

Recruit, Prepare, and Retain Teachers of Color in Nevada

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Over the course of the past four decades, the face of America has changed dramatically. In 1972, whites represented 78 percent of the student population nationally. Today, no ethnic subgroup holds a plurality. In Nevada, the diversification of communities has occurred at an increasingly accelerated rate, already surpassing demographic patterns projected for the nation in 2050. At the same time, the ethnic diversity of the teaching corps has remained relatively static. Between 2011 and 2015, the percentage of non-white teachers increased only four percentage points, to a total of 18 percent. This incongruence, known as the “diversity index,” has implications for the education of K-12 students, as research has demonstrated better learning outcomes for both white students and students of color in ethnically diverse teaching environments.

Nevada Facts & Statistics

- In the 2012-13 academic year, students of color comprised 63 percent of the statewide student population, while teachers of color represented only 19 percent of the corps.
- Within the Clark County School District (CCSD), whites represented only 26.2 percent of the student body in academic year 2015-16, but 72.9 percent of the teachers.
- Nevada’s diversity index is among the largest in the nation (Nevada: 42 vs U.S.: 30).
- Given the acute and persistent shortage of teachers in Nevada and the state’s demographic composition, non-whites represent a large, relatively untapped potential pool of teachers.

U.S. Facts & Statistics

- Diversity gaps are not inherently indelible; several other metropolitan areas in which whites represent a minority within the student population have diversity indices less than half of Nevada’s.
- National research reveals improved academic outcomes among students instructed by teachers of similar ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
- Teachers of color are also perceived as “role models” by non-white students, resulting in higher academic performance and attendance.
- Quantitative research indicated that middle and high school students of all races, including whites, preferred a diverse pool of teachers.

Recent Actions in Nevada

- The University of Nevada, Las Vegas has implemented alternative licensure programs, which enroll a larger percentage of teacher candidates of color.
- The UNLV Office of Research and Economic Development funded a research project, *Where Are Our Teachers of Color?: Resilience and Diversity in K-12 Education* to conduct research from perspectives of teachers of color in CCSD regarding recruitment, preparation, and retention of teachers of color.
- The Nevada Department of Education provided a grant enabling the development of the *Abriendo Caminos/Opening Pathways* initiative, which encourages CCSD students of color to consider teaching as an educational plan in high school.
- CCSD offers professional development opportunities to increase the cultural competence of teachers from all ethnic backgrounds working with students of color.
- CCSD also implemented a multi-pronged initiative to address the teacher shortage that includes, among other things, fast-track certification options and monetary hiring incentives for teachers committing to work in lower-performing schools.

Considerations for Future Actions

To reduce the diversity index, lawmakers may consider a number of measures, including:

- Increase funding for the recruitment, development and retention of teachers of color.

- Expand upon the successful Zoom and Victory schools promoted through SB 405 and SB 432 to include support specifically for current inservice teachers of color as well as for early recruitment of teachers of color from local high schools.
- Improve working conditions within K-12 schools, which are correlated with teacher attrition.
- Recruit preservice teachers of color from within the pool of currently unlicensed staff in K-12 schools.
- Enhance the level of interaction between white teachers/administrators and teachers/students of color.
- Build upon programs to recruit, support, train and mentor teachers of color.

Statewide Benefits of Future Action

- Based upon data from other metropolitan areas with smaller diversity indices, a greater level of teacher diversity is correlated with improved student performance and higher graduation rates.
- Non-whites represent a significant and largely untapped human resource to address the state's ongoing teacher shortage, which is particularly prevalent within urban areas that have higher percentages of students of color.
- An ongoing challenge for Nevada in attracting major employers and diversifying the economy is the national reputation of its primary and secondary educational system; measures that improve student performance and, by extension, the state's ranking will support the state's broad economic goals.

Implications of Maintaining Status Quo

- Education Week's *Research Quality Counts 2016* report listed Nevada last in the nation for "student chance of success" and 38th for K-12 achievement.
- The relative lack of teachers of color within Nevada is a self-perpetuating cycle, because students of color perceive teaching to be a role reserved for whites and elect not pursue that field of study.
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Introduction

The greatest challenge facing K-12 educators in the state of Nevada is to provide an effective and equitable education to all students from all backgrounds regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, disability, home language, and socioeconomic status. This is not a new challenge, but one that has continued to grow along with the diversity of the student body (Banks 2006; Grant & Sleeter, 2007; Hodgkinson, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2009). In 1972, only 22 percent of the school population were students of color; by 2001, this population had increased to 39 percent (Hodgkinson, 2001, Villegas & Lucas 2002, quoted in Dedeoglu & Lamme, 2011, p.469). As of 2014-2015, white students are now a minority in K-12 schools, with no single racial or ethnic group in the majority (Institute of Education Sciences, 2016, Table 7, p. 48). Compounding the challenge of student demographic diversity, the nation's teaching force is only slowly becoming more diverse. In 2011, 86 percent of America's teachers were middle-class white females (Dedeoglu & Lamme, 2011, p.469; Feistritzer 2011, p. 11). The most recent numbers have barely improved—currently, 82 percent of the teacher corps is white (U.S. DOE, 2016).

The difference between the percentage of students who are students of color and the percentage of teachers who are teachers of color is known as the diversity index or diversity gap. Boser (2014) reported that, in 2012, with a diversity gap of 42 (61 percent students of color versus 19 percent teachers of color), Nevada was well above the national average (30). This was the second-largest diversity gap in the country, with only California showing a slightly larger diversity gap of 44 (Boser 2014). In the succeeding three years, the situation has worsened. The Nevada Education Data Book 2015 reported that students of color comprised 63 percent of the total student population statewide in 2012-2013, while 81 percent of the teacher corps was white (diversity gap of 44); Clark County in the same period reported 70 percent students of color, and 76 percent of the teacher corps white, for a diversity gap of 46 (Takahashi, 2012). Most recently, Clark County School District (CCSD) reported 73.8 percent students of color populating that district as of 2015-16 (Clark County School District Fast Facts 2015-16). However, the percentage of teachers of color is only 27.1 percent, yielding a diversity gap of 46.7.

Figure 1. CCSD students of color and teachers of color comparison (2012-2013 to 2015-2016)

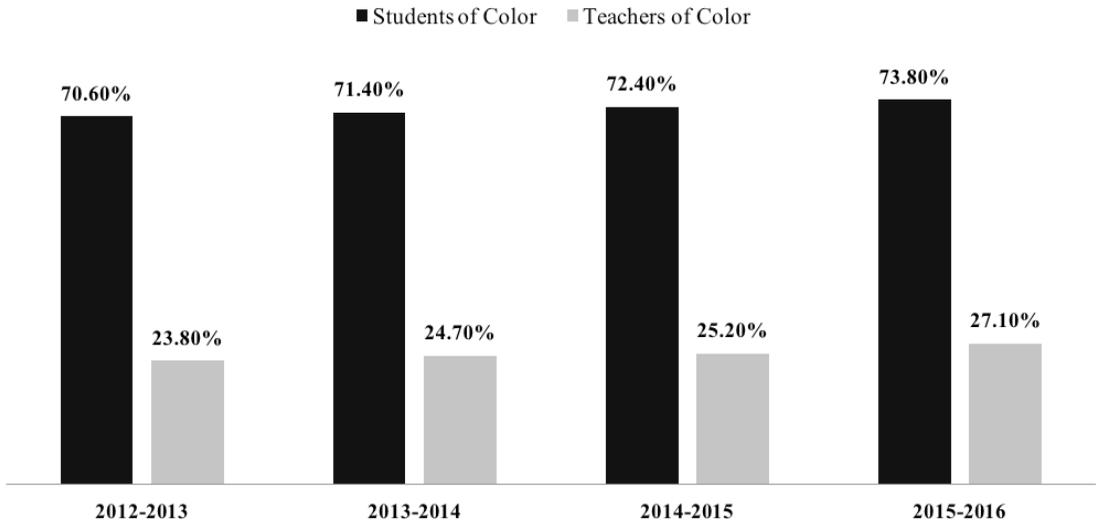
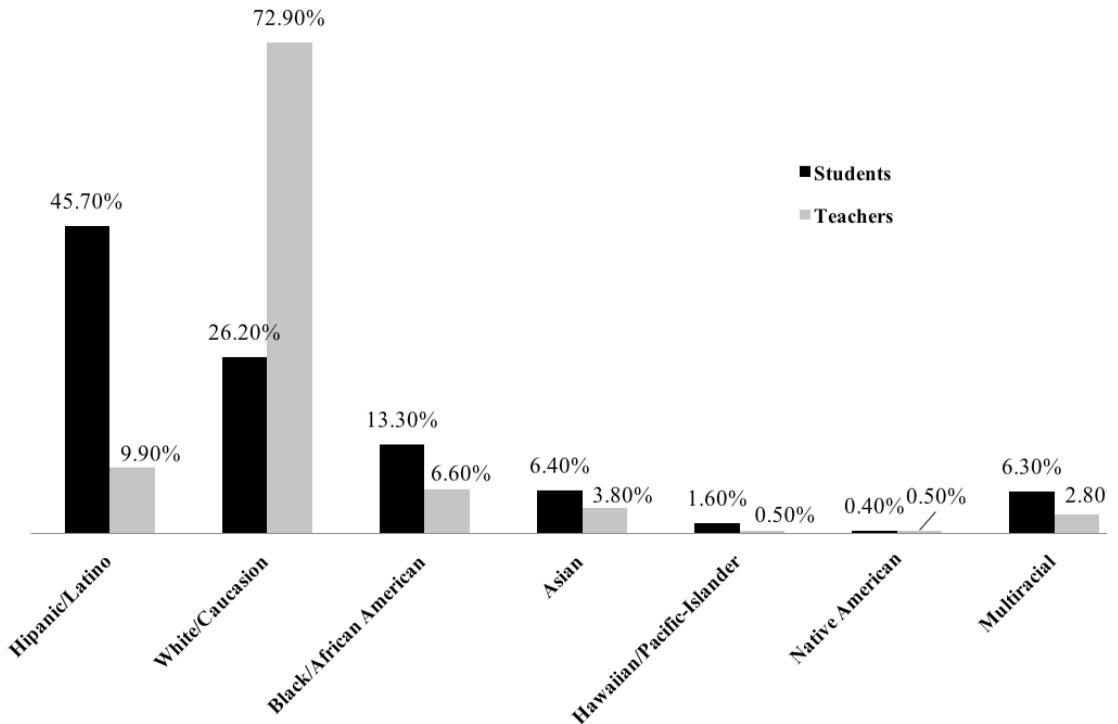


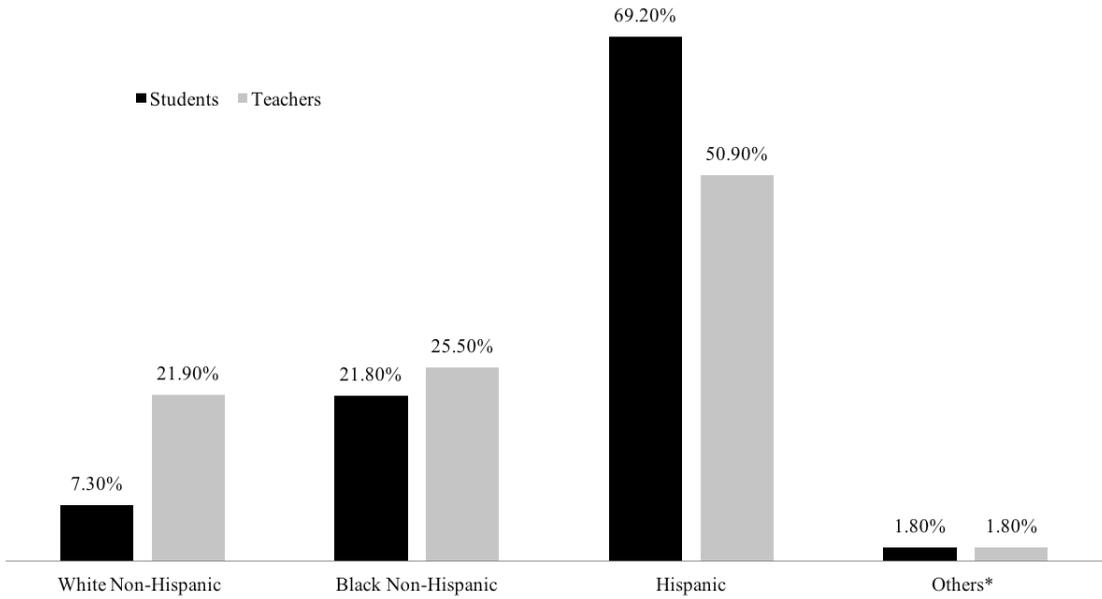
Figure 2. CCSD Student/Teacher Ethnic Distribution Comparison (Year 2015-2016)



Comparing to other large school districts nationwide, the diversity gap in Nevada, especially CCSD, is significant. For example, Miami-Dade County Public Schools is the fourth largest school district with a total student enrollment of 370,656 as of August 30, 2016. The school district's Statistical Highlights 2015-2016 shows that students

of color comprised 92.7 percent in 2015 and the teachers of color comprised of 78.1 percent in the same time period, yielding a diversity gap of 14.6. Figure 3 demonstrates the student and teacher ethnic distribution comparison in Miami-Dade County Public Schools in 2015.

Figure 3. Miami-Dade County Public Schools Student/Teacher Ethnic Distribution Comparison (2015)

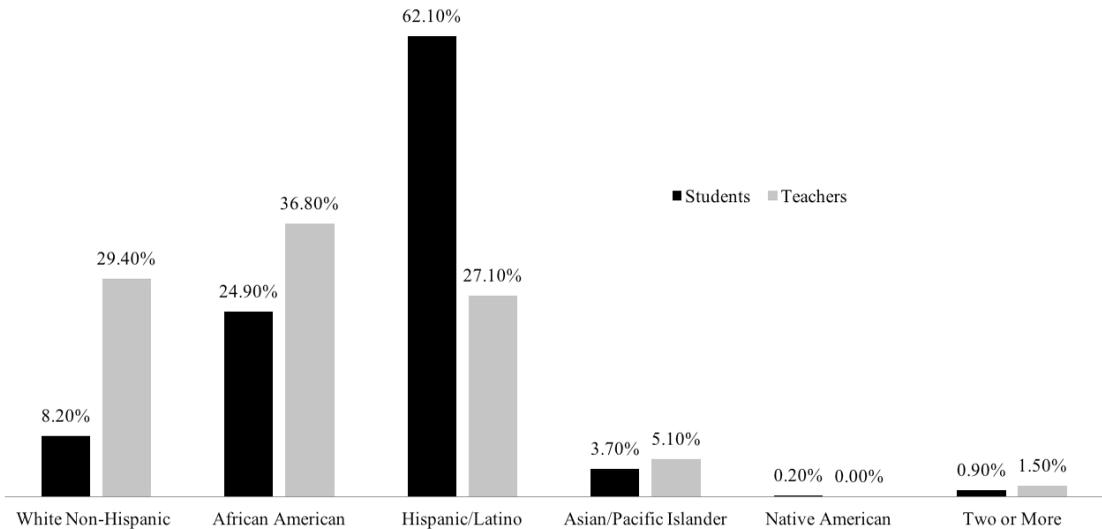


*Others includes American Indian, Alaskan Native, Asian, Pacific Islander, and Multiracial Categories.

Houston Independent School District, the eighth largest school district in the United States, has a total student enrollment of 215,225 in Year 2014-2015. Students of color comprised of 91.8 percent in Year 2014-2015 and teachers of color

comprised of 70.6 percent in the same time period, yielding a diversity gap of 21.2. Figure 4 shows the student and teacher ethnic distribution comparison in Houston Independent School District in 2014-2015 (District and School Profiles, 2014-2015).

Figure 4. Houston Independent School District Student/Teacher Ethnic Distribution Comparison (2014-15)



This “diversity gap” must be addressed for several reasons. One reason is that research clearly shows the benefits of having a more diverse teacher corps, not just for students of color but for white students as well (Ingersoll & May, 2011; Villegas & Irvine, 2010; Waters, 1989). A second but no less important reason is that citizens of color have as much right to aspire to education as a career—and to experience success in that career—as members of the majority do. Yet the persistence of the diversity gap indicates that those aspirations are being dashed, perhaps even before they are fully formed, which does not speak well to our society’s commitment to equal opportunity in either education or livelihood. In short, there are compelling reasons to work to shrink the diversity gap rooted both in practical and philosophical ground. Doing so, however, first requires recognizing the benefits of greater participation in the teacher corps of teachers of color, as well as understanding the nature and causes of the gap. We can then evaluate past and current efforts to shrink the gap, and consider what else needs to be done.

The policy paper “The Teacher Pipeline: Recruitment and Retention” (McCarthy & Quinn, 2015) lays out the needs and recommendations for K-12 teacher recruitment and retention in Nevada in general. Working from the research and implications laid out by McCarthy & Quinn, we focus specifically on teachers of color and their needs in terms of recruitment and retention. We begin by noting the benefits to multiple constituencies of a teacher corps that includes teachers of color, discuss the nature and causes of the persistent diversity gap in K-12 schools, and then provide an analysis of the efforts that have been made to improve the situation to date, as well as the factors that have limited the success of those efforts. We end with a brief discussion of the implications for Nevada policy makers.

The Benefits to Shrinking the Diversity Gap

Research indicates that having teachers of color in the K-12 workforce benefits all students, including white students. In addition, they have the potential to serve as a resource for schools as a whole, as well as the surrounding community.

Benefits to Students of Color

Sleeter (2008) pointed out a number of problems resulting from a primarily white teach-

ing force, including difficulties such teachers have forming constructive relationships with students of color, holding low expectations of students of color, interpreting students’ lack of engagement as a lack of interest in learning, and blaming students’ academic problems on an inability to learn (p. 559). Sleeter (2008) further observed that, due to the combination of low expectations and cultural mismatch, white teachers are more likely to refer to students of color to special education programs than white students and, conversely, are more likely to refer white students to gifted programs than students of color. Reinforcing Sleeter’s work, Villegas and Irvine (2010) found that teachers of color have more favorable views of students of color, including more positive perceptions regarding their academic potential (p. 181-182). Research shows that students of color view schools as more welcoming places and perform better on a variety of academic outcomes if they are taught by teachers of color who are likely to have “inside knowledge” (Ingersoll & May, 2011) due to similar life experiences and cultural backgrounds (Villegas & Irvine, 2010). Villegas and Irvine (2010) identified three research-based rationales for increasing the supply of teachers of color: (1) teachers of color serve as role models for all students; (2) teachers of color can improve the academic outcomes and school experiences of students of color; and (3) more teachers of color are needed to reduce the acute shortage of educators for high-needs urban schools (pp. 176-186).

Benefits to White Students

According to former U.S. Secretary of Education King, “research suggests that students of color benefit from having teachers of color who can serve as positive role models and illustrate the potential of what they can be. But we also know that society benefits when all students, regardless of their background, grow up seeing diverse adults in positions of authority” (King, 2016). King’s second point is an important one: All students need the opportunity to experience a multi-ethnic teaching force in order to unlearn racist stereotypes they might have internalized in other settings (Waters, 1989; Villegas & Irvine, 2010) and understand people from different backgrounds. Moreover, based on data from the Measure of Effective Teaching study, Cherng and Halpin (2016) found that middle and high school students of all races preferred a di-

verse pool of teachers. Thus, it is important to have a diverse population of teachers in our schools to meet the needs of all students.

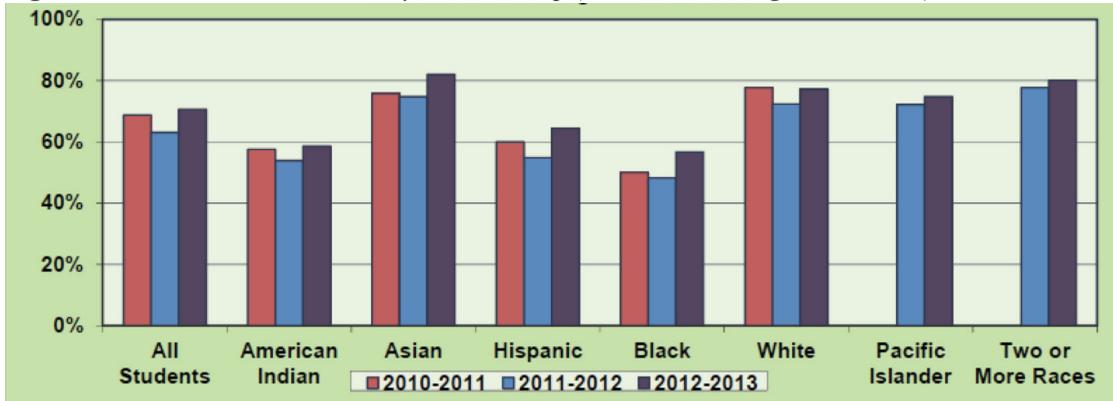
Causes of the Diversity Gap: The Leaky Pipeline

Knowledge of the nature and causes of the diversity gap nationwide date in some cases as far back as the 1980s, as researchers have identified a range of factors contributing to the gap as well as its intractability, all of which are visible in Nevada school districts as well. One main issue lies in problems with the teacher supply pipeline that has too few students of color enter and complete college (Ingersoll & May, 2016). Students of color face numerous obstacles on the road to becoming teachers (Ahmad & Boser, 2014; Dilworth &

Coleman, 2014). First, they must overcome the inequality that begins at a young age because students of color are more likely to attend substandard K-12 schools and least likely to attend a university (Nuby & Doebler, 2000). As Ladson-Billings (2005) observed, “if high school completion continues to be a barrier for students of color, it is unlikely that we should expect to see more students of color in college or university preparing for teacher certification” (p. 230).

In Nevada, for example, the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate in 2012-2013 was 70.7 percent; however, the graduation rate for Black students that year was 56.7 percent, followed by American Indian students at 58.7 percent and Hispanic students at 64.4 percent (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Nevada Graduation rates by Ethnic Group (SY 2010-11 through SY 2012-13)



Source: Nevada Education Data Book 2015 (p.40)

Even after students of color decide to become teachers, they face further barriers built on top of those they experienced during their K-12 schooling, including lower scores on teaching entry tests, economic factors such as the high cost of schooling and lack of scholarships (Achinstein, Ogawa, Sexton, & Freitas, 2010; Ahmed & Boser, 2014; Ingersoll & May, 2016; Irvine & Fenwick, 2011), and inadequate college preparation and guidance (Sleeter, Neal, & Kumashiro, 2015). This means students of color go to universities and eventually teacher preparation programs at a lower rate. Table 1 shows one way of demonstrating the leaky pipeline for students of color in Clark and Washoe

Counties by showing the decreasing percentages of students of color in the Nevada education system from K-12 schools to the university programs in Las Vegas and Reno (Table 1). Sources of the data in Table 1 include NSHE Nevada K-12 Population by Ethnicity Demographics, University of Nevada, Las Vegas College of Education Internal Data, University of Nevada, Reno Center for Student Cultural Diversity Annual Report 2015, CCSD Fast Facts 2015-2016.

Table 1. CCSD and WCSD K-12 through University Student Demographics (Year 2015)

K-12 through University Student Demographics (Year 2015)	White	Minority
Clark County		
CCSD K-12 Students	27.6%	72.4%
High School Class of 2015	31.1%	68.9%
UNLV Students (Total)	41%	59%
College of Education Undergraduate Students	47%	53%
Undergraduate Enrollment in Teacher Licensure Programs	57%	42%
College of Education Graduate Students	56%	44%
Graduate Enrollment in Teacher Licensure Programs	53%	41%
Washoe County		
WCSD K-12 Students	45.7%	54.3%
High School Class of 2015	49.5%	50.5%
UNR Students (Total)	63.6%	36.4%
College of Education Undergraduate Students	68%	32%
Undergraduate Enrollment in Teacher Licensure Programs	71%	29%
College of Education Graduate Students	72%	28%
Graduate Enrollment in Teacher Licensure Programs	71%	29%

The existence of a leaky pipeline is not unusual nationwide. However, comparing to the two large school districts, Miami-Dade County Public Schools and Huston Independent School

District mentioned earlier, the extent of the leaky pipeline in Nevada, especially Southern Nevada, is greater (See Table 2 and Table 3).

Table 2. Miami-Dade County Public Schools K-12 through University Student Demographics

K-12 through University Student Demographics	White	Minority
Miami-Dade County Public Schools		
Miami-Dade K-12 Students	7.3%	92.7%
High School Class of 2015-2016	7.7%	92.3%
Florida International University Students (Total)	11%	72.3%
College of Education Undergraduate Students (2014-2015)	N/A	N/A
Undergraduate Enrollment in Elementary Teacher Licensure Programs (2014-2015)	9.7%	90.3%
Undergraduate Graduation in Elementary Teacher Licensure Programs (2014-2015)	10.2%	89.8%
Graduate Enrollment in Teacher Licensure Programs	N/A	N/A

Table 3. Houston Independent School District K-12 through University Student Demographics

K-12 through University Student Demographics	White	Minority
Houston Independent School District		
Houston Independent School District K-12 Students (2015-2016)	8.45%	91.55%
High School Class of 2014	N/A	N/A
Houston University (2015) (Total)	27.6%	62.8%
College of Education Undergraduate Students (Fall 2015)	30.3%	69.7%
Undergraduate Program in Teacher Education (2015)	26.2%	73.7%

After teachers of color enter the profession, they continue to face adversities such as low salary, lack of respect from both staff and students, and the institutional racism that exists at both the K-12 and university levels (Irvine, 1988; Jackson, 2015; Achinstein & Aguirre, 2008). The result is that, in addition to entering the teaching profession at a lower rate, teachers of color tend to leave the profession at higher rates (Cochran-Smith et al., 2012; Kraft et al., 2013). These barriers, according to Sleeter, Neal, & Kumashiro (2015), work together to reveal a larger system working to maintain the whiteness of the teaching profession.

Nevada is not unique regarding the diversity gap, but it is something of an outlier. The state legislature has instituted policies aimed at recruiting and retaining teachers needed for the state. Nonetheless, as described in the introduction to this paper, the diversity gap in Nevada is the second-largest in the country. In May 2016, Durish, Dietrich, and Sposito of the Nevada Department of Education addressed the Interim Legislative Committee on the teacher shortage, recruitment, and retention, identifying the following issues contributing to the diversity gap in Nevada (p. 3):

- Statewide teacher shortage and insufficient pipeline: Nevada's traditional and alternative routes to licensure do not produce enough teachers to fill vacancies.
- Inadequate preparation: Underexposure to high-need school classrooms; lack of content knowledge and evidence-based instructional practices; poor preparation for teaching student subpopulations.
- Recruitment and hiring practices: Applicants uninterested in serving high-need students and/or schools; collective bargaining agreements that do not allow for differentiated pay.
- Inadequate resources: There is a lack of effective instructional leadership; inconsistent data-based induction, mentoring, coaching, and team collaboration to meet individual teacher needs aligned to student needs; longer hours, more demanding work, with lack of extra incentives - time, money, lower class sizes
- Skill gaps; unaligned initiatives and infrastructure: There is a lack of aligned structures in a learner-centered system; lack of aligned professional learning based on student data and teacher needs; lack of alignment between initiatives

There are several other potential causes to a lack of teacher diversity in Southern Nevada. Teachers of color are disproportionately assigned to schools in urban areas with challenges, including under-resourced schools, violence, and crime, among other issues (Ingersoll & May, 2011). Nevada has recently evaluated its education funding plan per the state constitution. In a local news article, district stakeholders highlight recruitment challenges caused by uncertainty in the Clark County School District's budget (Takahashi, 2012). Both per-pupil expenditures and teacher salaries in Clark County are below the national averages: Education Week's *Research Quality Counts* report (2016) cites Nevada as 46th out of 51 states in school finance, last place for student chance of success, and 38th for K12 achievement, making it "difficult to shake the negative perceptions of Las Vegas' education system" (CCSD Equity and Diversity Director Greta Peay, quoted in Takahashi, 2012). More than 30 states offer incentives to recruit teachers of color, yet Nevada only offers incentives in hiring hard-to-fill positions such as teachers for English language learners, math, science and special education (Bachler, S., Hill, T. L., & Allen, M., 2003). CCSD's Human Resources Director, Staci Vesneske, suggests that Nevada's Alternative Routes to Licensure program "is too complicated and has too many requirements," which may also deter students of color (Takahashi, 2012).

To summarize, the causes of the diversity gap and its persistence in Nevada within the context of a nationwide issue, we can organize the problems into two broad areas: 1) problems in the pipeline supplying novice teachers of color to schools and districts; and 2) problems retaining teachers of color once they are in the classroom.

Pipeline Issues

The first pipeline issue to consider is the diversity gap itself—the features of the gap that tend to reinforce its existence and hinder efforts to shrink it. One such feature is the lack of role models in the teacher workforce for students of color, which limits the candidates available for recruitment at the middle and high school levels. That is to say, the very paucity of teachers of color limits the ability of students of color to envision careers in education, and develop the aspiration and resolve necessary to successfully navigate higher education. Second, endemic institution-

al bias in favor of white students and teachers—whether intentional or not—continues to be a serious problem, short-circuiting the career paths of teacher candidates of color at multiple points, from recruitment through preparation to licensure, assignment, and retention (Ahmad & Boser, 2014; Tyler, Whiting, Ferguson, & Eubanks 2011). Finally, several researchers have found that teacher education programs have been largely ineffective in preparing white teachers to teach students of color. In spite of required coursework and professional development training on multicultural education, differentiated instruction, and teaching for social justice, field studies indicate that white preservice and in-service teachers have not internalized these approaches or the philosophy underlying them. Rather, they are able to perform a shallow form of these approaches when given incentive and the opportunity to construct a carefully bounded example—but otherwise operate comfortably within the unconsidered privilege structure of the majority (Liu, 2013; Thomas & Liu, 2012).

Beyond the diversity gap itself—indeed, beyond teaching and teacher education as a whole—are a set of social problems that pose additional barriers to the induction of a greater number of teacher candidates of color. For example, the pipeline to college for students of color as a whole is leaky, at best, with students of color dropping their higher education plans (or never having the opportunity to develop such plans) at every stage from middle school to graduation from college (Ahmad & Boser, 2014, p.8). Thus, within the overall context of the leaky college pipeline for students of color as a whole, teacher education is not unique. Second, educational funding inequities at all levels disproportionately affect students of color, including teacher education students, exposing them to substandard educational experiences at every point in their K-16 schooling. This, in turn, makes success more difficult and attrition more likely (Ahmad & Boser, 2014, p. 7). Finally, it is worth pointing out that teacher candidates and teachers of color face continued discrimination, including de facto segregation enforced through illegal covenants and redlining, personal and institutional bias in admission and hiring, and a base of colleagues unlikely to have shared such experiences (Espino, 2008, p. 29).

Retention Issues

Once teacher candidates of color have made it through licensure, difficulty shrinking the diversity gap is no longer a pipeline issue but a retention one. We must discover how to ensure that a significant percentage of teachers of color early in their careers survive past the three- and five-year attrition points, and thrive in their chosen profession. Here researchers have identified several issues leading to relatively high attrition rates and proportionately low retention rates (Ingersoll & May, 2011; 2016). First, novice teachers of color are disproportionately assigned to teach in high-needs and “hard to staff” urban schools with a high percentage of students of color (Achinstein, Ogawa, Sexton, & Freitas, 2010; Ahmad & Boser, 2014). Such schools have high burnout and turnover rates for teachers in general, due to factors such as poor physical plant, insufficient funding, a largely disadvantaged and transient student population drawn from seriously stressed communities (Ingersoll & May, 2011), an emphasis on assessment-driven, scripted teaching (Ingersoll & Connor, 2009), and a lack of teacher autonomy and administrative support (Farinde, Allen, & Lewis, 2016). It is no surprise, then, that novice teachers of color in such schools also experience high attrition rates.

Second, regardless of the school in which they find themselves teaching, novice teachers of color pay an “invisible tax” (King, 2016) that leads to burnout. The invisible tax comes in the form of extra responsibilities and extra stress as the novice teachers of color find themselves acting as a bridge between students of color and white teachers and administrators. Novice teachers of color add student counseling and advocacy to their normal teaching duties, and may also be relied upon by administrators for much of the official communication between the school and students of color and their parents, be that translating during parent-teacher conferences, “explaining” student attitudes and behavior to other teachers and administrators, or delivering disciplinary letters to students of color and their parents (Machado, 2013). Moreover, as King notes, only 2 percent of the nation’s teachers are African-American, yet they are expected to serve as disciplinarians for the entire African-American student body. The strain this role places on teachers of color—King’s “invisible tax on teachers of color” (2016)—can be considerable and, on top of

the normal stresses faced by novice teachers, leads quickly to burnout.

Finally, compounding the two situations described above is a chronic problem in mentoring novice teachers of color. In the case of high-needs schools, systemic underfunding combined with high turnover make adequate mentoring difficult to accomplish. Yet it has been known since the 1980s that mentoring early-career teachers not only improved teacher retention but student achievement as well (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). In the case of low-needs schools, the fact that few teachers of color have the seniority necessary to make them qualified as mentors means that novice teachers of color are likely to have a mentor who neither shares nor understands their background, not to mention that of the students of color (Johnson, 2007; Moule & Higgins, 2007). This makes misunderstanding and conflict much more likely which, in turn, may encourage the novice teacher of color to quit rather than persevere in a profession that doesn't appear to want their participation as either student or teacher.

What Has Been Done to Shrink the Gap?

To date, multiple approaches have been taken in Nevada to address the diversity gap, either directly or indirectly, to improve recruitment and retention at both school district and statewide levels. Most prominently, as a federally designated Minority Serving Institution (MSI) and Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), the University of Nevada, Las Vegas has taken a leadership role in the state by implementing alternative licensure programs, which enroll a larger percentage of teacher candidates of color than traditional programs or Teach For America programs. UNLV has also partnered with several community programs and has even started its own initiative to recruit students of color into the teaching field. One example, the TEACH Program, "helps juniors and seniors at Clark High School consider teaching as a profession by offering college-level education courses, mentoring and campus visits to UNLV" (Takahashi, 2012). Most recently, a UNLV grow your own initiative called the *Abriendo Caminos/Opening Pathways* program seeks to recruit more students of color in Clark County to consider teaching as an educational plan in high school. "The program is funded by a \$335,000 grant from the Nevada Department of Education's Great Teaching and Leading Fund

through August 2017" (Bruzda, 2016).

At the local level, the Clark County School District, in an attempt to retain teachers of color, began to offer professional development opportunities to increase the cultural competence of all teachers working with students of color (Takahashi, 2012). Moreover, in spite of a tremendous budget deficit, in 2011 the Clark County School Board "approved \$74,000 for multicultural training for about 350 teachers last school year, including 18 days of professional development and materials, as well as a \$313-an-hour consultant to deliver the training" (Takahashi, 2012). In 2012, the Clark County School District implemented six initiatives to address the teacher shortage including: 1) A marketing campaign with fast-track-certification options; 2) Four positions for teaching recruiters; 3) A \$5,000 hiring incentive for teachers who commit to working in low-wage earning and low-performing schools; 4) Scholarships and funding for teacher preparation and Alternate Route to Licensure (ARL) programs; 5) Support for the enrollment of long-term substitute teachers in ARL programs; 6) An increase in teacher salaries; and 7) Incentives for "teachers who take positions in hard-to-staff schools" (Rebora, 2016). Continued funding for such initiatives remains a concern for the District, however.

In spite of the large diversity gap, as late as 2003, Nevada was one of 21 states that did not offer specific incentives for recruiting teachers of color (Education Commission of the States, 2003), nor for supporting particular student populations such as English language learners (ELLs). More recently, Nevada was named as the only one of the five states with the largest diversity gap (the others being Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas) without a comprehensive plan to address the gap (Ahmad & Boser, 2014). Nevertheless, in recent years Nevada has seen legislation to address the teacher shortage challenge while working to increase diversity in the teacher corps. Senate Bill (SB) 511 offered incentives to newly hired teachers during the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years, especially teachers of color, developing a Teach Nevada Scholarship program to provide \$3,000 per semester for students in teacher education programs, with three-fourths of the funding coming during their studies, and the balance awarded after five years of teaching in the state (Rindels, 2015). SB 511 also proposed \$5,000 incentives

to hire 2,000 new teachers over a two-year period (Rindels, 2015). During the implementation, in 2015-2016, \$7.1M was expended to hire 1,579 new teachers. Novice teachers are required to complete a total of 60 hours of professional development as a condition of their employment and to receive their incentive.

The Nevada Department of Education has also developed a plan to enable students of color, from low income families, ELLs, and with special needs to have equitable access to quality teachers and school leaders using a three-tiered approach: enhancing teacher recruitment and teacher retention, to improve student learning outcomes.

Figure 6. *Educator Equity Theory of Change (Nevada Department of Education, 2015, p.21)*

Provide financial incentives to improve the pipeline and increase the supply of teachers by attracting them to fill teaching positions at high-need schools, and use a comprehensive talent management system to include using a Turnaround Strategy at underperforming schools; and

Ensure district support and sufficient school fiscal resources for having an aligned learner-centered infrastructure that drives educator effectiveness behaviors to facilitate and monitor students in mastering curricular learning targets; and

So students have equitable access to effective educators in order to have equitable opportunity to master academic standards and remain on track to graduate from high school college- and/or career-ready.

Nationwide, efforts to shrink the diversity gap have focused on one or more of the following approaches: 1) Better preparing white preservice and in-service teachers to work with students of color through training in multicultural education, culturally responsive pedagogies, and teaching for social justice, with the goal of increasing the overall pool of qualified undergraduates who might be interested in teaching students of color (Ladson-Billings, 1999; Nieto, 2000; Sleeter, 2008; Zeichner, Payne, & Brayko, 2015); 2) Increase the number of preservice teachers of color entering the K-12 education pipeline with a combination of recruitment, financial support, and mentoring through licensure (Bennett, Cole, & Thompson, 2000; Gist, 2014; Ingersoll & May, 2016; Irizarry, 2007; Stevens, et al., 2007; Wong et al, 2007); and 3) Improve the retention of in-service teachers of color (Achinstein, Ogawa, Sexton, & Freitas, 2010). In this paper, we will consider only the approaches that attempt to affect the pipeline and retention problems directly, leaving the indirect approach of better training for white teachers aside.

Pipeline Approaches

Pipeline approaches taken nationwide to date, defined here as efforts to increase the number of teacher candidates of color, generally emphasize one or more of the following strategies: recruitment, financial support, and mentorship. It is rare for pipeline approaches to continue past the licensure point of a teacher's career.

Recruitment

Recruitment approaches attempt to increase the number of teachers of color by increasing the number of teacher candidates of color. Literature on nationwide teacher recruitment efforts highlight unique programs in various states and efforts to recruit teachers of color, while documenting states with no history of specific recruitment policies, including Nevada (Bachler, Hill, & Allen, 2003; Simon, Moore Johnson, & Reinhorn, 2015; Villegas, Strom, & Lucas, 2012). For example, in 2012, Villegas, Strom, and Lucas found that 31 of the 50 states had implemented some kind of minority teacher recruitment policy, while only 19

(including Nevada) had none (p. 290). Some of these programs, such as the Illinois Grow Your Own (GYO) and Enhancing Minority College and Career Preparation (EMCCaP) programs, begin recruitment efforts in high school or earlier; others, such as the Connecticut Summer Institute for Future Teachers and the Georgia Pathways programs, focus on higher education students already in associate's or bachelor's programs other than education. Grow Your Own Teachers Initiatives and other similar programs are designed to "recruit, support, and prepare educators to return to teach in the communities from which they spring," (Toshalis, 2013). Ultimately, teacher candidates are encouraged to pursue education as a career and to return to their home neighborhoods as a way to give back to their community and to assist in meeting the needs for diverse educators. Here we survey two programs from Illinois and California.

The Grow Your Own Teachers (GYO) Illinois is committed to recruiting individuals to pursue education, and upon receiving their degree to teach in the communities in which they grew up. (Madda & Schultz, 2009). The goal is to equip Illinois schools with teachers who have an understanding of the student population they teach, as well as adequate knowledge about the communities in which they teach. Students pursuing education degrees are able to apply for and receive scholarships if they choose to teach in high need communities in Illinois. In addition, students who participate in the GYO initiative are eligible for a TEACH grant as long as they fulfill a teaching commitment in an Illinois school of need upon graduating (Grow Your Own Teachers website). According to Kretchmar and Zeichner (2016), the GYO Illinois program has the features of transformative teacher education program that values community expertise, emphasizes place-based learning, and prepares community teachers who are knowledgeable of the communities in which they teach (p. 428). As listed on their website, the GYO program has proven to be effective in equipping schools with diverse educators and increasing teacher retention (Grow Your Own Teachers website).

The Multilingual/Multicultural (M/M) Teacher Preparation Center at Sacramento State University is a center that works to recruit and

prepare students from diverse backgrounds, typically students of color, to work as highly effective educators for social justice (Wong et al., 2007). The M/M center was established in 1974, and has grown since then to involve students in multicultural teacher preparation education while providing students with the support they need to receive teacher licensure. The M/M Center has been successful as supported by survey data, which explains "that the majority of M/M Center graduates leave the program with a strong desire to work in low-income and culturally and linguistically diverse communities," (Wong et al., 2007, p. 21). Ultimately, the Multilingual/Multicultural Teacher Preparation Center was designed to encourage students of color to not only become teachers, but to also be effective as activists and role models in the field of education. The M/M center has been successful in its efforts; 80 percent of the cohort students who were contacted were "teaching in low-income and culturally and linguistically diverse settings," and because a large number of the M/M Center graduates who are teaching "focus their work on activism within their classrooms and with/in behalf of their students." (Wong, et al., 2007, p.22). Many of the graduates of the program have taken on roles that extend far beyond their teaching role as a way to advocate and lead their students to success.

Financial Support

Financial support approaches across the United States tend to make use of grants and loan forgiveness, typically with the stipulation of service for a certain number of years in a high-needs school within the state. More sophisticated approaches add an element of mentoring or networking into at least the early years as an in-service teacher. Here we survey programs in Illinois and Kentucky.

Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois. Similar to the Grow Your Own Initiative described above, the Golden Apple Scholars Foundation works to recruit, prepare, and retain diverse educators to serve in Illinois schools of need. The Golden Apple Scholars Foundation provides selected students with scholarships for college, provides them with varying degrees and opportunities for support both before beginning and during their undergraduate education careers, and assists them

in finding a teaching job post-graduation (Golden Apple Foundation website). The Golden Apple Scholars organization has proven to be successful in developing a diverse pool of highly qualified educators. For example, 57 percent of Golden Apple Scholars are the first in their families to attend college, 38 percent come from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and 50 percent are considered minorities, which proves the program is diverse in their recruitment efforts (Golden Apple Foundation). Not only does the program encourage diversity among participants, the program has proven to be effective in retaining teachers as well. Specifically, “82 percent of Golden Apple scholars teach five plus years in schools of need,” as opposed to “44 percent of teachers who leave their initial school within two years” (Golden Apple Foundation).

The Minority Teacher Recruitment Project (MTRP) with University of Louisville, Kentucky began in 1985 as a way to address the community’s shortage of minority teachers. The MTRP partners with school districts and the University of Louisville’s College of Education and Human Development as a way to fulfill the ongoing need of diverse educators to serve in various diverse school districts and communities surrounding the Louisville community (Minority Teacher Recruitment Project website). Through this project, the university provides financial support, such as a \$5,000 yearly scholarship, professional development, and a range of academic support to meet the needs of the project participants (Minority Teacher Recruitment Project website).

Mentorship

Blankenship et al. (1992), in *Embracing Cultural Diversity in Colleges of Education: Minority Recruitment and Retention Project* (created for the reformist Far West Holmes Group), argue for a complete strategy from recruitment through training to mentorship of in-service teachers of color to support diversification of the administrative population as well as the teacher corps. One way in which this need for thorough, ongoing mentorship has been implemented is through Urban Teacher Residencies (UTR), teacher training programs designed to equip teachers with necessary skills and experiences to be an effective teacher in urban schools (Berry et al., 2008). During a UTR,

teacher candidates, also referred to as residents, will spend one year teaching alongside a mentor teacher while fulfilling the requirements for a master’s degree. Once the residents have completed the first year, they will become full time teachers with their own classrooms but are given extensive mentorship and support during their first full time teaching year (Berry et al., 2008). This particular teacher training approach has shown some success in recruiting and retaining effective educators for high need districts; Berry et al. (2008) discuss how “school administrators rate UTR graduates’ skills and competencies highly,” and explain that “90 to 95 percent of graduates are still teaching after three years” (p. 5). Here we discuss the Boston Teacher Residency (BTR) program, which has been indicated as a model for other programs—with the caveat, however, that it does not specifically target teacher candidates of color.

The Boston Teacher Residency (BTR) Program began in 2004 and is aimed at recruiting individuals who hold bachelor’s degrees and are passionate about working and making a positive difference of the lives of Boston Public School students (BTR, 2016). In their efforts to recruit, the BTR program works to identify and train hard-working, passionate, and committed educators of varying backgrounds as a way to enhance the teacher quality pool of Boston Public Schools. Educators who are accepted into the BTR program are provided with health benefits, a living stipend, and end the program with a master’s degree and teacher licensure in both the content they are teaching and in special education (BTR, 2016). As indicated by their website (2016), “87 percent of BTR program graduates are still teaching, 90 percent are still in the field of education, and 80 percent of those hired by the Boston Public Schools have remained in the district,” which identifies the effectiveness of the year-long teacher residency program (BTR, 2016). Additionally, Boston Public Schools have expressed extreme satisfaction with BTR program graduates in their school district, and the program continues to receive positive praise. Specifically, 97 percent of administrators working with graduates from the Boston Teacher Residency program would recommend that other administrators hire graduates from the BTR program as well (BTR, 2016).

Retention Approaches

It has been established for some time that a strong contributing factor to the diversity gap is the relatively high attrition rate of early-career teachers of color (Ingersoll & May, 2011). Nevertheless, discussion of retention approaches is very simple because, across the United States and within Nevada, few special efforts have been made to retain teachers of color. At the same time, efforts to assist retention of teachers in schools with high percentages of ELL students, or located in high-poverty areas, can boost retention of teachers of color by virtue of the fact that so many teachers of color teach in such schools.

For example, in 2015 the Nevada State Legislature passed two bills, SB 405, “Zoom Schools Act,” and SB 432, “Victory Schools Act.” Both acts provide (among other support) financial incentives for recruitment and retention of teachers in low-performing schools in Clark and Washoe counties, provided they also fit other specific criteria, such as having large populations of ELLs in the student body (Zoom Schools) or being located in one of the 20 poorest zip codes in the state (Victory Schools). There are strict limits in the legislation capping the combined total of the funding for a Zoom or Victory school that can be used for professional development, recruitment and retention pay, and family engagement to 2 percent of that school’s budget. Nevertheless, because the biennial budget for each act is \$25 million, the estimated total for recruitment and retention incentives is more than \$1 million per year.

Why Has Success Been Limited?

As the problems described in the previous section have been identified, programs have been developed to address them—yet, today, the diversity gap remains almost unchanged. In a statistical sense, this is not because the number of teachers of color has failed to grow, but that it has not grown as rapidly as the number of students of color. In other words, although both statistics are increasing, that for students of color is increasing more rapidly than that for teachers of color (Villegas, Strom, & Lucas, 2012, p. 296). Observing this fact simply underscores the urgency of the need to improve the recruitment and retention of teachers of color.

Scholars have identified various factors limiting the success of the efforts to shrink the diversity gap, some of which are grounded in larg-

er educational inequities. For example, the leaky pipeline for the production of teachers of color is part of the leaky pipeline for all students of color, which is, in turn, grounded in large social issues of school funding inequities, community segregation, salary stagnation at the lower end of the economy, and institutional racism (Ahmad & Bose, 2014). As far as teacher preparation programs go, it appears that the efforts to recruit and train teachers of color have not been a complete failure—there has been improvement in the numbers, after all. Rather, research on the leaky pipeline indicates the problem lies in the support and training for prospective teachers of color, the kinds of assignments teachers of color receive in the first few years of their careers, and the general lack of support they obtain over their careers. For example, teachers of color tend to be over-represented in high-needs schools, which not only leads to higher attrition rates but may also discourage recruitment in the first place (Villegas, Strom, & Lucas, 2012, p. 296). On the other hand, programs emphasizing continuing mentorship and support through the early years of teachers’ careers, such as the Urban Teacher Residencies described above have shown significantly greater retention three years into a teaching career than the national average, even though teachers of color have been placed in high-needs schools (Berry, et al., 2008). In short, it is possible that the problems at the beginning of the pipeline could be adequately addressed with existing programs, given appropriate funding and staffing, but more attention needs to be paid to supporting and retaining teachers of color once they have graduated from college and entered the workforce if the recruitment programs are to reach their full potential.

Implications for Policy

The presence and persistence of the diversity gap, and the benefits of having a more diverse teacher corps not just for students of color but for all students, clearly lead to the conclusion that more needs to be done to shrink the gap. Moreover, the rapidity with which the student population is continuing to diversify—particularly in Clark and Washoe counties—lends an extra level of urgency that has not, to date, been visible in Nevada. There are many students, families, and communities that are not well served by ignoring the diversity gap, and it is unconscionable to let their needs go unmet while attempting to craft the perfect solution. At

the same time, educators, communities, and policymakers especially, need to consider the deep structural foundations that have led to the diversity gap, and recognize that fundamental change cannot happen overnight. To a certain extent this awareness is already present: As part of the presentation to the Legislature, Durish, Dietrich, and Sposito (2016) proposed to shrink the equity gap by focusing on improving fiscal resources to match K-12 demographic shifts, and work on attracting, preparing, developing, supporting, and retaining effective site-based administrators and teachers. Strictly speaking, however, these are goals, not strategies, and have no clear timeline or set of priorities, much less concrete steps to take. For these reasons, the authors suggest considering the implications of current research on the diversity gap for policy over the short, medium, and long term, and begin by identifying appropriate priorities for recruitment, preparation, and retention over each term. This will allow relatively speedy easing of acute problems while moving forward on more substantial change to patch the chronically leaky pipeline: Improving recruitment, training, mentorship, and retention of teachers of color in the Nevada schools.

Short Term

Over the short term, it is important to identify and address as quickly as possible the most pressing problems among the neediest communities. To summarize:

- Zoom and Victory schools promoted by SB 405 and SB 432 are excellent first steps, identifying high-needs schools with large populations of ELLs (Zoom Schools) or high concentrations of poverty (Victory Schools), then directing extra funding toward them.
- Increasing funding for recruitment, professional development, and retention will start to patch the leaky pipeline that endangers the careers of teachers of color.
- Improving working conditions by increasing funding for other activities that form the bulk of the Zoom and Victory school budgets; working conditions are strongly correlated with attrition versus retention, particularly among teachers of color.
- In short, as successes are seen in the Zoom and Victory schools, they can be used as model programs for other schools that might not see

such high levels of need, but which do need significant improvement.

Medium Term

Over the medium term, it is vital to begin repairing the pipeline from high school through teacher preparation and into successful teaching careers. This requires:

- Improving the recruitment, support, training, and mentoring of teachers of color through programs such as Urban Teacher Residencies and homegrown programs recruiting teacher candidates from the areas where they will teach, career mentoring programs, and efforts to increase the number of administrators of color with expertise in these areas.
- Improving the interaction of white teachers and administrators with students and teachers of color by integrating diversity issues throughout the teacher education and school leadership curricula as well as ongoing school and district professional development programs.
- Increasing state-level funding to support programs such as the UNLV grow your own programs and the *Abriendo Caminos/Opening Pathways* initiative to recruit and prepare community-based teachers.

It is true that one benefit to having teachers of color, particularly at the middle and high school levels, is to serve as aspirational role models, encouraging students of color to consider a career in teaching. However, it is also true that positive experiences with teachers and teaching in middle and high school years in itself encourages students to consider a career in teaching, whether the inspirational teacher is the same race as the student or not. Therefore, better training for white preservice and in-service teachers in multicultural teaching, culturally responsive pedagogy, and deep community engagement is vital to help shrink the diversity gap. The authors consider this a medium-term implication because the evidence clearly indicates that one-shot “diversity training,” whether in the form of a special class for preservice teachers or a professional development session for in-service teachers—by far the majority approach among teacher education programs in the U.S.—see Zeichner (1992) and Ladson-Billings (1999)—has failed to affect change in white teachers’ attitudes and behaviors (Montecinos, 2004).

Long Term

Over the long term, the persistence of the diversity gap suggests a need for an epistemological shift throughout the entire educational system toward an inclusive and democratic approach in which there is “respect for and interaction among practitioner, academic, and community-based knowledge” (Zeichner, Payne, Brayko, 2015). There are several approaches to developing this kind of epistemology in an educational system, but they all come down to eliminating the walls between K-12 schooling, the communities surrounding the schools, and college- or university-based teacher education programs. Approaches to accomplish this include:

- Implementing “Teacher Preparation 3.0” (Kretchmar and Zeichner 2016) grounded in school and community expertise, emphasizing learning from the community, preparing community teachers who are knowledgeable about the communities in which they teach.
- Enhancing partnerships among universities, K-12 schools, and local communities in the recruitment, preparation, and retention of teachers of color.
- Recruiting preservice teachers of color from the pool of unlicensed staff already working in the K-12 schools. This group that includes paraprofessionals such as teacher assistants already inclined to teach and familiar with both the schools and the routines of teaching. This approach was pioneered in North Carolina (Irvine & Fenwick, 2011, p. 17); studying their experience could be instructive.
- Continue improving the interaction of white teachers and administrators with students and teachers of color, their families, and their communities.

Sleeter (2008) called for teacher education that can be powerful enough to counter at least three forms of ongoing socialization that white teachers experience. Since most teacher education programs recruit and prepare white teachers and teachers of color together, this framework applies well to “Teacher Preparation 3.0.” First, the ongoing lived experiences of white people usually take place in relatively homogeneous neighborhoods, in which white individuals associate mainly with other white people, experiencing the everyday privileges that accrue to being white without being aware of this (Sleeter, 1992). Second, the

ongoing experience of school and classroom life, first as a K-12 student, then as a university student, and subsequently as a new teacher, solidifies taken-for-granted conceptions of how schooling should go and what teaching should look like, making it difficult to envision alternatives in the classroom (Lortie, 1975). Third, the everyday conditions of teacher work generally structure teaching as transmission of prescribed content to crowds of students following a “banking” model of teaching and learning. When teaching is experienced this way and supported by testing, teachers learn to see differences among students primarily as differences in ability to learn what is prescribed (Prawat, 1992), rather than seeing difference as a source of knowledge and strength.

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