



Recruiting, Preparing, Developing & Retaining Educators of Color: A Remedy for Improving Educational Opportunity & Promoting Educational Justice

Project Overview:

California state policymakers have identified educator diversity as a top priority issue but have not had an actionable blueprint for change. To date, there is no organized coalition advancing this critical issue. This grant would fund a team of prominent researchers of color, K-12 and higher education system representatives with expertise in issues related to educator diversity to collaborate with California stakeholders to produce an **actionable evidence-based report and briefs that identify tangible policy interventions and models** that can be undertaken by state policymakers and locals in the short-term and long-term to improve teacher diversity. Throughout the grant period, reports will be produced with the direct engagement of students, educators, scholars, postsecondary education system leaders, advocacy organizations, and state policymakers to inform the effort and to begin laying the foundation for a state coalition to drive the urgency of the issue.

Hewlett National Overview:

Hewlett will have a national presence in Mississippi, Ohio, and Maryland, and would like to use the approaches taken in California in two of these three regions. We anticipate there will be learning that takes place in California that can begin to create a template for work in these regions. In these regions, we expect some of the prominent researchers of color and system leaders to either have a presence in these regions or have spent significant time working/conducting research in these regions. The local engagement will look different in these regions but we will have grantees in place in these regions that can be engaged and begin to develop relationships. Lastly, we do expect California to be the first focus area and kickoff for this work but will want to see how the work is staged to address the other regions while taking advantage of the current focus on racial justice.

Expected Outcomes:

- Produce a landscape study on the state of educator diversity in California produced by a core group of respected researchers of color and institutional leaders with evidence-based recommendations for state and local policymakers, teacher preparation programs, and K-12 practitioners. Thematic issue briefs, opinion pieces and a robust dissemination strategy will accompany the landscape study.
- Begin to mobilize key stakeholders (e.g. professional organizations, educators, policymakers, students, advocates) to implement some of these evidence-based policies, practices and approaches in the landscape study in order to continue closing the educator diversity gap in California.
- Policymakers at the local and state level will begin to prioritize an action agenda around educator diversity in coordination with the Black and Latino Caucuses based on the landscape study.
- A working group of advisory scholars and organizations committed to educator diversity and racial justice will begin to form or expand based on the landscape study.

Partner: Center for the Transformation of Schools (CTS) at UCLA, led by Dr. Tyrone Howard

CHALLENGE

Students of color are expected to make up 56 percent of the US student population by 2024 which will not be reflected in an educator workforce that is still overwhelmingly white, with less than 1 in 5 educators being people of color.¹ The most recent U.S. Department of Education Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), a nationally representative survey of teachers and principals, shows that 82 percent of public school teachers identified as white, a figure that has hardly changed in more than 15 years.² Diversity gaps are also large within districts:

California, Florida, and Massachusetts account for 20 percent of all students in the United States, and gaps within districts in those states are often larger than those within states.³ While states like California, Mississippi and Ohio have made modest gains to

address gaps between the composition of the educator workforce and students, significant diversity gaps remain within those states and across the nation. The federal government, states and districts must do more to support programs to help individuals of color enter and remain in education.

Doing so will require unique and innovative strategies because of the complexities brought about by COVID-19 and the economic distress that is profoundly impacting communities of color.

1 U.S. Department of Education (2016). *The State of Racial Diversity in the Educator Workforce*. Retrieved at https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/highered/racial-diversity/state-racial-diversity-work_force.pdf; Boser, U. (2011). *Teacher diversity matters: A state-by-state analysis of teachers of color*. Center for American Progress. Retrieved at https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2011/11/pdf/teacher_diversity.pdf

2 U.S. Department of Education (2012). *School and Staffing Survey (SASS)*. Retrieved at <https://nces.ed.gov/survey/sass/methods.asp>

3 Boser, U. (2014) *Teacher Diversity Revisited: A New State-by-State Analysis*. Center for American Progress. Retrieved at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/report s/2014/05/04/88962/teacher-diversity-revisited/>

OPPORTUNITY

Research is clear about the benefits of educator diversity on the educational trajectory of students of color and even teacher retention. Having more teachers with racially, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in the classroom can have a positive impact on learning for students of color, for closing achievement gaps, improving graduation rates and aspirations to attend college.⁴ Benefits extend to both students of color and white students having positive perceptions of their teachers of color, including feeling cared for and academically challenged.⁵ Greater diversity of teachers also supports greater retention, helping mitigate feelings of isolation, frustration, and

fatigue that can contribute to individual teachers of color leaving the profession when they feel they are alone.⁶

While evidence shows the urgency of addressing diversity gaps between educators and their students, a unique opportunity exists in today's social and political landscape as more Americans are calling to eradicate systemic racism and to reexamine policies and practices in schools as a first line of defense in that endeavor. Educator diversity is one issue that can bind the interests of students, educators and voters across the country as states and the federal government recover from the COVID-19 recession, an economic downturn that will prove to be more challenging than the Great Recession.⁷

4 Carver-Thomas, D. (2018). *Diversifying the teaching profession: How to recruit and retain teachers of color*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute; Gershenson, S., Hart, C. M. D., Lindsay, C. A., & Papageorge, N. W. (2017). *The long-run impacts of same race teachers*. Bonn, Germany: IZA Institute of Labor Economics. Discussion Paper Series; Dee, T. (2004). *Teachers, race and student achievement in a randomized experiment*. *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, 86(1), 195–210; Higgins, P., Shaffer, S., & Schlanger, P. (2017). *School integration — Preparing teachers for working in diverse classrooms*. IDRA Newsletter 44(4). San Antonio, TX: IDRA.

5 Cherng, H.-Y. S., & Halpin, P. F. (2016). *The importance of minority teachers: Student perceptions of minority versus White teachers*. *Educational Researcher*, 45(7), 407–420;

6 Higgins, P., Shaffer, S., & Schlanger, P. (2017). *School integration — Preparing teachers for working in diverse classrooms*. IDRA Newsletter 44(4). San Antonio, TX: IDRA.

7 Griffith, M. (2020). *COVID-19 and School Funding: What to Expect and What You Can Do*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. Retrieved <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/blog/covid-19-and-school-funding-what-expect-and-what-you-can-do>

STRATEGY

The Center for the Transformation of Schools (CTS) in the School of Education & Information Studies at UCLA proposes a sequence of state-specific efforts in California over the next two years to accelerate evidence-based efforts to recruit, prepare, develop

and retain educators of color in a select group of BMGF & Hewlett priority states: California, Mississippi and Ohio. This proposal provides a high-level overview of work that UCLA will lead in California and support nationally in close partnership with the BMGF and Hewlett foundations, and additional postsecondary state collaboratives in Mississippi and Ohio.

The proposal outlines a plan over the next two years to broaden awareness and promote evidence-based models, practices and policies and approaches that recruit, support, retain teachers of color in US schools broadly and California specifically and develop pathways for teacher leadership and professional growth. This work builds on the Changing Expectations for the K–12 Teacher Workforce report done by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to address the changing landscape of today’s schools^[1]. This proposal will focus on a proposed first phase of work or landscape study to document the state of educator diversity in California and to begin to identify promising models and policies to address the diversity gap.

Project Timeline:

When	Deliverable	Outcomes
November 2020	Convene advisory group and UC, CSU, CCC and California Independent Colleges and University system leaders virtually	Develop landscape outline and revised timeline
January 2021	Focus group of educators of color identified from CTA, CFT and teacher education programs convened virtually	Synthesize findings
February 2021	Focus group of students identified by districts and statewide youth organizing groups convened virtually	Synthesize findings

March 2021	Focus group of statewide agencies convened virtually (see Appendix A)	Synthesize findings
April 2021	Focus group of professional organizations convened virtually (see Appendix A)	Synthesize findings
August 2021	Reconvene advisory group and system leaders to share draft report in person if possible	Share final draft of landscape report
February 2022	Final report released in Sacramento	Report and issue briefs released in coordination with Black and Latino caucuses and legislature in Sacramento
February 2022-June 2022	Statewide hearings, digital webinars and robust communications strategy	Support state policies and media coverage around educator diversity

ADVISORY GROUP

CTS will assemble a group of approximately 12 scholars of color virtually and in person when possible at least twice for the duration of this grant representing the UC, CSU and CCC systems. Scholars identified have conducted research and led efforts on issues related to the educator diversity continuum (e.g. college preparation, recruitment, professional learning, retention, teacher leadership). This group will be asked to support the development of the landscape study and to produce opinion pieces, research and policy briefs that directly tie to the goals of this grant from November 2021-June 2022. The goal of assembling this group is not only to elevate scholarship

related to the continuum of educator diversity, but also to build stronger connections between state decision-makers and educators and researchers of color.

FOCUS GROUPS

CTS will convene approximately 100 leading students, educators, scholars, higher education segments, institutional thought leaders, state policymakers and key stakeholders over the period of the 2021-2022 years virtually and in-person when COVID allows us to do so to begin addressing a set of questions and to promote an actionable policy and practice agenda (see **Appendix A**):

1. What is the scope of the educator diversity gap in California?

- *What teacher prep programs enroll the most teachers of color?*
- *What teacher prep programs certify the most teachers of color (i.e., looking at program completion)?*
- *Where are teachers of colors employed?*
- *How do teacher demographics compare to student demographics- this is already available at the state level, but wondering if you think it is most helpful to report this at the region/county/district level?*
- *What do retention rates look like for teachers of color at the state/county/district level?*

2. What are the underlying factors driving this gap?

- *What policies enable/inhibit diversity of teacher preparation programs (e.g., licensure exams)?*
- *What program features drive this gap (e.g., demographics of faculty, recruitment practices, length or location of the program, cost of the program, advising or other support to candidates)?*
- *What role could state-level data systems play in helping to identify prep programs/schools that are doing a great job of preparing/retaining a more diverse teaching workforce and where support/improvement is needed?*

3. What stakeholders are most interested in this issue or should care more about educator diversity?

- *Students*
- *Parents*
- *Educators*
- *Philanthropy*
- *Advocates*
- *Community-based organizations*
- *Policymakers*

4. What can we learn from the experiences of current educators of color to improve teacher recruitment, preparation, development and retention for the state?

- *Include interventions that are feasible without on-going external funding. And/or to describe how organizations who see this as a priority have reallocated existing resources in order to implement an intervention.*
- *Note differences that should be considered when recruiting and supporting Black teacher candidates vs Latinx candidates vs other candidates of color. Identify any nuance in how these interventions are implemented based on who they intend to serve?*

SUPPORTING POLICY AND SYSTEMS CHANGE

CTS will also engage professional organizations (California Teachers Association, California Federation of Teachers, Association for California School Administrators, California School Business Officers, California School Boards Association, etc.), targeted districts, all 58 counties and policymakers (Black caucus, Latino caucus, Asian Pacific Islander caucus, National Association of Latino Elected & Appointed Officials) throughout the state to develop a set of policy recommendations in the landscape report that local and state actors can use to promote local, regional and statewide policy mobilization to eliminate barriers for those interested in teaching and to put systems in place for systemic change to take shape.

The Center has established strong working relationships with the Governor, legislature, labor community, higher education, county, district, community and civil rights partners through a statewide pilot to reduce school suspensions that will help facilitate

many of these critical conversations. CTS will complete an initial landscape report highlighting educator diversity as part of a continuum of high-quality teaching and learning based on findings from focus groups. **This work will begin to identify models and interventions that can be undertaken statewide and at the local level with clear implications for policymakers, practitioners, and school leaders.** The landscape report will be presented as part of a robust dissemination and digital communications strategy. The primary audiences for the report will include state policymakers, K-12 and higher education system leaders, philanthropic partners, advocates and educators.

DISSEMINATION & COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY FOR LANDSCAPE STUDY

We will design a robust PR & communications strategy to support the release of the report. We have identified our primary audiences for the report as 1) CA state policymakers, and 2) CA educators & school administrators. We intend to target these audiences by utilizing both traditional and new media channels and strategies, detailed below. CTS will manage PR & communications strategy and deliverables, and we welcome feedback and support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Public Relations Strategy

CTS will offer an advance embargoed copy of the report to key reporters at both statewide and national media outlets. Spanish language media outlets, often underutilized in education media targeting, will be targeted. CTS will also highlight the report authors as leading sources of thought leadership and commentary on the topic of educator diversity, securing future interviews and media opportunities. Media prep and training will be provided to report authors as-needed. Sample media outlets include:

- Chalkbeat
- EdSource
- EdSurge
- Education Dive
- EdWeek
- Huffington Post

- Los Angeles Times
- NBC Telemundo
- New York Times
- NPR
- Politico
- Sacramento Bee
- San Francisco Chronicle
- Univision
- US News
- USA Today
- WSJ
- Washington Post

CTS will draft and release a press release and host a press briefing and provide ongoing monitoring of media coverage post-launch. CTS will secure placement for lead report authors at relevant conferences & events to share more broadly about the report findings.

Communications Strategy

Our communications strategy will utilize a drip marketing campaign promoting the report content in sections over the course of several months. This campaign will promote the report content with our target audiences using strategies and channels that include:

- CTS website communications
- Social media networks
- Email marketing
- Blog posts
- Events
- Search engine optimization (SEO)

CTS has strong relationships with individuals and organizations across the education field; including administrators and educators in ECE, K-12 and higher education, professional organizations, advocacy and civil rights groups, research partners,

politicians and political organizations, and government departments and offices. We intend to leverage our relationships with these partners to further amplify distribution of the report through re-sharing and cross-promotion/marketing.

Creative

The report and collateral communications materials will receive a customized design treatment, including branding and art direction.

Funder Recognition

CTS will recognize the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's support of the report through the following strategies:

- Special thanks and logo inclusion in the report foreword, email marketing and report webpage
- Social media handle tagging/inclusion in social promotion
- Verbal recognition during speaking engagements and events (webinars, panels, etc)
- Opportunities for co-branding/cross-promotion of report content with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Success Metrics

On a regular basis throughout the campaign, we will use analytics reporting to track the below metrics and continue to optimize content:

- Brand awareness
- Email engagement
- Social media engagement
- Website traffic
- Media coverage monitoring (feature stories, mentions, quotes, and pickups)

Communications Timeline

- **Oct 2021:** Advance pitching to key reporters offering embargoed report
- **Oct 2021:** Strategic outreach to mobilize CTS partners, statewide and local
- **Oct 2021:** Advance interviews with lead report author(s)
- **Nov 2021:** Release report

- **Nov-Dec 2021:** Media placements and interviews
- **Nov-Dec 2021:** Presentation of report findings, hosted by lead report author(s)
- **Dec 2021-June 2022:** Digital (social, email, website) campaign promoting report content
- **Dec 2021-June 2022:** Media coverage monitoring
- **Dec 2021-June 2022:** Op-Eds by lead report author(s) submitted for publication and hosted on our website

POTENTIAL RISKS AND REWARDS

CTS is currently co-leading two statewide efforts that provide a natural extension for this proposal with a focus on educator diversity in California. The first statewide effort is a five year, \$15 million Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) pilot with the Orange County Department of Education and Butte County Office of Education that is focused on addressing discipline disparities apparent by race and the overidentification of students of color for special education services with seven districts and 14 school sites including Center Joint Unified, Fort Bragg Unified, Madera Unified, Morongo Unified, Oroville City Elementary, Pittsburg Unified, and Pomona Unified. We have already begun to partner with county offices of education, the California Department of Education, Newsom Administration, professional organizations (CTA, CFT,ACSA, CSBA), higher education system leaders (UC, CSU), advocacy, civil, rights and philanthropic organizations who will be critical to inform this proposed landscape study, ensure its findings gain traction and to help key education decision makers see the connection between school climate and student learning and the racial composition and capacity of the teaching force.

A second statewide effort we are co-leading with the California Department of Education and the Newsom Administration is a landscape study to be released in the fall of 2020 on the state of education for students experiencing homelessness from early education to higher education, which includes over 269,000 students and predominantly Black and Latinx students. The educator diversity proposal is modeled after the CTS landscape study on student homelessness.

These two efforts require significant time, energy and capacity of our team at the Center, a risk to consider as we prepare through this proposal to undertake more work and deliverables. With additional staff and resources from BMGF and the Hewlett Foundation, we are confident that we will be able to leverage existing relationships and partnerships to make educator diversity a top priority for the state, and to ensure it has direct connections to existing efforts related to racial justice in education like the MTSS pilot and statewide landscape study on student homelessness.

We also recognize through these two efforts that timelines will have to be adjusted and modified for the duration of the grant not only as a result of COVID, for political considerations to be made, time required to produce high quality research and conduct interviews, but also to allow for collective investment and time for other organizations and partners to “see themselves” in this work.

Appendix A: Key Partners

Advisory

Travis Bristol, UC Berkeley
Maisha Winn, UC Davis
Margarita Jimenez Silva, UC Davis
Shanyce Campbell, UC Irvine
Rita Kohli, UC Riverside
Marianna Harris, UC Merced
Jessica Hannigan, CSU Fresno
Daniel Choi, CSU Fullerton
Sharon Chappell, CSU Fullerton
Matt Jones, CSU Dominguez Hills
Shareem Pavry, CSU Long Beach
Sabrina Zerkel, Santa Clara University

California Community College System

Daisy Gonzalez, Deputy Chancellor

Professional Organizations

Joe Boyd, Executive Director, California Teachers Association
Sara Callahan, Executive Director, California Federation of Teachers
Wes Smith, Executive Director, Association of California Administrators (ACSA)
Vernon Billy, Executive Director, California School Boards Association
Dwight Bonds, Executive Director, California Association of African American Administrators
Jose Gonzalez, Executive Director, California Association of Latino Administrators

UC System

Claudia Martinez, Executive Director, Educator Programs; UC Office of the President
Tine Sloan, Teacher Education Research and Improvement Network (CTERIN)
Annmarie Francois, UCLA; Commissioner, California Commission on Teacher Credentialing
Tyrone Howard, UCLA
Joseph Bishop, UCLA

CSU System

Marquita Grenot-Scheyer, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Educator Preparation and Public School Programs
Earnest Black, CSU Chancellor's Office

Independent & Private Institutions

Kristin Soares, President, Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities
Pedro Noguera, Dean, Rossier School of Education, USC
<https://aiccu.edu/page/memberinstitutions>

Governor, Caucuses, State Agencies & Legislature

Newsom Administration

Jennifer Johnson, Education Advisor, Governor Gavin Newsom
Lande Ajose, Higher Education Advisor, Governor Gavin Newsom

Agencies

Mary Sandy, Executive Director, California Commission on Teacher Credentialing
Marlene Garcia, Executive Director, California Student Aid Commission

Legislature

Tanya Lieberman, Chief Counsel, Assembly Education Committee

Lynn Lorber, Chief Counsel, Senate Education Committee

Black Caucus

Latino Caucus

API Caucus

Student Organizations

UC Student Association

Cal State Student Association

Californians for Justice

Yo! California