rest of the state) and various need/resource capacity categories.

One important result of this distribution is that White students rarely experience an educator of color in a leadership position in their school. Eighty-four percent of White students — more than 977,000 students — attend schools without a single Latino or Black principal or assistant principal.



# MAKING TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADER DIVERSITY A POLICY PRIORITY

There are immediate steps that state leaders can take to improve teacher and school leader diversity and strengthen public education in New York:

1. Strengthen the educator preparation pipeline for future teachers and leaders of color
2. Improve recruitment and hiring at the school district level
3. Focus greater attention on retention, support, and career advancement for educators of color



In putting forward the following policy recommendations, we believe it is important to begin with two overarching notes.

First, we reject the notion that there must be a tradeoff between quality and rigor, on the one hand, and diversity, on the other; New York can — and must — have a strong *and* diverse educator workforce.<sup>17</sup> There is no doubt about the importance of improving access to the strongest teachers, particularly for historically underserved groups of students. Right now, students of color are more likely than their White peers to be assigned to the least effective teachers — yet we know that among students who scored at the lowest level on the state test in math, 65 percent improved at least one level if they were assigned to teachers rated highly effective for two years in a row.<sup>18</sup> Improving access to strong educators requires professional standards that are both high and meaningful (and demonstrated through performance-based certification assessments like the edTPA) as well as sustained investment in professional development and career ladder programs such as the state’s Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (STLE) grants.

Second, we recognize that in addition to the short-term steps described below, there is a larger cyclical challenge that the state must address: part of the reason that Latino and Black teachers and school leaders are under-represented is that New York’s elementary and secondary schools need to do better for students of color. The education system currently leaves too many students from historically underserved groups unprepared for college and for highly skilled careers like teaching.<sup>19</sup> This in turn magnifies the shortage of teachers of color. New York must break this cycle so that all young people have equitable access to the full range of career and life choices.

Nevertheless, there are immediate steps that state leaders can take to improve teacher and school leader diversity and strengthen public education in New York, building on existing efforts including the recommendations of NYSED’s Principal Preparation Project Advisory Team and the state’s TeachNY initiative.<sup>20</sup> We believe the following recommendations should be undertaken as part of a cohesive strategy by the Board of Regents and State Education Department, governor, legislature, school districts, and the leadership of SUNY, CUNY, and private institutions of higher education:

## 1. STRENGTHEN THE EDUCATOR PREPARATION PIPELINE FOR FUTURE TEACHERS AND LEADERS OF COLOR

### 1.1. Require diversity data collection, use, and transparency for educator preparation programs

**“Throughout our state right now we’re in the midst of a crisis.” — Luvelle Brown | Ithaca School District superintendent**

Educator preparation programs — and the public — are unlikely to recognize a problem if they do not see it. Several states are taking important steps to make disaggregated program-level pipeline data available and setting targets for improvement, including on enrollment, completion, placement, and retention. **The Tennessee Department of Education** has taken a leading role on this issue as part of its broader educator preparation strategy.<sup>21</sup> New York should require and facilitate disaggregated and transparent data reporting for preparation of educators at all levels.

These data systems should bridge the divide between educator preparation programs and school districts. As the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) noted in a recent report, “To achieve effective teacher preparation programs, states need data systems that are specific, practical and accessible enough to help states create truly transformative programs.”<sup>22</sup> To reach this goal, SREB recommended that state data systems incorporate four key features: follow teachers through their careers; focus on outcome measures; break down data silos; and make data more accessible.<sup>23</sup>



## 1.2. Require educator preparation programs to improve diversity and strengthen program components that prepare all teaching and administrator candidates to educate all groups of students

**“It’s important that all people are well-versed in what it means to teach students from different cultures. Everyone needs to be able to assess their own bias. All leaders need to look at that and how it impacts teaching and how they view their kids.” – Danicka\* |**  
*New York City principal*

New York State currently requires teacher preparation programs to be accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). While the CAEP accreditation standards include diversity, New York should take further steps to ensure that diversity and inclusion are required priorities — both for recruiting and supporting teaching candidates and in how all candidates are prepared for the classroom. NYSED should include these elements in the protocol that CAEP will use to review educator preparation programs across the state.

As the Center for American Progress recently reported, the **Rhode Island Department of Education** “is the first state education agency to endorse a plan to hold teacher prep programs accountable for candidate diversity rates.”<sup>24</sup> New York should hold programs accountable for successful recruitment, completion, placement, and success of aspiring teachers and leaders, with the data disaggregated and reflecting goals for increased diversity.

To assist educator preparation programs in improving diversity, the State University of New York (SUNY) and City University of New York (CUNY) should explore ways to connect their Black & Hispanic Male Initiative and Black Male Initiative, respectively, with teacher candidate recruitment. In addition, the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) is a successful student support initiative and participating students could be encouraged to consider teaching careers.

It is also essential to provide teachers with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in educating diverse learners and to provide administrators with the skills

## HOW CAN NEW YORK FUND THESE RECOMMENDATIONS?

Many of the recommendations in this report require additional targeted investment, including to ensure capacity and support at NYSED. One obvious source of funds is the state budget process, which begins with the presentation of the Executive Budget in January and concludes at the end of March.

Federal funds constitute a second key revenue source to support these strategies. In particular, federal Title II funding can and should be prioritized for the purposes described in this report. As guidelines issued by the Obama administration remind states, state education agencies and school districts “may use Title II, Part A funds to improve the recruitment, placement, support, and retention of culturally competent and responsive educators, especially educators from under-represented minority groups, to meet the needs of diverse student populations.”

In addition, we believe the state should evaluate the efficacy of publicly funded educator preparation programs and reallocate funds from programs that do not successfully prepare candidates for New York classrooms in order to invest more in evidence-based programs and promising innovative strategies.

to establish inclusive workplaces. Training in culturally relevant education pedagogy and implicit bias training should be universal requirements in New York State’s teacher and administrator preparation programs. In addition, educator preparation programs should ensure that their staff and faculty receive implicit bias training and that they have experience teaching in high-performing, diverse schools.

### 1.3. Expand the Teacher Opportunity Corps grant program, which recruits and supports historically under-represented and low-income teaching candidates

**“What [the Teacher Opportunity Corps grant program] has done is helped us focus and pay more attention to those conversations. We’ve been more intentional in our strategies. We’re also paying more attention to what our recruiters are telling us.” – Catherine Snyder**  
| *Clarkson University*

The **Teacher Opportunity Corps II** (TOC) grant is a component of the state’s **“My Brother’s Keeper”** initiative, and it incorporates many of the best practices in teacher preparation, including meeting the holistic needs of students, providing mentorship, incorporating early and frequent training in classrooms, and partnership with school districts. While it is too early to examine outcome data from the grant program, there are a number of promising practices. At **SUNY Oswego**, the TOC program provides assistance for students from the first year of college through the graduate level, focused on supporting students socially, professionally, and financially — in addition to academically. SUNY Oswego and **Clarkson University** both also help participating students with the transition into the program; in Clarkson’s case, by providing tutoring on writing and professional skills.

Importantly, TOC programs also provide direct financial assistance to students to address a range of financial needs that could keep low-income, first-generation, and other under-represented college students from completing a postsecondary program and successfully beginning their teaching career. New York should significantly increase its investment in these grants and in broader financial assistance to aspiring under-represented teachers, as well as evidence-based practices to support their early careers, such as residency programs (discussed below) and intensive mentorship by the most effective educators. The state should track and publicly report on the effectiveness of these programs on improving student outcomes. In addition, the state should develop an analogous grant program to support the high-quality preparation of under-represented school and district leaders.

### 1.4. Strengthen relationships between school districts and teacher preparation programs, including through the expansion of “Grow Your Own” initiatives

**“We often don’t hear African Americans and Latinos telling students that they should be a teacher, that this is a wonderful career. We should be encouraging kids from the time they’re little to be part of this profession. That’s a problem in the community.” – Danicka\*** | *New York City principal*

Ensuring consistent communication and collaboration between school districts and teacher preparation programs can improve alignment between the “supply” and “demand” sides of teacher preparation and create pathways for students of color to become teachers. Both strategies require sustained leadership from the state and the SUNY and CUNY boards, as well as resources.

#### NEW YORK’S “MY BROTHER’S KEEPER” INITIATIVE

Last year, New York became the first state in the nation to enshrine the goals of President Obama’s “My Brother’s Keeper” initiative into law. Designed to improve outcomes for boys and young men of color, “My Brother’s Keeper” is intended to address a range of opportunity gaps in New York’s education system.

The 2016-17 state budget includes \$20 million for “My Brother’s Keeper” initiatives, including \$3 million for the Teacher Opportunity Corps II grant program referenced in several examples in this report.

Learning from the program’s experiences to date and expanding funding for “My Brother’s Keeper” initiatives is an important way to address teacher and school leader diversity, along with related issues that impact boys and young men of color.

New York has several promising examples to build on, particularly for future teacher recruitment. At **CUNY's Queens College**, the TOC program will enable the college to partner with the New York City Department of Education to recruit soon-to-graduate high school students from targeted school districts in Queens. Recognizing that Black and Latino students often attend community college before enrolling in a four-year university, Queens College is also identifying students from targeted high schools who are already enrolled in CUNY two- or four-year programs and creating pathways into undergraduate and graduate teacher education programs, leading to initial certification for first-time teachers.

Syracuse launched the **Syracuse Urban Teacher Program** this year as a "Grow Your Own" (GYO) initiative. Importantly, the program aims to recruit students at the end of eighth grade in order to begin in ninth grade — much earlier than many GYO initiatives. Syracuse plans to begin service-learning in ninth grade, followed by teacher shadowing, taking college courses two days a week in their junior year, and ultimately enabling participating students to help teach portions of a class by their senior year. The positive impact of such programs can be seen at the **University of Rochester Educational Partnership Organization at East**, where 20 years ago teachers started the Teaching and Learning Institute (TLI) for high school students interested in careers in education. Since its inception, 275 students have graduated from the program, including some who have returned to teach at the school. Along with learning education policies and practice, TLI students gain experience assisting teachers in Rochester elementary schools.

The program has served as a model for other districts developing GYO programs, including **Buffalo**, which this year launched its Urban Teacher Academy in partnership with SUNY Buffalo State. Students will take college credit-bearing education courses in high school and be paired with a mentor. The Buffalo program also establishes a clear pipeline for students from high school into higher education, and the district plans to use it as a recruiting pool in the future.

In the **Ithaca School District**, administrators are taking a different approach to encourage students at an even

younger age. School leaders identify students who express an interest in education as early as middle school and pair them with mentors who they are connected with during their time in the district. They then follow those students through college, with the hope some will return to the district once they graduate.

For districts that do not have the capacity to develop their own Grow Your Own programs, opportunities exist to partner with non-profit organizations that have developed teacher pipeline programs, such as **Today's Students Tomorrow's Teachers** (TSTT). TSTT offers an 8-year teacher training pipeline program, recruiting ninth graders and supporting them through high school and college as well as with the certification process and job placement. Students in the program receive academic support and mentors and, starting in the ninth grade, students engage in job shadowing, classroom observations, tutoring, and internships. College students are also provided with scholarships to assist with the cost of tuition.

In addition to using NYSED's and the universities' convening power to foster communication between a region's community colleges, teacher preparation program, and school districts, the state should provide incentives to strengthen collaboration between the sectors, such as through "future educator clubs" in middle and high schools and evaluation of and funding for Grow Your Own initiatives. These efforts should target high-performing middle and high schools that serve high proportions of students of color.

### 1.5. Expand career pathways through targeted strategies and innovative alternative certification pilots

**"I think that for the men of color going into that room they felt more prepared, more confident. They were able to look around and feel like they belonged there and were prepared."** – **Saskia Traill** | *ExpandEd Schools*

Career pathways are increasingly common in health care and other professions to help middle-skill professionals prepare for high-skill careers, and they are beginning to gain ground as a strategy to recruit skilled and diverse educators. Recent research reinforces their importance as part of the strategy for recruiting teachers of color: Boston University professor Travis Bristol found that among Black

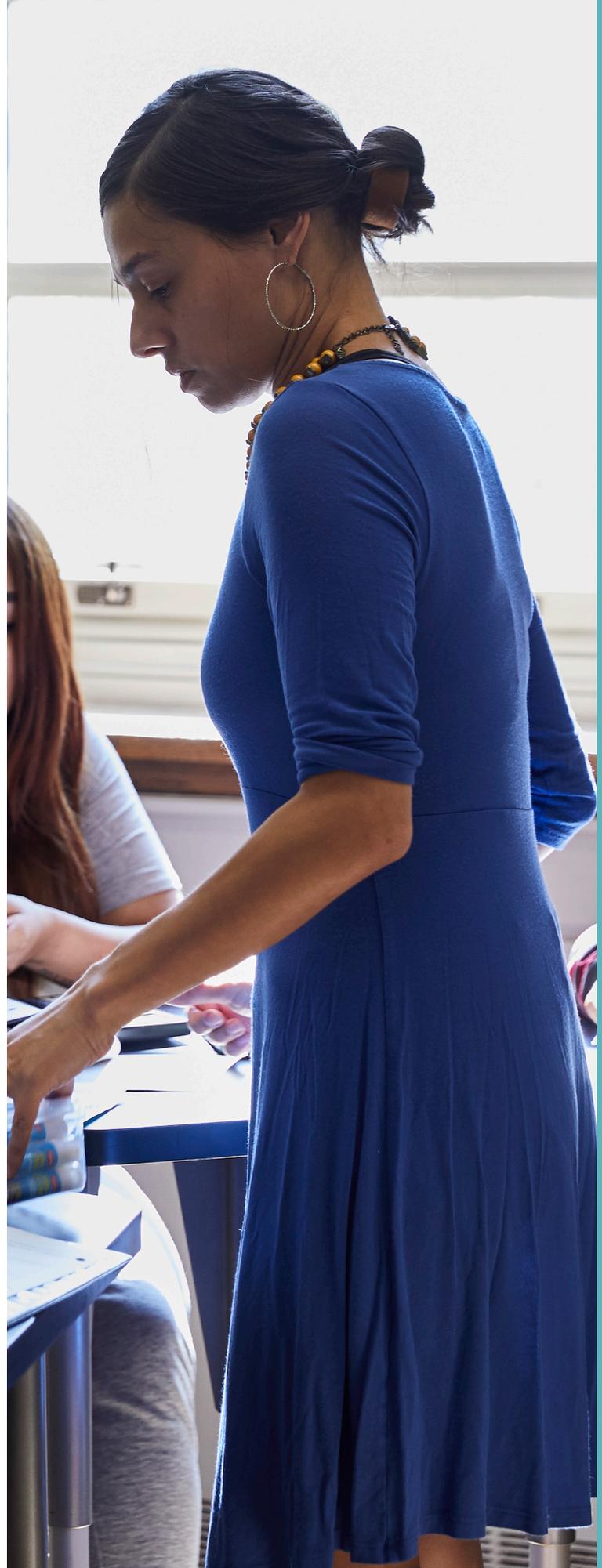
male teachers, “about 63 percent of participants had an early experience teaching in high school, college, an after-school program, or as a substitute teacher, which influenced their decision to enter the teaching profession.”<sup>25</sup>

**Blue Engine** is a non-profit organization that recruits, trains, and places recent college graduates and professionals as teaching apprentices in New York City middle and high schools. Teaching apprentices commit to one year of service, but are encouraged to continue for a second year. Once in their second year, they are provided with the opportunity to enroll in a teacher residency program to become fully certified teachers. Blue Engine focuses on recruiting college graduates from the same communities where they partner. Sixty-eight percent of current teaching apprentices identify as people of color and 62 percent of second-year teaching apprentices of color are currently enrolled in a teacher residency program.

Similarly, **ExpandED Schools** — formerly known as The After-School Corporation — recruits potential teachers, with a focus on men of color. Participants in the program develop their skills by working in after-school and expanded-day programs. The program also provides exposure to and experience in education through a 10-month training program and mentoring alongside employees in school-based programs. Participants have the opportunity to lead classes and work with small groups of students to hone their skills. ExpandED Schools has also found that participant stipends and access to emergency grant funds for unexpected costs can help to support financially vulnerable workers as they move towards becoming teachers.

**Teach For America–New York** has also prioritized corps member diversity, with more than 50 percent of corps members identifying as people of color over the past several years. Where possible, TFA-NY works to place corps members in communities with which they have a connection. In addition, TFA-NY has created peer networks through affinity groups for corps members of color and The Collective, the national alumni of color association.

New York should provide targeted funding to support and expand career pathway initiatives, and every school





district should be expected to describe how they create pathways into teaching for their paraprofessionals, teaching assistants, and other school-based employees. In addition, the state should eliminate barriers that may hold back excellent candidates, such as teacher preparation program GPA requirements for someone who has been out of college for many years and can demonstrate their readiness through workplace experience and other measures. New York should also develop alternative certification pathways for under-represented candidates who complete rigorous non-traditional preparation programs — incorporating both pedagogical knowledge and extensive field experience — and undergo high-quality evaluation to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills to succeed in the classroom. The programs should be held accountable for diversity in recruitment and completion and for the success of their graduates in the classroom, consistent with the changes we have recommended for traditional teacher preparation programs.

**1.6. Encourage “quality sustained clinical practices”<sup>26</sup> — including residency programs and other field work — that provide opportunities for teaching candidates to gain intensive, structured classroom experience**

**“That thing I hate to hear is ‘we can’t find any qualified [teachers].’ They’re qualified but you send them in and you send them into the lion’s den without any support. Some of them can’t weather the storm.” — Paula\* | retired Buffalo teacher**

As **Bank Street College of Education** noted in a 2016 report: “In countries where school systems have improved dramatically, such as Finland and Singapore, one of the shifts their nations embraced was to integrate teacher preparation with K-12 school systems. Aspiring teachers are paid to practice under the guidance of an effective classroom teacher for a full year before seeking certification. Increasingly, evidence from the United States also indicates that such a model is an effective way of addressing persistent challenges facing schools and districts,” including “attracting a diverse group of promising candidates into the profession.”<sup>27</sup>

**Relay Graduate School of Education** offers such a program, allowing aspiring teachers to gain classroom experience while working toward a master’s degree in teaching over the course of two years. The program supports residents as they seek full-time teaching positions and also provides certification exam preparation support. Residents are paid for their time in the classroom and Relay assists with identifying funding opportunities, such as AmeriCorps awards, to cover the cost of Relay tuition, which is lower than the cost of traditional teacher preparation master’s degree programs.

In a different approach to early field work, **Uncommon Schools** — a high-performing public charter management organization — recruits college juniors who are interested in education careers to participate in an intensive Summer Teaching Fellowship program. Fellows work alongside an expert teacher who serves as their coach through the program from late May through July. At the end of the school year, they participate in the same type of three-week training that new teachers at the school receive. Fellows then spend three to six weeks teaching at Uncommon’s summer school programs, coached by their mentor teacher. Approximately 75 percent of participants are students of color, and the vast majority leave the program with an offer to teach at Uncommon Schools after they graduate college. The program has helped diversify the teaching force at Uncommon Schools, where more than half of teachers are educators of color.

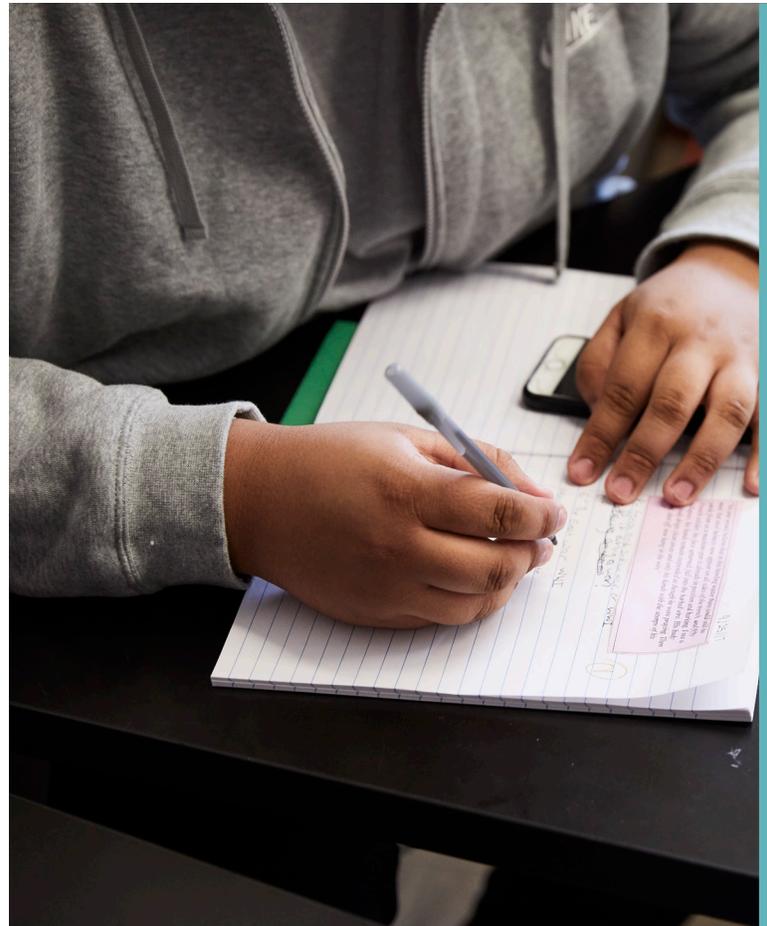
New York should provide funding for teacher residencies for under-represented teachers — so that access never depends on a candidate’s ability to pay. While these intensive field experiences are important for all teachers — not just teachers of color — we include them here because recruitment and retention of teachers of color in particular is an especially stark challenge for New York. More generally, the state should ensure that all aspiring teachers participate in strong student teaching experiences, drawing on research on effective clinical training, which New York has signaled is a priority in its accountability plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

## 2. IMPROVE RECRUITMENT AND HIRING AT THE SCHOOL DISTRICT LEVEL

### 2.1. Collect and use data to examine school district recruitment, interview, and hiring practices

An essential step in improving teacher and school leader diversity at the school district level is to understand where the pipeline is working and where it is not. This begins with data systems that provide disaggregated data for every step of the process — including who submits applications, is invited for an initial interview, proceeds to subsequent interview rounds, receives a job offer, is hired by the school district, and is successfully retained over multiple years. Then, schools and school districts must regularly examine the data and change their processes to reflect their findings.

All of this requires technical assistance and support. The state should put the framework for this system in place so that it is an expectation for all school districts, and then offer guidance to school districts on how to effectively collect and use this data.





## 2.2. Provide state-level oversight and transparency

The Board of Regents and NYSED have begun an important conversation about creating state- and district-level dashboards that reflect key equity issues. Access to effective teachers of color, disaggregated by student subgroup, should be included in these reports — not as an accountability indicator for schools, but rather as a way to spotlight this important issue, increase urgency, and target support.

This strategy would also enable the state to flag school districts that are most successful in establishing a culture that values diversity, equity, and inclusion (which can serve as best practices for peer districts), as well as those that have the most problematic track records and should receive additional monitoring and assistance.

In addition, as part of its accountability plan under ESSA, NYSED has committed to publishing Equity Reports examining access to strong educators at the school and district levels. These reports present an opportunity to raise the profile of the important issue of access to effective and diverse educators, and to establish expectations that districts will act on the data.

## 2.3. Encourage school boards to signal and embrace the importance of teacher and school leader diversity

**“We have no representation on our board because we just lost a member. Now, we have to try and convince people on the board to buy into understanding and to deal with that issue of that lack of representation. Because you know as well as I that when it comes to system change you need someone at that level. . . . Our voice is lost.”** – Gloria\* | former Rochester educator

Organizations that successfully embody diversity, equity, and inclusion demonstrate these values at all levels, beginning with their governance bodies. School boards have a vital role to play in establishing diverse environments and making clear to school district and school leaders that a strong and diverse workforce is a priority.

For example, **Valley Stream Union Free School District #13's** Board of Education Goals for 2012-17 include the following as Goal #1: “To increase the extent to which the faculty and staff of the school district are ethnically, linguistically and, in gender, more representative of the student population with whom they work.”<sup>28</sup> This

represents a clear commitment and sends a powerful message to current staff as well as potential new hires.

As **Educators for Excellence** noted in a recent report on teacher diversity in Minnesota: “the importance of strong leadership at the district and school level cannot be overstated. The success of [culturally inclusive environments] depends on leaders’ and teachers’ continued commitment to implementation.”<sup>29</sup>

School boards should be encouraged to make these values explicit through board resolutions and set clear and measurable expectations for district leadership.

## 2.4. Question and change recruitment practices to identify additional qualified applicants of color

**“Segregation was intentional, so integration has to be intentional. That’s also apropos to teachers. We have to make an effort to give more interviews and hire more teachers of colors.” – Aneth | *New York City student***

If school districts continue to look to the same pools of candidates, informal networks, and teacher preparation programs, they are highly unlikely to expand the pool of job applicants to include significantly more Latino and Black educators. To help school districts maximize recruitment opportunities, the state should provide guidance on best practices for school districts and schools to consider.

These actions should be embedded in deeper conversations with school leaders about their workforce. As one model, **NYC Men Teach** — part of the New York City mayor’s Young Men’s Initiative — created a Principals Network to support administrators in closing the diversity gap, including identifying supports and best practices to address retention and leadership of male teachers of color. Active members of the Principals Network have provided insight about barriers to promotion, school subjects with the greatest need, and ways to support year-round hiring.

## 2.5. Address implicit bias in the hiring process

Improving candidate recruitment alone is insufficient; school districts must also address systemic barriers to employment for people of color.

A recent study published in the *Harvard Educational Review*, which examined hiring practices in a large school district, found that “a Black applicant would be half as likely to receive a job offer as a White candidate with identical qualifications.”<sup>30</sup> The authors concluded: “District and school-level leaders ought to use this research as a call to examine their hiring practices and identify and root out inherent biases. Equity in teacher hiring is important because it is good for students. However, addressing these inequitable practices is perhaps even more essential because they point to systematic racial bias that likely also informs students’ classroom experiences, teachers’ work lives, and the organizational culture of public schooling.”<sup>31</sup>

The state should require all personnel involved in hiring to receive implicit bias training. This could be provided by the state, BOCES, and/or non-profit partners. The state should also encourage school districts to consider additional strategies such as “name-blind” recruitment (where those responsible for hiring do not see personally identifiable information that can reveal race/ethnicity and other factors until after they decide whether to grant a candidate an interview) and greater reliance on performance tasks instead of resumes.

## 3. FOCUS GREATER ATTENTION ON RETENTION, SUPPORT, AND CAREER ADVANCEMENT FOR EDUCATORS OF COLOR

### 3.1. Improve the working environment for teachers of color

**“I’ve had instances where I’ve worked with other teachers that are not of color and I feel like maybe they were intimidated with the rapport I had with students, my leadership would be questioned, my knowledge of the content would be questioned, so, it would be difficult in certain instances to work with some of my colleagues.” – Amanda\* | *New York City teacher***

**“I do not feel supported and that’s why I choose to serve as a mentor, a teacher educator... because I did not have that.” – Crystal\* | *New York City teacher***

As described earlier, the Latino and Black educators we spoke to believe deeply in the importance of their roles

while also acknowledging the unique challenges and burdens they face in gaining support to succeed in their careers and, in particular, the impact of stereotypes and racism in the education system.

National data indicate that Latino and Black teachers leave the field at higher rates than their White colleagues.<sup>32</sup> As our colleagues at The Education Trust have noted: “They leave because of working conditions.... The bottom line is that across the nation teachers of color are placed in schools that are more likely to have less desirable working conditions. And this impacts their desire and willingness to stay.”<sup>33</sup>

School districts need technical assistance to understand the challenges that educators of color face and implement more equitable and inclusive environments that recognize the important contributions of educators

of color and provide them with the professional development they need. As Dr. Bristol explains, “Practitioners should begin to tailor professional development that responds to the experiences teachers of color face. In schools, we differentiate learning for students, but rarely do so for adults.”<sup>34</sup>

The state should provide guidance and support that helps school districts address implicit bias, improve support for teachers, and create more inclusive and supportive environments.

More generally, teachers of color are disproportionately likely to work in schools with less resources and where there may be longstanding cultures of lower expectations for students. Addressing these systemic issues, while beyond the scope of these recommendations, is essential for both educator and student success.



### 3.2. Create and support cohorts of teachers, assistant principals, and principals of color

**“If I’m alone, there are others out there who are alone.” – Veronica\* | New York City school leader**

An important strategy to improve the professional experience of educators of color is to establish cohorts of colleagues, reducing isolation and creating communities of practice — particularly for new teachers and leaders.<sup>35</sup>

For example, in partnership with CUNY, **NYC Men Teach** is building cohorts of both non-education and education students on and across college campuses so that they have peers to rely on for support once they are in the classroom — having found that one of the primary reasons Black male teachers leave the profession is that they were “the only one.”

State funding and guidance can enable school districts to implement a cohort approach to recruitment and support.

### 3.3. Invest in mentorship and career ladders for current and aspiring teacher, school, and district leaders

**“I didn’t realize my leadership capacity until my principal pointed it out and gave me roles in school to practice my leadership skills and give me feedback. It was the mentorship that made a huge difference. That was the turning point. As I had success in smaller leadership roles and saw impact on the school, I realized I wanted to have a larger impact outside of my classroom.” – Priscilla\* | New York City assistant principal**

**“There are a ton of people right now in the pipeline if given the right opportunity and the right exposure and the right mentoring could be dynamic administrators throughout New York State. But if you’re in a community or an environment where your qualities are not nurtured and then advanced, then you get stuck.” – Shaun Nelms | University of Rochester Educational Partnership Organization at East superintendent (Rochester)**

The school leaders we interviewed repeatedly pointed to the importance of mentors in helping them receive the support needed to advance through the education profession. One of the most impactful actions the state could take would be to establish and fund mentorship programs for under-represented educators and to do so for a variety of positions and career trajectories. In addition, many interviewees expressed the importance of remaining in the classroom or working to support other teachers, without formally entering administration. Establishing meaningful career ladder opportunities for teachers — and the professional and financial advancement that they represent — is crucial for educator retention and for improving student outcomes. ■



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to the members of our report advisory board: Travis Bristol, Boston University; Arthur Everett, New York City public school teacher; Constance Lindsay, Urban Institute; Shaun Nelms, University of Rochester Educational Partnership Organization at East; Julia Rafal-Baer, Chiefs for Change; Evan Stone, Educators for Excellence; and Kate Walsh, National Council on Teacher Quality. The findings and recommendations in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of individual advisory board members and are the sole responsibility of The Education Trust–New York.



## A NOTE ON DATA SOURCES

All data findings in this report are based on The Education Trust–New York’s analysis of unpublished 2015-16 data provided by the New York State Education Department. Data on staff race and ethnicity are self-reported and collection protocols may differ among school districts.

The dataset includes a universe of 4,751 schools, including 4,495 district-run and 256 charter schools.

The number of schools included in the analysis is 4,522 (95 percent of the total universe), including 4,304 district run (96 percent of district-run schools) and 218 charter schools (85 percent of charter schools).

### **The following schools were excluded from the analysis due to student population considerations:**

- 13 schools with grade organization code = 8 (“Not Available”)
- 2 schools with grade organization code = 2 (“PreK Only”)

### **The following number of schools were excluded due to n-size considerations:**

- 74 schools where full-time principals < 1
- 12 schools where full-time principals > 6
- 68 schools where full-time teachers < 10

### **The following number of schools were excluded due to data quality issues:**

- 2 schools where the sum of the racial/ethnic staff breakdowns did not equal reported total
- 28 schools with no matching Need Resource Capacity category/grade organization code data
- 6 schools with a share of American Indian teachers > 80 percent
- 8 schools with a share of Multi-racial teachers > 80 percent
- 16 schools with a share of Black and Latino teachers > 80 percent and share of White teachers = 0 percent

References to teachers, other professional staff, assistant principals, and principals throughout this report are based on the number of full-time school-level staff members and excludes part-time employees as well as district-level staff.

Data on student race/ethnicity and economic status are from the New York State Education Department 2015-2016 Report Card Database available at: <https://data.nysed.gov/downloads.php>.

Data at the school district level represent the sum of all included schools in the school district. While the dataset also includes totals reported at the district level, this report relies only on school-level data in order to best reflect the circumstances in individual schools.



## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>The Education Trust—New York offered anonymity to interview subjects in order to preserve their ability to speak openly and candidly. Where an individual’s name has been changed to respect her or his wishes, we have marked the name with an asterisk (\*).

<sup>2</sup>While this report, and much of the research, focuses on Latino and Black students and teachers, we recognize that other groups of students and educators are also under-represented. In our upcoming additional work on teacher diversity, we intend to also include Asian American students and educators, particularly in regions of the state with large and/or growing Asian American communities.

<sup>3</sup>Qualitative research for this report included a series of four focus groups with teachers and school leaders (two in New York City, one in Buffalo, and one in Rochester) and telephone interviews with additional teachers and school leaders throughout the state; a focus group with students in New York City and telephone and in-person interviews with students in the rest of the state; and telephone and in-person interviews with superintendents, teacher preparation programs, researchers, and other experts.

<sup>4</sup>Jason Grissom and Christopher Redding, “Discretion and Disproportionality: Explaining the Underrepresentation of High-Achieving Students of Color in Gifted Programs,” (AERA Open, January-March 2016, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 1-25), <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2332858415622175>.

Anna Egalite, Brian Kisida, and Marcus Winters, “Representation in the Classroom: The Effect of Own-Race/Ethnicity Teacher Assignment on Student Achievement,” (Economics of Education Review, April 2015, Vol. 45, pp. 45-52), [https://sites.hks.harvard.edu/pepg/PDF/Papers/Egalite-et-al-2015-FLTM\\_EER.pdf](https://sites.hks.harvard.edu/pepg/PDF/Papers/Egalite-et-al-2015-FLTM_EER.pdf).

Constance A. Lindsay and Cassandra M. D. Hart, “Exposure to Same-race Teachers and Student Disciplinary Outcomes for Black Students in North Carolina,” (Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, September 2017, Vol. 39, No. 3, pp. 485-510).

Seth Gershenson, Cassandra M. D. Hart, Constance A. Lindsay, and Nicholas W. Papageorge, “The Long-run Impacts of Same-race teachers,” (IZA Institute of Labor Economics, March 2017), <http://ftp.iza.org/dp10630.pdf>.

There are also numerous secondary sources that summarize this research, including:

Steven Bednar and Dora Gicheva, “Retaining minority teachers in schools where most of their colleagues are white,” (The Brookings Institution: Brown Center Chalkboard, August 2, 2017), <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2017/08/02/retaining-minority-teachers-in-schools-where-most-of-their-colleagues-are-white/>.

Anna J. Egalite and Brian Kisida, “The many ways teacher diversity may benefit students,” (The Brookings Institution: Brown Center Chalkboard, August 19, 2016), <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2016/08/19/the-many-ways-teacher-diversity-may-benefit-students/>.

Hannah Putman, Michael Hansen, Kate Walsh, and Diana Quintero, “High hopes and harsh realities: The real challenges to building a

diverse workforce,” (Brown Center on Education Policy at Brookings Institute, August 2016), [http://www.nctq.org/dmsView/High\\_Hopes\\_Harsh\\_Realities](http://www.nctq.org/dmsView/High_Hopes_Harsh_Realities).

<sup>5</sup>John Kucsera and Gary Orfield, “New York State’s Extreme School Segregation: Inequality, Inaction and a Damaged Future,” (Los Angeles, CA: The Civil Rights Project, March 2014), <http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/nynorfl-et-report-placeholder/Kucsera-New-York-Extreme-Segregation-2014.pdf>.

New York State Education Department, “Promoting Diversity: Integration in New York State,” Presentation to the Board of Regents, June 12, 2017. Available at: <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/P-12%20Promoting%20Diversity%20-%20Integration%20in%20New%20York%20State.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup>Matt Barnum, “5 Things We Now Know About Teacher Diversity: What Researcher Constance Lindsay Has Found About Race in School,” <https://www.the74million.org/article/5-things-we-now-know-about-teacher-diversity-what-researcher-constance-lindsay-has-found-about-race-in-school/>.

<sup>7</sup>Xiomara Padamsee and Becky Crowe, “Unrealized Impact: The Case for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion,” (Oakland, CA: Promise54, July 2017), [http://www.unrealizedimpact.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Unrealized\\_Impact-Final-072017.pdf](http://www.unrealizedimpact.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Unrealized_Impact-Final-072017.pdf).

<sup>8</sup>Ashley Griffin and Hilary Tackie, “Through Our Eyes: Perspectives and Reflections From Black Teachers,” (Washington, DC: The Education Trust, 2016), <https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/ThroughOurEyes.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup>For comparison purposes, the most recent National Center for Education Statistics data for New York State, from 2011-12, indicate that 10 percent of full- and part-time teachers are Latino and 9 percent of full- and part-time teachers are Black. See: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), “Public School Teacher Data File,” 2011–12. Available at: [https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/tables/sass1112\\_2013314\\_t1s\\_001.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/tables/sass1112_2013314_t1s_001.asp).

<sup>10</sup>Amy Stuart Wells, Lauren Fox, and Diana Cordova-Cobo, “How Racially Diverse Schools and Classrooms Can Benefit All Students,” (New York, NY: The Century Foundation, February 2016), [https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/production.tcf.org/app/uploads/2016/02/09142501/HowRaciallyDiverse\\_AmyStuartWells-11.pdf](https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/production.tcf.org/app/uploads/2016/02/09142501/HowRaciallyDiverse_AmyStuartWells-11.pdf).

<sup>11</sup>Unless otherwise noted, references to New York City in this report are to district-run schools and do not include charter schools, which are described separately and at the state level.

<sup>12</sup>While Utica has joined the Conference of Big 5 School Districts, they are not included with the Big 5 in this report in order to be consistent with New York State Education Department reporting, which counts Utica as an urban/suburban high-need district.

<sup>13</sup>The Council of School Superintendents, “Snapshot IX: The 9th Triennial Study of the Superintendency in New York State,” (New York, 2016).

<sup>14</sup>Chiefs for Change, “Diversity to the Forefront” (Washington, DC, March 2016), <http://chiefsforchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Diversity-to-the-Forefront-Chiefs-for-Change.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> Richard Ingersoll and Henry May, "Recruitment, Retention and the Minority Teacher Shortage," (The Consortium for Policy Research in Education, September 2011), [http://www.cpre.org/sites/default/files/researchreport/1221\\_minorityteachershortagereportrr69septfinal.pdf](http://www.cpre.org/sites/default/files/researchreport/1221_minorityteachershortagereportrr69septfinal.pdf).

<sup>16</sup> Schools may have more than one assigned principal.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example: Lisette Partelow, Angie Spong, Catherine Brown, and Stephenie Johnson, "America Needs More Teachers of Color and a More Selective Teaching Profession," (Washington, DC: Center for American Progress, September 2017), <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education/reports/2017/09/14/437667/america-needs-teachers-color-selective-teaching-profession/>.

<sup>18</sup> New York State Education Department, "New York State's Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to the Most Effective Educators, 2014-15," <http://p12.nysed.gov/accountability/T2/pdfs/FINALNYSEquityPlan.pdf>.

<sup>19</sup> We address this issue in other reports, including our September 2017 Equity Alert, "Student Achievement in New York," available at: [http://newyork.edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/09/Equity-Alert\\_9.5.pdf](http://newyork.edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/09/Equity-Alert_9.5.pdf).

<sup>20</sup> New York State Education Department, "Final Report from the Principal Project Advisory Team," available at: <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/718%20Principal%20Preparation.pdf>.

State University of New York, "TeachNY Advisory Council: Report of Findings and Recommendations," available at: [http://www.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/teachny/TeachNY-Report\\_20160512-\\_1420\\_With-Cover.pdf](http://www.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/teachny/TeachNY-Report_20160512-_1420_With-Cover.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> Tennessee Department of Education, "Preparation Through Partnership" (2017), available at: [http://tn.gov/assets/entities/education/attachments/Preparation\\_through\\_Partnership\\_report\\_final\\_web.pdf](http://tn.gov/assets/entities/education/attachments/Preparation_through_Partnership_report_final_web.pdf).

<sup>22</sup> Southern Regional Education Board, "Teacher Preparation Data Systems," (Atlanta, GA, September 2017), [https://www.sreb.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/teacherprepcommission\\_datareport\\_2017.pdf](https://www.sreb.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/teacherprepcommission_datareport_2017.pdf).

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Center for American Progress 2017.

<sup>25</sup> Travis Bristol, "Black Men of the Classroom: A Policy Brief for How Boston Public Schools Can Recruit and Retain Black Male Teachers," available at: <http://schottfoundation.org/sites/default/files/TravisBristol-PolicyBrief-BlackMaleTeachers.pdf>.

<sup>26</sup> Karen DeMoss, "For the Public Good: Quality Preparation for Every Teacher," (New York, NY: Bank Street College of Education, 2016), <http://educate.bankstreet.edu/faculty-staff/2>.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> See: [http://valleystream13.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/030915\\_Board\\_Goals\\_2012\\_2017.pdf](http://valleystream13.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/030915_Board_Goals_2012_2017.pdf).

<sup>29</sup> Educators for Excellence, "Closing Gaps: Diversifying Minnesota's Teacher Workforce," (Educators for Excellence-Minnesota, February 2015), <https://e4e.org/what-we-do/policy-solutions/closing-gaps>.

<sup>30</sup> Diana D'Amico, Robert Pawlewicz, Penelope Earley, and Adam McGeehan, "Where Are All the Black Teachers? Discrimination in the Teacher Labor Market," (Harvard Educational Review, Spring 2017, Vol. 87, No. 1, pp. 26-49).

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS), "Current and Former Teacher Data Files," 2012-13. Available at: [https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/tables/TFS1213\\_2014077\\_cf1n\\_002.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/tables/TFS1213_2014077_cf1n_002.asp).

<sup>33</sup> Ashley Griffin, "Black Teachers Are Leaving the Teaching Profession at Staggering Rates. But Why?" (September 30, 2015). Available at: <https://edtrust.org/the-equity-line/black-and-latino-teachers-are-leaving-the-teaching-profession-at-staggering-rates-but-why/>.

<sup>34</sup> Bristol, Travis J., "The troubling shortage of Latino and black teachers — and what to do about it," (The Washington Post, May 15, 2016 ), [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2016/05/15/the-troubling-shortage-of-latino-and-black-teachers-and-what-to-do-about-it/?utm\\_term=.9a2721e0c3981](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2016/05/15/the-troubling-shortage-of-latino-and-black-teachers-and-what-to-do-about-it/?utm_term=.9a2721e0c3981).

<sup>35</sup> Bristol, Travis J., "To Be Alone or in a Group: An Exploration Into How the School-Based Experiences Differ for Black Male Teachers Across One Urban School District," (Urban Education, March 14, 2017, pp. 1-21).



## **ABOUT THE EDUCATION TRUST–NEW YORK**

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The Education Trust–New York

8 West 126th Street, New York, NY 10027

P 646-844-0228 F 518-252-4154 [WWW.EDTRUSTNY.ORG](http://WWW.EDTRUSTNY.ORG)