

# **Race & The Limits of Whitewashed Policies for Hiring of Non-White Teachers**

by

## **Radical Advocates for Cross-Cultural Education**

**A Presentation to the Connecticut State Legislative Taskforce on Minority Teacher  
Recruitment and Retention-Best Practices**

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# How do we identify problems and create solutions while navigating systems that perpetuate inequity?

Human existence cannot be silent, nor can it be nourished by false words, but only by true words, with which men and women transform the world. To exist, humanly, is to name the world, to change it. Once named, the world in its turn reappears to the namers as a problem and requires of them a new naming. Human beings are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection.

~Paulo Freire, 1968~

“Women of color are differently situated in the economic, social, and political worlds. When reform efforts undertaken on behalf of women neglect this fact, women of color are less likely to have their needs met than women who are racially privileged.”

~Kimberle Crenshaw, 1993~

Is the recruitment and retention of minority teacher candidates an impossibility in the status quo?

“The results of the data that was collected show that 62% of Black and Latino teacher’s surveyed say they have felt discriminated against in their current positions.”

*Waterbury Public School District Action Plan to Increase Representation of Black and Latino Educators* is filled with pertinent survey data that reveals institutional neglect and racial isolation of non-white teachers and administrators.

# WE COUNT WHAT WE VALUE

## Achievement Gap

\*Waterbury is a an Alliance School District and has (2) schools in the Commissioner's Network\*

### Information Gap

Waterbury Public Schools doesn't willingly share data with our organization or other community organizations.

### Information needed

Race, gender, and ethnicity of applicants:  
Who gets hired?  
Who doesn't?  
Who is retained?

## Hiring Gap

Out of 849 teachers hired the last 7 years only  
89 are Black or Hispanic (as of 10/1/15)

## Discipline Gap (2012-2015)

Black Females are suspended 3.5 times more than their white counterparts.

Hispanic Females are suspended 5 times more than their white counterparts.

## Attendance Gap (2011-2014)

14% of white Students are Chronically Absent

20% of Black students

22% of Hispanic (2012-2014)

# Waterbury Public Schools' Hiring Practices

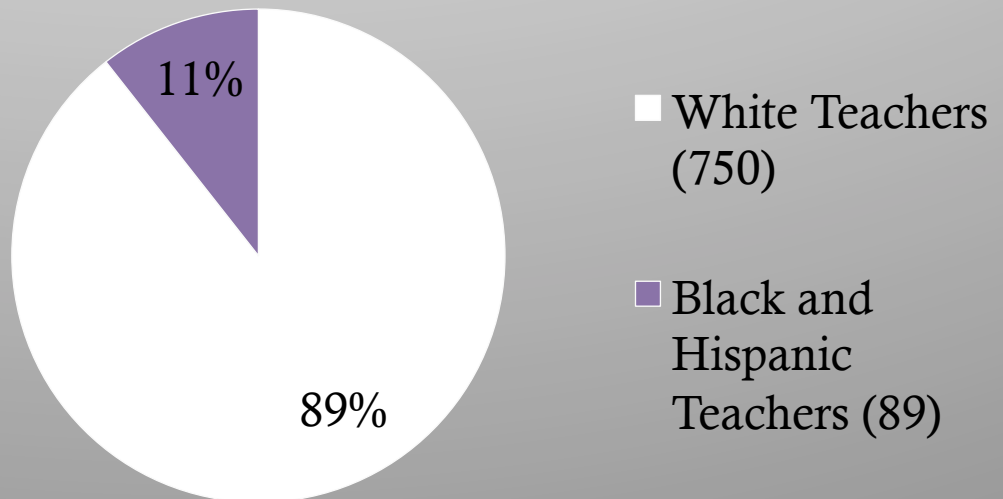
2014-15

Race/Ethnicity # of Hires

Asian	4
Hispanic	10
Black	3
n/a	6
White	174

Total 197  
(8.5%)

## Teachers Hired by Waterbury Public Schools last 7 Years (849-10/1/15)



# State-Regional-Local

## State

Support the repeal of legislative barriers to hiring nonwhite teachers, such as Section 36 of Public Act 12-116, which requires an applicant for a professional educator certificate to hold a master's degree (7/2016). Simplifying the process to earn a professional certificate will attract more candidates.

Fund mechanism to ensure these laws attract candidates to become teachers in Connecticut: P.A. 15-108, and P.A. 15-243. Ensure districts and higher education institutions provide proper amounts resources to address this educational dilemma the legislature and CSDE must create enforcement mechanisms, as well as incentives for those who work towards reversing this dilemma. Despite having one of the nations most rigorous certification requirements, Connecticut Teacher Preparatory Programs' were poorly rated (D+, 2009, B-, 2013) by the NCTQ.

## Regional

Despite having a strategy and maintaining a consistent pattern of activities, ACES, Waterbury's regional partner for minority teacher recruitment, has been largely unsuccessful in targeting minority candidates for hire.

According to our correspondences with ACES, "Waterbury has consistently and regularly participated and contributed to these events." We must close the conceptual gaps between what works and what doesn't. Our conclusion is that the regional action plan hasn't been successful. Waterbury must move beyond their framework and create a model that works in the short-term and long-term.

## Local

The office of the superintendent of schools has sole authority over the hiring of teachers. Her leadership team along with the BOE has identified the hiring of minority teachers as a priority, but little has been accomplished. Exasperating this dilemma is the flight of non-white teachers to other districts. Even though we haven't seen the data we could assume more minority teachers are leaving each year than are being hired. The short-term outlook is daunting.

Grassroots community organizations and individuals are quickly becoming motivated to impact Waterbury's school system. Being informed of the problems and solutions is just a starting point. Advocating for specific educational reform is our focus. Advocating for tailored solutions that meet the unique needs of our district is our goal.

# Potential Solutions

## District based Minority Teacher Recruitment Center

### ~Mission~

Increase the amount of minority teachers to match student demographics.

### ~Strategy~

A locally based recruitment center must be able to successfully recruit local minority college students first. A concerted effort to capitalize on UCONN, University of Bridgeport and Post University teacher preparatory programs residing in Waterbury must be the foundation of any local plan. Create partnerships with as many of 320 higher education Minority Servicing Institutes as possible. Targeting institutions with the largest numbers of non-white candidates first. The Institute for Higher Education Policy recommends looking to HBCU's and *beyond* to find non-white teacher candidates. Connecticut is not perceived as a "welcoming climate for teachers of color," and we need sub-strategies to change this.

### ~Sub-Strategies~

(1) Develop financial incentives, such as bonuses or loan forgiveness, housing, job security, and preference for entry into graduate school education programs for minority teachers. (2) Provide non-white mentors for non-white teacher candidates-supports current and new teachers. (3) Praxis tutoring and waivers for fees. (4) Hiring practice accountability becomes possible when a third party supports and tracks candidate progress, monitors as well as coaches candidates through interviews and reviews job offers.

# Literature Review

*“Waterbury Public School District Action Plan to Increase Representation of Black and Latino Educators,”* June 30, 2015

*“Teacher Diversity Matters: A State-by-State Analysis of Teachers of Color,”* by Ulrich Boser for Center for American Progress. November 2011.

*“Representation in the classroom: The effect of own-race teachers on student achievement,”* Economics of Education Review Volume 45, April 2015, Pages 44–52

*“Keeping Up with the Kids: Increasing Minority Teacher Representation in Colorado,”* by APA Consulting for Colorado Department of Education

*“Waterbury Public Schools Annual Reports,”* 2008-2015

*“The Relevance of Historically Black Colleges and Universities in Preparing Black Educators and Teachers The Relevance of Historically Black Colleges and Universities,”* Journal of Educational Policy; Fall 2013.

*“Alliance District Chronic Absenteeism Data Cohort, 2012-2014,”* CSDE

*“CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP: IMPACTING THE CLASS ROOM THROUGH INCREASING CULTURAL COMPETENCY,”* Radical Advocates for Cross-Cultural Education, 9/12/15

*“BLACK GIRLS SUMMIT: FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS ON WATERBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISCIPLINE DISPARITIES,”* Radical Advocates for Cross-Cultural Education, 9/7/15.

All literature can be viewed on our website-RACCE.NET