



Retention of Teachers of Color

Background, Recommendations, and the Wisconsin Context

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Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Literature on Retention of Teachers of Color
3. The overview of the situation in Wisconsin
4. Best Practices, Recommendations, and Additional Resources



Introduction

- After Brown v. Board of Education (1954) and 1964 Civil Rights Act, school desegregation was matched by an exodus of Black teachers from the profession.
- By 1972 the share of Black post-secondary professionals who were teachers had dropped by 50% and the total share of teachers who were Black nationwide had dropped by a third.
- This legacy has been echoed during modern school reform movements as Black and other teachers of color are more likely to be affected by school closures, layoffs and other symptoms of turnover.
- Efforts to address these issues are often most focused at recruiting new teachers of color without reforming the pipeline for new educators or the main issues which cause higher turnover amongst teachers of color



Literature on Retention of Teachers of Color

- **Impact of credentials on Retention (get existing teachers credentials)**
 - A Longitudinal Investigation of the Relationship between Teacher Preparation and Teacher Retention
 - Teachers with traditional certifications are more likely to be retained in the long term.
- **Racial bias in hiring and promotion practices**
 - Mix and Match: What Principals Really Look for When Hiring Teachers
 - Principals create an “organizational mix” and “organizational match”, where principals tend to hire teachers who differ from those already in the school in terms of race, gender, and experience, but also they want to “match” applicants to the average work habits of the school.
- **Belonging in Workplace (mentorship)**
 - [Race, Relational Trust, and Teacher Retention in Wisconsin Schools](#)
 - The Impact of Induction and Mentoring Programs for Beginning Teachers: A Critical Review of the Research
 - Teacher mentor practices can help increase student achievement scores.
 - "What Else Would I Be Doing?": Teacher Identity and Teacher Retention in Urban Schools
 - Teachers of color tend to be clustered in high-poverty urban centers, where they face extreme inequities and challenges that are not always possible to be prepared for, even by the most well-meaning and intentional TEPs.

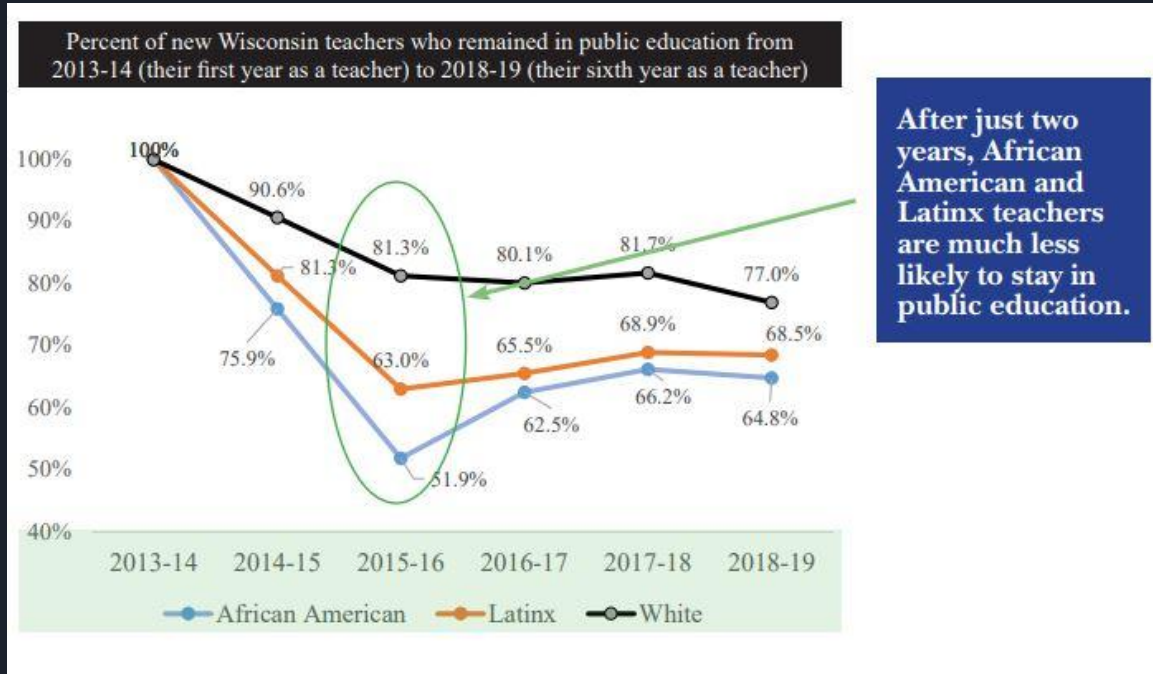


The Wisconsin Context

- For the vast majority of districts in Wisconsin, teacher recruitment needs to come first. Data from the Wisconsin Educator Effectiveness Research Partnership at UW-Milwaukee detail the issue (Jones, 2019).
 - 2% of Wisconsin Teachers and 5% of Wisconsin Principals are African American, while 1.9% of Wisconsin teachers are Latinx and 1.4% of principals are Latinx.
 - In comparison, 9% of Wisconsin students are African American and 12.3% of Wisconsin students are Latinx.
- Most teachers of color in Wisconsin are concentrated within Milwaukee Public Schools
 - 71% of all Black teachers and 39% of all Latinx teachers work in MPS.
 - In comparison, only 50% of Black students and 19% of Latinx students in Wisconsin attend MPS.
 - Only .6% of teachers are Black and 1.3% are Latinx in the rest of Wisconsin Schools.
 - 86% of all Wisconsin schools do not have any Black teachers and 83% do not have any Latinx teachers
 - Only 10 schools across the state (.5% of all schools in Wisconsin) do not enroll any students of color.

The Wisconsin Context

- The Retention Gap is Established in the First two years (WEERP/Jones 2019).



- **Trust** is a defining characteristic of why teachers are not retained, and teachers of color have lower perceptions of trust with white teachers and white principals.



The Wisconsin Context

- Multiple sources cite issues of relationships, trust, lack of belonging, and lack of support as why teachers of color leave the profession.
 - WEERP findings on trust between teachers of color and white colleagues and leadership
 - Kerry Motoviloff, project lead for Madison Teacher's Incorporated's MTI-CENTRS work focused on anti-racism, "It is not through surplus and layoff that we're losing our staff of color, it is through lack of support and lack of feeling belonging".
 - Wisconsin Policy Forum's recent report, Opening Doors, also mentions that a lack of belonging and lack of mentors who teachers of color can relate to early in their career are reasons for teachers of color leaving the profession.



The Wisconsin Context

- The Madison Metropolitan School District recently voted to change their layoff/surplus policy. Previously, this policy used years of service as the sole criteria of who was surplus/laid off. Sample guidelines of the new policy are as follows:
 - Evaluation 40% of teachers on the following criteria: for culturally responsive practices, 25% for student learning objectives, 20% for seniority, 10% for additional language proficiency and 5% for academic credentials.
 - The reassignment criteria would be weighted with 40% for culturally responsive practices, 25% seniority, 20% additional language proficiency and 15% academic credentials.
- MMSD tailoring support for teachers based on the context they are teaching in
- Many districts mention a commitment to diversity, but few have public-facing policies for action in diverse teacher hiring and recruitment.



Initiatives from Other States

- Mississippi - Assisted Housing Teacher Program
 - The Mississippi Department of Education offers a unique opportunity for teachers to receive assistance with closing costs related to home ownership. Through the state's housing finance agency, qualified teachers can receive up to a \$6,000 loan to help with down payments and closing costs. After three years of teaching, the loan is converted into an interest-free grant. Teachers must buy a home in the county where they teach.
- South Carolina - Teacher Cadet Program
 - Since 1985, South Carolina has implemented the Cadet Program at multiple high schools throughout the state. While the main goal is to attract academically talented youth to a teaching profession, it also encourages the later retention of these teachers once they get into the profession. It also shows these students the importance of teaching in rural areas.



Best Practices and Recommendations

A. Increased mentorship and belonging opportunities for teachers of color

- Cohort models and affinity groups for new teachers of color
- Intensive mentorship and coaching for new teachers of color that recognizes the difficulties of teaching in high poverty areas.

B. Equity Audits

- Accountability-based policies like NCLB exacerbate inequities across schools/districts
- Equity audits have a history as a data driven tool to work for civil rights
- Combine metrics into tools that school/district leadership can use to address inequity

C. Professional Development for white teachers

- Teacher retention isn't a problem with teachers of color, it's a product of a negative work environment.
- Training white teachers to be culturally competent, reduce micro-aggressions, be more inclusive, understand biases and move towards being anti-racist can improve the environment for teachers of color.



Additional Resources

- [Race, Relational Trust, and Teacher Retention in Wisconsin Schools](#). WEERP report by Curtis Jones, November 2019.
- [A Teacher who Looks Like Me](#). WI Policy Forum examining teacher diversity, June 2020.
- [Opening Doors: Strategies for advancing racial diversity in Wisconsin's teacher workforce](#). WI Policy Forum, March 2021.
- [Capital Times Article on New Layoff Policy](#) in MMSD.
- [Teacher Cadet Program](#), South Carolina
- [Assisted Housing Teacher Program](#), Mississippi