



Brief Summary:

This policy brief highlights the need for greater diversity among North Carolina’s teacher workforce. Although the majority of public school students are people of color, nearly 80% of North Carolina’s teachers are white. Following an overview of the problem, the brief reviews the research literature on the benefits of student-teacher racial matching, describes the policy context for teacher diversity in North Carolina and addresses common misconceptions about teachers of color. The brief concludes by proposing four recommendations to increase the supply of teachers of color in the state: 1) adding race to the Teacher Working Conditions Survey, 2) ensuring school districts develop teacher diversity plans, 3) evaluating educator preparation programs on diversity, and 4) developing strategic partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Minority Serving Institutions.

The Impact of Teacher Diversity on Students

Researchers found that when taught by a teacher of the same race, students of color:



Had fewer absences and were less likely to become chronically absent.



Were less likely to be suspended or expelled.



Performed better on academic assessments.



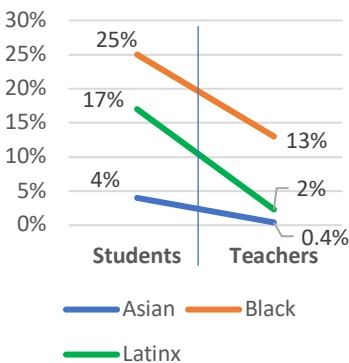
Were more likely to take advanced level courses.



Were 39% more likely to graduate from high school.

Why is Teacher Diversity so Important for North Carolina?

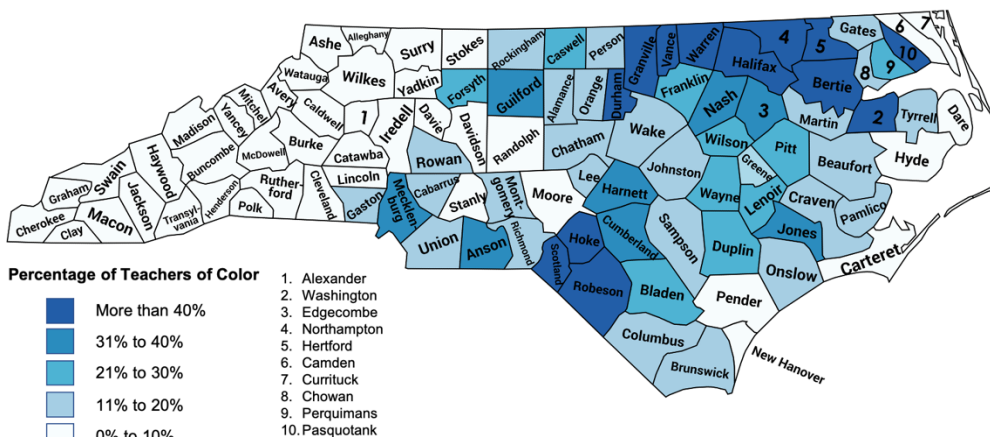
1 Teachers of Color are Underrepresented in NC

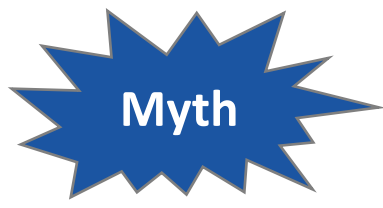


2 Low numbers of teachers of color are the result of past and present-day policies. For example, in North Carolina alone, all Black superintendents, nearly 500 elementary school principals, and over 3,000 Black teachers were dismissed as a result of school desegregation efforts in the years following *Brown v. BOE*.

3 Teachers play a crucial role as they help students to understand their place in the world and claim their right to be brilliant. Teachers perform these tasks through the lens of their own racialized life experiences. That’s why teacher diversity matters, especially in a state as diverse as North Carolina.

The Distribution of Teachers of Color Across North Carolina





vs



Teacher quality will suffer if we focus on teacher diversity.	Education research has demonstrated that teacher diversity is a key component of teacher quality. We must view these two concepts as complementary rather than competing.
White students will suffer if we focus on teacher diversity.	Teachers of color provide unique perspectives that ALL students benefit from learning. White students have as much to gain from increasing diversity among North Carolina's teachers as anyone.
It will cost too much money to focus on teacher diversity.	A well-prepared, experienced, and diverse teaching workforce will pay dividends beyond measure. Ignoring the need for a more diverse teaching workforce in North Carolina will cost us much more than we can afford.

Organizations like *Profound Gentlemen*, *Profound Ladies*, and *TeachNC* are doing incredible work to ensure North Carolina's teaching workforce is prepared to educate all of our students. We recommend several steps that state policymakers can take to lead North Carolina forward:

Policy Recommendations

#1

Inquire about race on the North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey. Continuing to exclude race would be a missed opportunity to gather valuable information that would allow policymakers, researchers, and school leaders to address the unique challenges facing teachers of color.

#2

Ensure every district in North Carolina develops an educator diversity plan. These plans should consider points of entry into the teaching profession as well as points of departure that diminish retention of teachers of color.

#3

Approve an accountability model for Educator Preparation Programs that factors in diversity. Adopting this evaluation model would incentivize EPPs to recruit and retain more diverse students, thereby ensuring North Carolina's educator workforce is equipped to teach the increasingly diverse students who attend our schools.

#4

Develop strategic partnerships with North Carolina's Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority-Serving Institutions. Policymakers could significantly increase the supply of teachers of color by providing additional resources for educator preparation programs at minority-serving institutions.



Scan this QR code in order to access the full version of Policy Brief #2.

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Through research, coalition building, and technical assistance, the Center for Racial Equity in Education (CREED) works to close opportunity gaps for all children in P-20 education, especially children of color, with the vision that one day race will no longer be the primary predictor of educational outcomes.