

Minority Teacher Recruitment and Retention



**Black Teachers' Perceptions
of the Obstacles and Catalysts to
Becoming and Remaining Teachers in Connecticut**

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Connecticut Facts



- 569,237 CT public school enrollment
 - 13.9% African American students
- 53,328 certified staff
 - 3.7% African American staff
- Large Black-White achievement gap
- Annual drop out rate - 2.5%
 - Many poor districts dropout rates double or triple
- 2/3 of minority teachers concentrated in poorest districts
- 1/3 of districts have no certified minority staff representation
- Poorest districts have the highest attrition rates and lowest fill rates
 - DRG I – unable to fill 15.3% of vacancies with qualified teachers
- 80% of CT's inexperienced teachers work in urban schools

Purpose of the Study



My research study examined the perspectives, opinions, and experiences of Black teachers in Connecticut to ascertain the perceived obstacles and catalysts to becoming and remaining a public teacher in Connecticut. The goal of this study was to identify ways to increase the representation of Black teachers in Connecticut.

Qualitative Population



Selection of Focus Group Participants:

A purposeful sampling strategy was used to select focus group participants.

- Total of 21 participants (15 Females, 6 Males)
- Elementary & Secondary
- Subject Areas (Reading, Math, Science, Social Studies, Art, English, Special Education)

Qualitative data were collected in a number of ways:

- open-ended survey question (252 respondents)
- two focus groups* (8 participants)
- one individual interview*
- written responses* (12 participants)

Quantitative Population



1155 certified Black teachers received the survey

357 completed the survey

Response Rate: **30.9%**

The survey contains four sections:

1. Demographics
2. Obstacles and Catalysts for Choosing Teaching
3. Teacher Recruitment and Retention
4. Diversity

Demographic Findings



- **77% Female, 23% Male**
- **73% African American, 21% Caribbean American, 5% Other**
- **87% Masters or above**
- **67% traditional 4 year college, 11% community college**
- **56% had 11 or more years teaching experience**
- **37% had 1-3 Black teachers in their K-12 schooling**
- **21% had no Black teachers in their K-12 schooling**

Quantitative and Qualitative Major Findings

Obstacles

- ***Salary***
 - Too low, non-competitive, not commensurate with level of education
- ***Lack of Support***
 - Administrative and mentoring necessary for all teachers
 - Evaluations and observations
 - Minority teacher support groups are need to help Black teacher acclimate to the profession, discuss challenges, voice inequalities
- ***Human Resource Practices***
 - Recruitment and hiring practices unfair, not aggressive, and insincere
 - Leaders must believe cultural and racial diversity is an asset
 - Dysconscious racism (King, 1991)
- ***Perception of Teaching***
 - Low pay, low status, high stress
 - Teachers are not appreciated, valued, nor respected

Quantitative and Qualitative Major Findings

Catalysts

- ***Intrinsic Motivation***
 - Desire to help children and make a difference in their lives
 - Give back to their race
 - Believe not enough is being done to help minority students
- ***Role Models***
 - More accurate representation of society
 - Black students need to see individuals that look like them in leadership roles in order to visualize the possibilities for their lives
 - Challenge negative stereotypes

Quantitative and Qualitative Major Findings

Diversity

- ***Staff***
 - Multiple perspectives and thoughts about teaching and learning
 - Multiple viewpoints broadens our understanding
 - More accurate representation of our society
 - Builds cultural awareness and tolerance
- ***Multicultural Curriculum***
 - Traditional curriculum is narrow and not inclusive of all
 - Equal educational opportunities for diverse students
 - Enhances the educational experience for minority and majority students/teachers and helps develop a more positive attitude toward diversity
- ***Culturally Relevant Pedagogy***
 - Modify teaching practices so that students can learn more effectively
 - Validates and empowers all students
 - Acknowledge that different topics have different meanings to different groups
 - Enhances the instructional practices of all teachers

Quantitative and Qualitative Major Findings

Policy Recommendations

- ***Teacher Support Policies***

- Joint effort among HR, superintendents, principals, and state level policymakers to provide comprehensive administrative and mentoring supports for all teachers
- Develop a policy to support the specific needs of minority teachers

- ***Recruitment Policies***

- Proactive early recruitment efforts
- Improve HR practice
- Build Community Colleges/HBCUs partnerships
- Budget funds specifically for MTR
- Develop a better data monitor systems

Recommendations



- Ongoing research is needed to better understand each of the factors (testing, salary, pipeline, HR, perception, K-12 preparation, recruitment and retention efforts, diversity, etc.) impacting MTR and use the data to inform decisions.
- Develop a comprehensive state level MTR framework that links a vision, mission, standards, and targeted SMART goals to each factor impacting preparation, recruitment and retention.
- Create a statewide monitoring system to increase state and district accountability and transparency with respect to refining the reporting of diversity goals, hiring practices, support practices, etc.
- Cultural sensitivity training for all stakeholders (school/district/state level personnel, teacher education programs, human resources leaders, and education policymakers).

Thank You

