



The Education Trust  
IN TENNESSEE

TECA

TENNESSEE EDUCATORS OF COLOR ALLIANCE

2022

REPRESENTED:

# Increasing Teacher Diversity in Tennessee's Education Preparation Providers



By: Fariha Hossain, Tennessee P-12 Policy Fellow

## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Methodology</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Key findings</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<i>Motivation for Entering the Educator Workforce</i> .....	<b>10</b>
<i>A Lack of Structured Support from EPPs</i> .....	<b>10</b>
<i>What does support look like?</i> .....	<b>11</b>
<i>Additional Hurdles: High Cost of Tuition and Loans</i> .....	<b>11</b>
<i>Additional Hurdles: Coursework</i> .....	<b>12</b>
<i>Additional Hurdles: Licensure Exams</i> .....	<b>13</b>
<i>Summative Table of Findings</i> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<i>Tennessee General Assembly</i> .....	<b>15</b>
<i>Tennessee State Board and Department of Education</i> .....	<b>17</b>
<i>Educator Preparation Programs</i> .....	<b>19</b>

## Executive Summary

Tennessee’s K-12 educator population is not representative of its overall student population. In 2020, the year that Tennessee Department of Education identified the importance of recruiting and retaining educators of color to address teacher vacancies,<sup>1</sup> teachers of color made up only 13% of Tennessee teachers.<sup>2</sup> That year, students of color made up 38.8% of the overall student population.<sup>3</sup>

This discrepancy between teacher and student populations is concerning, as research indicates a correlation between diverse educators in schools and improved standardized test scores, attendance, behavior, graduation rates, college-going rates, and more inclusive gifted class placements and participation in advanced coursework for all students, but particularly for students of color.<sup>4,5</sup>

The Tennessee Alliance for Equity in Education, a statewide coalition of more than 75 organizations committed to educational justice, including the Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance and The Education Trust in Tennessee, recognizes increasing educator diversity and quality as a priority for improving outcomes and experiences for students of color.<sup>6</sup> Together, these partners inform Tennessee advocates and policymakers about how to address inequitable access to a strong and diverse workforce.<sup>7</sup>

Since traditional Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs) educate the vast majority of teachers and are visible to prospective teachers, this report focuses on the experiences of teacher candidates of color at majority White EPPs in Tennessee. Findings from surveys and focus group interviews discovered that 87% of teacher candidates of color felt isolated or overlooked at some point during their educator training at EPPs. Additional burdens included the high financial costs of pursuing careers in education through EPPs and the lack of preparation to serve diverse communities.

These findings, incorporated with national research, led to the recommendations outlined below, which aim to increase teacher diversity, and ultimately, improve student experiences and resolve teacher vacancy problems across the state.

### Recommendations for the Tennessee General Assembly

- Propose in legislation and incorporate into the Governor’s budget expanding the Minority Teaching fellowship to alleviate the financial burden of tuition;
- Utilize existing state-level scholarship mechanisms or competitive grants to build cohorts that can provide fellowship and mentorship programs to combat isolation that candidates of color face in their programs
- Propose in legislation and incorporate into the Governor’s budget a fund or waiver program that alleviates financial burdens of licensure exams;

## Recommendations for the Tennessee State Board and Department of Education

- Explicitly ask candidates in the “Satisfaction” section of the annual EPP Report Card about their EPP-provided exposure to and experience with diverse communities;
- Provide guidance to EPPs on multicultural curriculum opportunities;
- Incentivize Tennessee’s EPPs to hire diverse faculty and adjunct faculty through revised standards and a revised EPP Report Card

## Recommendations for Educator Preparation Providers

- Empower candidates with skills and practical experience to work in diverse communities;
- Address isolation that teacher candidates of color face in their programs by establishing community, mentorship programs, and highlighting diverse, expert voices;
- Provide licensure assessment support via tutoring, labs, and scholarships
- Collaborate with other Educator Preparation Providers on best practices regarding recruitment, retainment, and improving experiences of teacher candidates of color



### Bright Spot

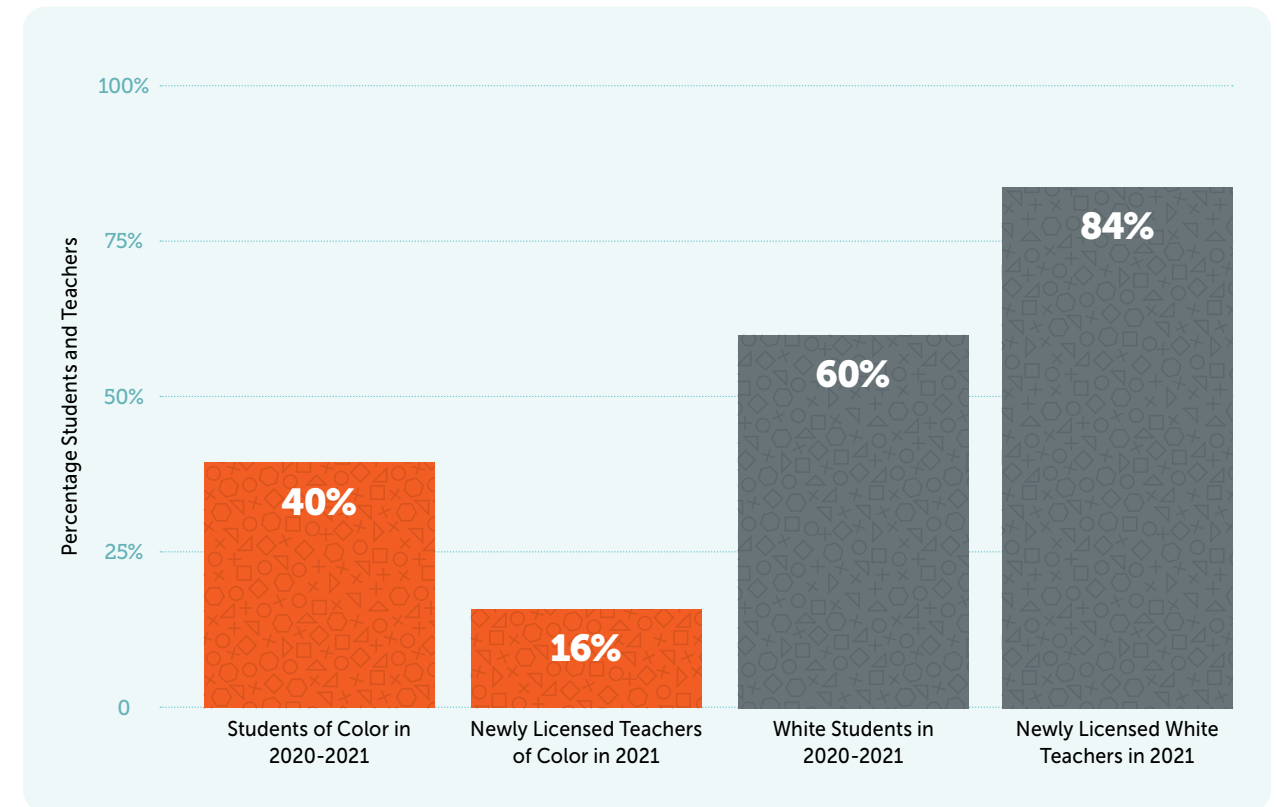
The Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance (TECA), in partnership with The Education Trust in Tennessee, is leading a movement to **increase teacher diversity in Tennessee by 20% by 2025**.<sup>8</sup> This campaign informed a decision by the State Board of Education to publicly set goals to increase teacher diversity. Also, in accordance with state law, the Tennessee Department of Education requires school boards and local school districts to establish reasonable, incremental goals for recruitment, employment and retention of teachers of color.<sup>9</sup>

## Introduction to the Report

Across the country, 44% of U.S. public schools reported teacher vacancies in 2022 and over half of schools identify the COVID-19 pandemic as a factor.<sup>10</sup> By 2028, Tennessee will have a projected 5,090 average annual openings for K-12 teaching positions.<sup>11</sup> Yet, annual enrollment at traditional Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs), housed at universities, has declined by 30% since 2011.<sup>12</sup> In 2021, the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) identified the importance of recruiting and retaining educators of color and addressing teacher shortages.<sup>13</sup> However, while 40% of Tennessee’s K-12 public school students were students of color in 2021, as of 2020, Tennessee’s teachers of color made up only 13% of Tennessee teachers.<sup>14</sup>

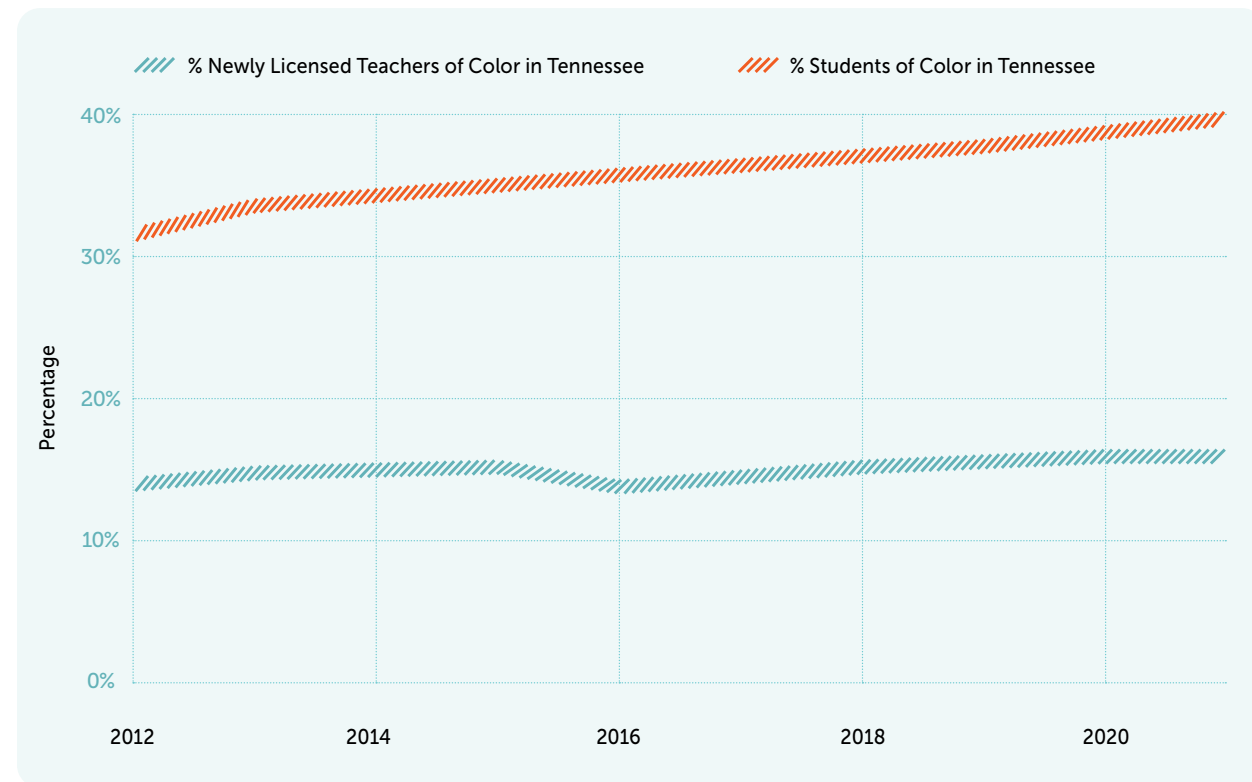
**Figure 1:** In the 2021-2022 school year, 39.8% of Tennessee students were students of color, but only 15.9% of newly licensed teachers in Tennessee in 2021 were teachers of color. However, White students were significantly overrepresented in the teacher population.<sup>15,16</sup>

01



Tennessee’s diverse public education landscape, long discussed as mostly Black and White students,<sup>17</sup> has seen an increase in immigrant and migrant students. Between 2013 and 2021, Tennessee’s student enrollment of Hispanic and Asian students increased by 38% and the population of English Language Learners increased by 20%.<sup>18</sup> Teachers of all backgrounds must be prepared to teach this increasingly diverse population and Tennessee must prioritize preparing a representative teacher population.

**Figure 2:** As the population of Tennessee students of color increases steadily, the population of newly licensed teachers of color remains stagnant, increasing the gaps between the two populations.<sup>19,20</sup>



Currently, there are clear racial disparities in student outcomes and school experiences in Tennessee. Standardized test scores from the 2021-2022 school year indicate a growing literacy achievement gap between Black, Latino, and Native American students and white students in Tennessee.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, Tennessee’s education policy landscape is embroiled in heated discourse about the appropriateness of curriculum that discusses slavery, racism, and white privilege.<sup>22</sup> The resulting legislation limiting these topics leaves many students of color feeling disheartened and further isolated within their schools and communities.<sup>23</sup>

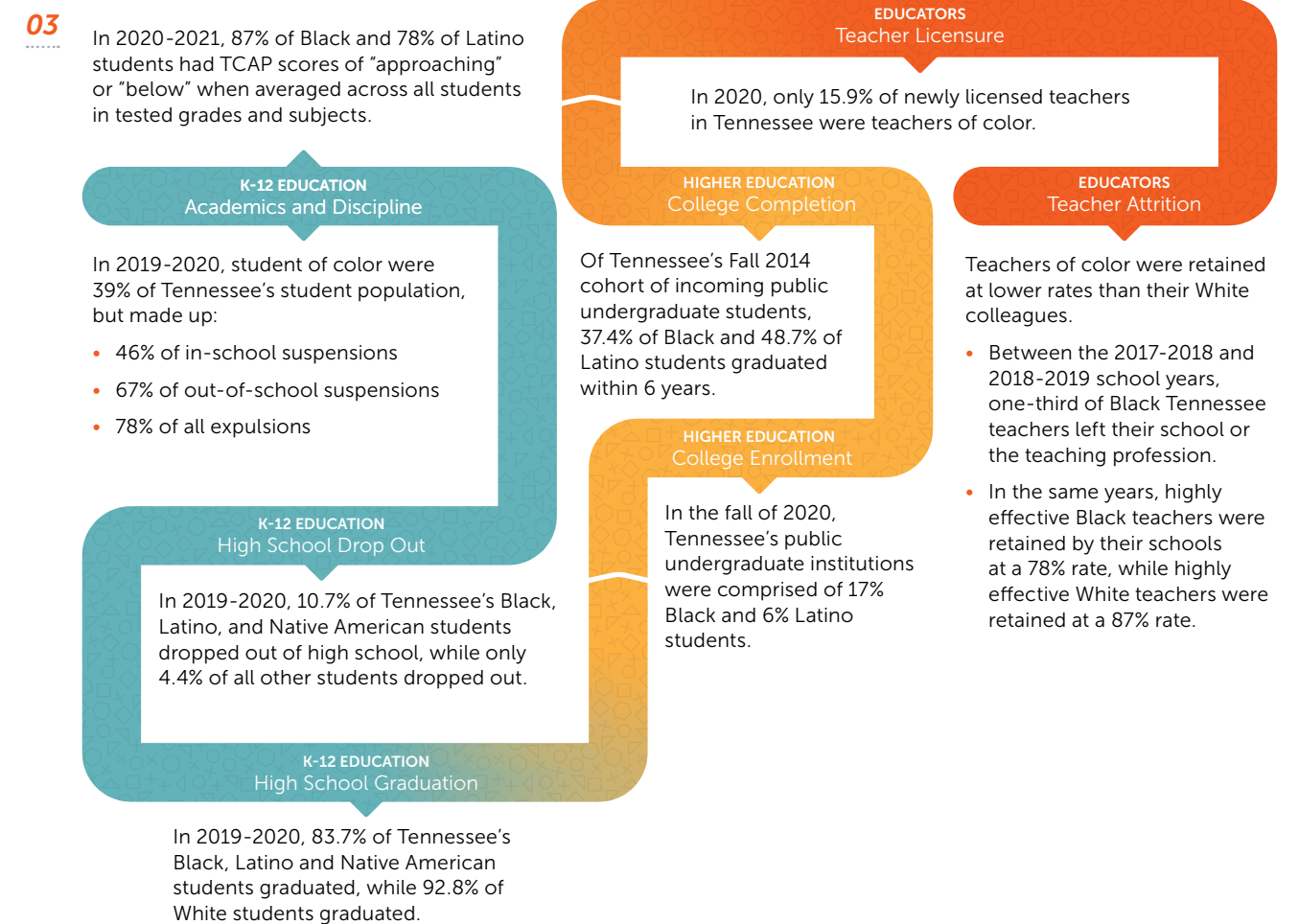
*“I have been the victim of racism, being an outcast, and my personal space and self being disrespected ... I want students that have the same experiences to understand that it is okay and they will triumph.”*

Research finds that students of color with access to teachers of color demonstrate improved social, behavioral, and academic outcomes. Teachers of color provide all students with representative role models and mentors,<sup>24</sup> helping students to engage with different perspectives and challenge assumptions about race.<sup>25</sup> Analysis of data from the Tennessee’s Student Teacher Achievement Ratio Project (STAR), an experiment funded by the Tennessee General Assembly and conducted by the Tennessee Department of Education<sup>26</sup> found that Black

elementary students with Black teachers had 3 to 6 percentile point higher reading and math scores. Those increases accumulated each year that students had a same-race teacher<sup>27</sup> and Black students with at least one Black teacher in grades K-3 were 13% more likely to graduate high school.<sup>28</sup>

These effects last beyond K-12 student experiences. Although college enrollment of students of color has increased in the past two decades,<sup>29</sup> a Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) report found that in 2021, Tennessee’s Latino and Black high school graduates were less likely than their White peers to enroll in college.<sup>30</sup> Additionally, across the country, students of color at higher education institutions are less likely to enroll in Education Preparation Providers (EPPs) than their White counterparts.<sup>31</sup> These compounding decreases result in cohorts of newly licensed teachers that do not reflect the demographics of the overall student population.

**Figure 3:** Tennessee loses potential teacher candidates of color all along the teacher pipeline, from discrepancy in K-12 outcomes to higher attrition rates in the classroom, ultimately leading to misrepresentation in the teacher population and disproportionately impacting students of color.<sup>32,33,34,35</sup>



According to the United States Department of Education, the vast majority of EPPs are traditional preparation providers, which offer undergraduate programs and attract individuals who enter college with the goal of becoming a teacher.<sup>31a</sup> Since traditional EPPs educate the vast majority of teachers and are visible to prospective teachers, improving the experiences of teacher licensure candidates of color at traditional EPPs across Tennessee will result in more well-trained teacher candidates of color for the state's students.

In 2018, Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance (TECA) conducted a study about the experiences of Tennessee teachers of color and found that EPPs were not preparing teachers with the skills they needed to have culturally competent conversations in schools.<sup>36</sup> In the spring of 2022, TECA, in collaboration with Teach Plus, launched the Ascension Project to equip teacher candidates of color at traditional EPPs with targeted skills and knowledge to prepare them to be effective teachers. As an extension of the work of the Ascension Project, The Education Trust in Tennessee partnered with TECA to understand the experiences of teacher candidates at EPPs across the state.

This report aims to provide stakeholders and policymakers, including the Tennessee General Assembly, the Tennessee State Board of Education, Tennessee Department of Education, and Tennessee Educator Preparation Providers, with viable solutions that support teacher candidates of color in EPPs, ultimately leading to a representative teacher population in Tennessee.

*“(I am proud to be bringing) my ethnicity (to the classroom) because I feel that there aren’t many teachers of color in school systems today. I feel that it is very important for students to be exposed to new faces as well as teachers of different ethnicities because it lets them know that they have support and (they have) people who are able to understand them.”*



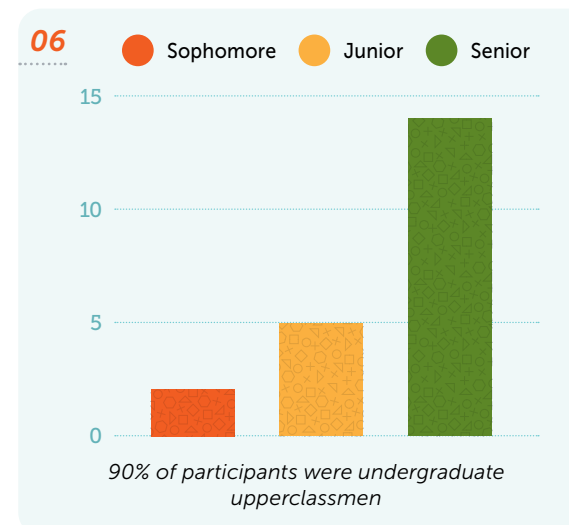
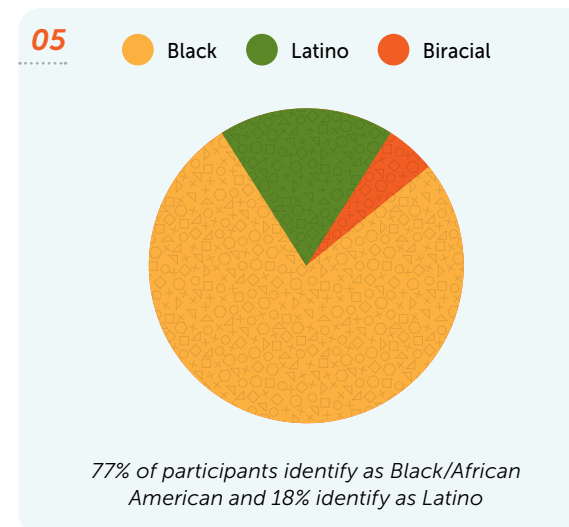
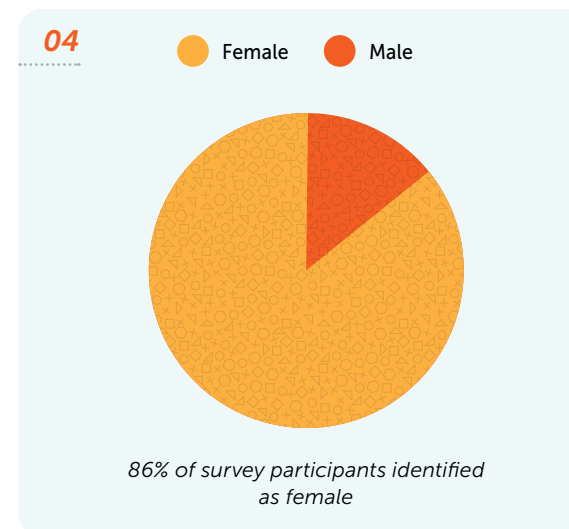
## Methodology

Teacher licensure candidates of color at EPPs across Tennessee were recruited to participate in focus group interviews. An invitation survey collected demographic information and initial reflections from 22 candidates of color. Of the survey respondents, 31% did not participate in a focus group. A sample of questions that guided the discussions are included below.

The scope of the analysis was limited to majority White traditional EPPs that had fewer than 40% teacher licensure candidates of color complete their program in 2021. The EPPs, located throughout Middle and East Tennessee, were composed of 5-36% candidates of color in their 2021 graduating cohort of newly licensed teachers.<sup>37</sup> The majority of candidates grew up across the state of Tennessee, and the majority aspire to teach in Tennessee following graduation.

Survey and verbal responses were compiled, organized, coded to identify the prevalence of common themes and ideas. Additional data was collected from the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury's Office of Research and Education Accountability (OREA), United States' Department of Education's Civil Rights Data Collection, and Tennessee State Board of Education (SBE) EPP Report Cards. Content analysis was derived from articles and policy on record from the Tennessee General Assembly and SBE websites.

A limitation of this study is that although the same recruitment method was for all regions of Tennessee, it was unsuccessful in recruiting teacher licensure candidates from West Tennessee. This is possibly due to a lack of availability near the end of the semester, and as a



result, there were no survey responses from candidates. This is unfortunate because Memphis houses multiple EPPs with graduating classes of almost 40% new teachers of color.

Figure 7: These questions guided the focus group interviews with teacher candidates of color.

07

## Focus Group Sample Questions

What classes or programs (i.e. mentorships, networking opportunities) did your program provide you that you felt were particularly meaningful? Conversely, what felt counter-productive?

To what extent do you feel supported in your racial/ethnic identity in your EPP? In your student teaching or practicum placements?

What is the most challenging part of being a teacher candidate of color?

## Key Findings

### Motivation for Entering the Educator Workforce

Teacher candidates of color feel their ethnic and racial identities are important assets they are bringing to the classroom as future teachers and role models for students.

- 100% of focus group participants are pursuing teaching in Tennessee because they are passionate about education and/or they appreciate the effect that a good teacher can have on students of all backgrounds.
- 90.5% of undergraduate teacher licensure candidates of color at Tennessee EPPs said that their racial identity was relevant or very relevant to how they view themselves as future teachers.
- **77.8% of survey respondents from Tennessee say it's very important to teach in a school with a diverse student and teacher body**

*“My students will be my children ... I have a deep desire to see my family happy and succeeding. I feel that ... will give me the drive to make sure all of my students succeed in learning.”*

### A Lack of Structured Support from EPPs

**87% of candidates mentioned feeling isolated and overlooked in classes, student teaching sites, or on campus.** This feeling was exacerbated by both White peers and/or professors.

For some, these feelings of isolation were compounded with feeling unsafe on campus or feeling trepidation when entering majority White spaces, not knowing if they would be welcome.

While **71.4% of survey respondents said they felt somewhat or very supported in their ethnic or racial identities in the EPPs, only 20% of focus group participants were able to identify examples of specific programs or opportunities for support provided by their EPPs based on their identity.** Their responses indicated that they defined support as the absence of aggressions, rather than the presence of interventions. Those that could identify supports recognized the **Pionero Scholars Program at Lipscomb University,<sup>38</sup> the Ascension Project,<sup>39</sup> and affinity spaces that were established by the candidates themselves.** 47% of participants identified faculty, generally faculty of color, as their primary sources of support at the EPPs.

*“As a future teacher of color, I feel that ... my professors and mentor teacher want to see me succeed and answer every question that I have about being an educator. [However], I do not relate to most of my [faculty] and my mentor teacher when it comes to race. They do not understand my experiences. They can only listen to stories or imagine.”*

One candidate, the only teacher candidate of color in their program, shared that it took three years to make a friend in their EPP because the students in their program did not talk to them for the first two years of the program. At least four students from different EPPs shared that they felt that their faculty and peers do not anticipate the success of Black students and visibly expressed surprise when a candidate of color was academically successful. Despite teacher candidates of color having valuable skills, identities, and perspectives that will help all students, these candidates had little to no exposure to being supported that made them feel valued, seen, or safe at their majority-White EPPs across Tennessee.

### What does support look like?

The most common form of support that students experienced at their EPPs was mentorship from faculty and mentor teachers that recognized the strengths and additional burdens carried by teacher candidates of color. Most often, the mentors that candidates mentioned were also people of color. However, candidates also brought up individual White faculty and mentor teachers that were understanding of bias, willing to learn, and acknowledged that racial disparities exist. Research finds that all mentorship, but particularly mentorship that takes race, gender, and ethnicity into account, is one of the most important factors in ensuring that students of color in higher education are successful in their careers.<sup>40</sup>

## Additional Hurdles: High Cost of Tuition and Loans

The costs associated with higher education were the major limiting factor for over 40% of focus group participants when they were choosing an EPP to attend. Rather than deciding to attend an EPP based on its resources, network, and learning, their choices were guided by financial constraints and available scholarships. Considering the extensive preparation that EPPs provide, it is concerning that many teacher candidates are not able to access EPPs that might provide them with a more inclusive or fulfilling experience.

*“I just feel overlooked a lot of the time. It honestly sucks when you fight so hard to stand out, even though you’re already standing out, and your work goes unnoticed or overlooked.”*

The experiences of focus group participants confirmed research that the high cost of college tuition and the low prospective income of educators are determinants for college students considering enrolling in EPPs. Additionally, students of color are more likely to report that student debt and loans limited their post-secondary education choices, relative to White peers, even when expecting the same amount of debt and post-graduation salary.<sup>41</sup>

## Additional Hurdles: Coursework

Candidates indicated that their most meaningful classes, covering topics such as classroom management, digital applications, and assessments, provide them with practical experience and skills. They felt that the least meaningful classes, however, were those that did not include a practical component, particularly when it came to working with diverse students. Rather, those classes are often heavy on video content and discussions about injustices, such as the Critical Race Theory debate, but fail to contemplate solutions for marginalized students. This is particularly detrimental to the **33% of the candidates who explicitly noted that they wanted to work in schools with diverse student bodies, but only had classroom teaching experience in majority White schools.**

*“The role of a teacher of color is addressed and admired on campus, [but we aren’t taught how to use] the fact that we are teachers of colors to better reach our students. For example, one of the classes we have to take is Cultural Perspectives but many students of color already understand the struggles students of color face on a daily basis. It would be more beneficial to have the students of color take a course that enriches their education techniques [or] teaching strategies we can use as teachers of color to help our students.”*

## Additional Hurdles: Licensure Exams

Candidates noted that having to retake licensure exams required to obtain a teaching license in Tennessee, over and over, was exhausting and expensive. While candidates can take either the edTPA or Praxis for their pedagogical exam requirements, candidates in our study primarily spoke about the burden of Praxis. Regardless of which exams candidates are taking, the cost of a first attempt can easily exceed \$300, and based on how candidates score, their retakes may cost just as much.<sup>42,43</sup> According to the EPP report card, most Tennessee candidates pass these exams within two attempts but pass rate data is not accessible on the EPP report card disaggregated by race. However, according to the National Council on Teacher Quality, 35% of Tennessee’s test takers of color pursuing elementary school licensure “walk away” after failing an exam the first time and do not make a second attempt.<sup>44</sup>

Testing requirements for educator licensure pose a disproportionately higher financial burden on teacher candidates of color. While there is no significant difference in pass rates between white teachers and teachers of color at the current edTPA pass score in Tennessee, across the country, Praxis exams are associated with racial disparities similar to other standardized tests.<sup>45</sup> Critics argue that these tests are not a good measure of future student achievement, nor do they account for the skills and strengths that diverse candidates bring to the classroom, but rather, focus on the strengths and knowledge base of White candidates.<sup>46</sup> One study using North Carolina data found that on average, Black teachers have more consistent success teaching minority students than White teachers and that correlation was greatest in magnitude for Black teachers at the lower end of passing Praxis II scores.<sup>47</sup> The study predicted that a Black teacher who failed the exam, but was near the cutoff, would have higher student achievement of underrepresented students in their classroom than a White teacher who meets the cutoff score.<sup>48</sup>

*“If I had known that I would have to pass two Praxis (exams), I wouldn’t have (pursued teaching).”*

For undergraduate teacher candidates in Tennessee, achieving passing scores on these exams often require for teacher candidates to be nominated for licensure by their EPPs,<sup>49</sup> often requiring candidates of color to take these tests numerous times in order to receive a qualifying score.<sup>50</sup> Candidates expressed that this can be demoralizing, stressful, and expensive.

**Figure 8:** This summative table of findings defines what candidates of color were able to identify as supportive and unsupportive experiences that they faced in their EPPs.

## From their experiences, what does support look and feel like for candidates of color?

### Supportive

#### MENTORSHIP

- Professors of color and veteran teachers of color in schools who help candidates grow in their identities
- White mentor teachers and professors that are understanding and willing to learn

#### COMMUNITY

- Feeling a sense of belonging and ownership in a space
- A strong program cohort that supports one another
- Having a support system
- Affinity groups, clubs or organizations formed around a shared identity, that candidates have sought out or created are some of the only spaces they feel supported

#### CURRICULUM AND PRACTICE

- Clear communication and guidance about teacher licensure requirements
- Targeted support for the EdTPA and Praxis
- Practicum or student teaching in a school that aligns with the demographics and/or age group that candidates hope to teach

### Unsupportive

#### BEING UNDERESTIMATED AND OVERLOOKED

- Faculty and peers in EPPs expect candidates of color to fail and do not help to address barriers to success
- Students and mentor teachers that assume teacher candidates are not smart
- Faculty and peers failing to acknowledge accomplishments of candidates of color

#### NEUTRAL OR DEFICIT APPROACHES TO RACE

- Professors or mentor teachers who use a colorblind approach
- Professors that express white guilt to candidates of color
- Professors that pick on candidates of color, particularly in conversations about any form of diversity
- Professors that are unsympathetic to challenges that candidates face

## Recommendations

### Tennessee General Assembly

The Tennessee General Assembly can increase the pool of highly qualified and effective, diverse teachers by supporting teacher licensure candidates of color. Legislation should:

- Propose in legislation and incorporate into the Governor's budget expanding the Minority Teaching fellowship to alleviate the financial burden of tuition;
- Propose in legislation and incorporate into the Governor's budget a fund or waiver program that alleviates financial burdens of licensure exams;
- Utilize existing state-level scholarship mechanisms or competitive grants to build cohorts that can provide fellowship and mentorship programs to combat isolation that candidates of color face in their programs

### Include Costs for Teacher Licensure into the Governor's Budget

In 2022, legislators from both parties proposed legislation to address the financial burdens of teacher licensure and certification. Ultimately, their efforts were unsuccessful, due to the high fiscal notes that were not accounted for in the Governor's budget. To counter this, these costs should be included and prioritized in the Governor's budget up front. According to the Sycamore Institute, Tennessee's tax revenue collections for fiscal year 2022 surpassed initial estimates for the entire year by June.<sup>51</sup> These earnings can be directly used to support students in Tennessee schools by allocating funds to support teacher candidates' tuition and licensure exams costs.

### Expand the Minority Teaching Fellowship

The financial and time costs of studying at an EPP are high, particularly because student teaching and internships are generally designed for full-time students without jobs.<sup>52</sup> **In the 2022 legislative session, Senator Jeff Yarbrow and Representative Sam McKenzie proposed a bill to expand the minority teaching fellowship<sup>53</sup> awards to cover the cost of tuition and fees at a public EPP, or \$5,000 of tuition and fees at a private EPP, for educator licensure candidates of color.<sup>54</sup>**

Expanding the minority teacher fellowship to support a greater number of educator candidates, and in a greater capacity, may recruit candidates of color that would otherwise be deterred by high tuition and time costs. However, as the fellowship currently stands, if a candidate does not complete the degree or is not employed at an eligible K-12 school, the award becomes a loan payable at a 9% interest rate.<sup>55</sup> Considering the unique challenges to licensure and certification that EPP candidates of color face, the high-interest loan caveat should be removed.



## Develop a Fund or Waiver Program to Reimburse Teacher Licensure Costs

**Representative Terri Lynn Weaver and Senator Rusty Crowe sponsored an unsuccessful bill that requires the Tennessee Department of Education to establish a fund for educator licensure reimbursements.**<sup>56,57</sup> This fund would reimburse the cost of licensing assessments if the candidate receives a qualifying score on the assessment and is currently an educator or an educator candidate that attains licensure. Since teacher candidates of color are disproportionately affected by the high cost of teacher licensure exams, this legislation would be a step in the right direction towards alleviating that burden.

## Utilize Existing Scholarship and Grant Mechanisms to Provide Candidates with Fellowship and Mentorship

Finally, mentorship has the ability to provide critical support for teacher candidates of color that feel isolated in their EPPs.<sup>58,59</sup> **Call Me MISTER (Mentors Instructing Students Toward Effective Role Models), founded at Clemson University and active at EPPs throughout the South, supports Black male teacher candidates with mentorship, peer support, and licensure exam preparation. Graduates of the program are expected to be new mentors and as of 2017, 100% of the program's nearly 150 participants remained in education.**<sup>60</sup>

The Tennessee General Assembly should pass legislation that directs mentorship initiatives through existing scholarship mechanisms and partnerships, competitive grants, or direct funding to establish mentorship programs. For example, the General Assembly could require the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC) to partner educator candidates that receive the minority teacher fellowship with alumni of the fellowship to build a supportive network, particularly for fellows and candidates that are racially isolated in their EPPs.

## Recommendations: Tennessee State Board (SBE) and Department of Education

The State Board of Education (SBE) and Department of Education (TDOE) can increase the pool of highly qualified and diverse teacher candidates by holding EPPs and school districts accountable to established standards and rules. The SBE and TDOE should collaborate to:

- Explicitly ask candidates about their EPP-provided exposure to and experience with diverse communities in the "Satisfaction" section of the annual EPP Report Card;
- Provide guidance to EPPs on multicultural curriculum opportunities;
- Incentivize Tennessee's EPPs to hire diverse faculty and adjunct faculty through revised standards and a revised EPP Report Card

## Use the EPP Report Card to Ensure that Teacher Candidates Are Being Prepared to Teach in Diverse Classrooms

Tennessee SBE approves EPPs in Tennessee in accordance with meeting the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) standards,<sup>61</sup> while TDOE convenes the Educator Preparation Working Group, which provides guidance on how EPPs can execute on the expected standards.<sup>62</sup> CAEP standards require EPPs to equip teacher candidates with the content and pedagogical knowledge "to work effectively with diverse P-12 students and their families." EPPs are required to "(ensure) effective partnerships and high-quality clinical practice...in different settings and modalities, as well as with diverse P-12 students, schools, families, and communities."<sup>63</sup>

As a result, both agencies play an important role in ensuring EPPs prioritize practical training and skill development in and for diverse communities. Research shows that educators of color most often teach in schools with increased diversity,<sup>64</sup> and 73% of surveyed teacher candidates of color expressed that it was very important for them to teach in diverse school environments. However, 46% of focus group participants shared that they did not feel like they were gaining practical experience serving diverse communities in their student teaching placements. Furthermore, teacher candidates, even juniors and seniors, mentioned having limited exposure to classroom placements. While this was due in part to COVID, classroom experience is critical in teacher preparation. Tennessee SBE and TDOE should hold EPPs accountable to preparing candidates to work with diverse communities by using the EPP report card to report candidate satisfaction in this particular area.

## Provide Guidance to EPPs on Practical, Skill-Based Multicultural Curriculum Opportunities

The candidates in the study did not indicate that they experienced valuable multicultural learning experiences in their universities. This is non-adherent to CAEP standards, which require EPPs to prepare teacher candidates with content and pedagogical knowledge to prepare them to work with diverse communities. TDOE and SBE should provide guidelines to EPPs on developing authentic, community-based elective courses and experiences to prepare future educators to critically engage with diversity and systems of privilege associated with linguisticism, immigration, racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, and more. These electives and experiences may take the form of ethnic studies or linguistic classes, but should teach candidates practical information that can be used in the classroom, perhaps through diverse field experience partnerships, service learning, and utilizing guest speakers from the community.<sup>65</sup> Through this, SBE and TDOE can ensure that EPPs are meeting CAEP standards.

## Incentivize EPPs to Hire Diverse Faculty and Adjunct Faculty

Just as diverse teachers are equipped to support students from diverse backgrounds, research indicates that EPPs with diverse faculty are better able to support their candidates of color<sup>66</sup>

**North Carolina's Developing a Representative and Inclusive Vision for Education (DRIVE) report calls on EPPs to combat structural racism by increasing the presence of diverse faculty and culturally responsive curricula.<sup>67</sup> Similarly, Oregon's Educator Equity Report encourages EPPs to hire bilingual and bicultural faculty to strengthen identities of diverse candidates and encourage all students to have an increased interest in language and culture.<sup>68</sup>**

In our focus groups, the few candidates who experienced consistently positive, targeted support received this interaction from their faculty of color who utilized informal mentorship approaches. To support these relationships, Tennessee SBE and TDOE should include demographic breakdowns of EPP faculty in the "About this Program" section of the annual EPP report card.

## Persist in Current Efforts

Finally, as a win in Tennessee, the SBE's Educator Diversity Policy 5.700 went into place in February of 2021 to prioritize increasing teacher diversity across the state. The policy requires districts to monitor local diversity data and their efforts to recruit and retain teachers of color, to propose specific goals for increases in diversity and strategies to meet them. Districts are required to share this information with the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE), but it is only encouraged to post their district diversity plans on their website.<sup>69</sup> While this was a bright spot in increasing teacher diversity, the policy's impact is unclear because there is no centrally accessible and common location to view the plans statewide.

## Bright Spot

In their July 2022 workshop, the Tennessee SBE discussed their drafted strategic goals for the 2022-2023 school year. One goal aspires to an annual 1% increase in racially diverse teacher candidates receiving initial licensure from Tennessee EPPs. This is five times more than the 0.21% average annual increase, from 2012 and 2021, of newly licensed teachers of color from EPPs in Tennessee.<sup>70</sup> This goal indicates a commitment to improving the experiences of teacher candidates of color. We are optimistic that these recommendations will help Tennessee EPPs meet that vision.



## Recommendations: Educator Preparation Providers

Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) can increase the pool of highly qualified and diverse teachers by recruiting and retaining diverse teacher licensure candidates. EPPs in Tennessee must:

- Empower candidates with skills and practical experience to work in diverse communities;
- Address isolation that teacher candidates of color face in their programs by establishing community, mentorship programs, and highlighting diverse, expert voices;
- Provide Praxis support via tutoring, labs, and scholarships
- Collaborate with other Educator Preparation Providers on best practices regarding recruitment, retainment, and improving experiences of teacher candidates of color

## Empower Candidates with Skills and Practical Experience to Work in Diverse Communities

In this study, 46% of focus group participants shared that they did not feel like they gained practical experience serving diverse communities in their student teaching placements, despite the fact that the majority of candidates hoped to teach in diverse schools. Additionally, candidates did not feel that their multicultural learning experiences in their universities

were valuable. To effectively meet the standards required by the Tennessee State Board of Education (SBE),<sup>71</sup> EPPs must equip teacher candidates with the content and pedagogical knowledge and experience necessary to work in diverse K-12 communities.

EPPs must develop authentic, community-based elective courses and experiences to prepare future educators to critically engage with diversity and systems of privilege. These may take the form of ethnic studies or linguistic classes, additional field experiences, service learning, and utilizing guest speakers from the community.<sup>72</sup> To provide candidates with experience working in diverse communities, EPPs near predominantly white districts must build relationships with schools that have more diverse student populations, and support candidates in traveling to these schools for their internships and practicum experiences. Additionally, EPPs should work with districts to partner teacher candidates of color with mentor teachers of color. If this is not possible, mentor teachers should at least be provided with cultural sensitivity training and guidance on how to support teacher candidates of color.

## Establish Community and Mentorship Programs for Teacher Candidates of Color

87% of candidates, at some point, indicated that they felt isolated in their programs. EPPs are uniquely positioned to address the isolation and lack of community that candidates of color experience face. Candidates identified bright spots where they found support through the Pionero Scholars Program at Lipscomb University, the Ascension Project, and affinity spaces that were established by the candidates themselves. **The Pionero program is a Grow Your Own program aspiring to increase the diversity of Nashville teachers and provide its diverse students with a scholarship, professional development and networking, mentorship, and community to navigate the college experience. This program encourages candidates to find value and strength in the diverse experiences that they can bring to classrooms and students; their experiential knowledge, passion, and dedication to their communities is acknowledged and celebrated.**<sup>73</sup>

The Ascension Project, started in spring of 2022 by TECA, supports candidates of color throughout Middle Tennessee by equipping candidates of color with policy knowledge and support in securing jobs post-graduation.<sup>74</sup> **Finally, candidates from Austin Peay State University formed their own affinity group to support each other on campus. EPPs must prioritize the unique needs of candidates of color by connecting them with each other and with external resources to build community.**

EPPs must take steps to help candidates of color establish community. Upon entrance to the program, EPPs can establish the norm of inviting all students to participate in affinity groups to create safe, supportive, and professional development spaces for candidates. Furthermore, mentorship in higher education has been found to have strong positive effects on the experiences of college students and faculty,<sup>75</sup> and EPPs should work towards establishing mentorship programs, even if they start with just two participants—one mentor and one mentee.

These mentorships can take place between EPP students from different years, students and faculty, and/or students and alumni.

## Highlight Diverse Expert Voices

Additionally, to combat isolation of candidates of color, EPPs should leverage their alumni networks as a method of retaining diverse expert experiences. **One example of this done well in teacher preparation is through the vast network of Teach for America, which uses intentional programming to provide candidates with meaningful mentorships and relationships.**<sup>76</sup>

*“I feel supported but honestly sometimes it feels more like white guilt than support.”*

Alumni can support current candidates as adjunct faculty, guest speakers, guest lecturers, and experts on panels. This can help to bring authentic experiences of people of color into EPPs for all students to learn from. Having diverse voices is proven to impact how diversity is taught in EPPs. An analysis of 416 early childhood teacher preparation programs found that the more diverse the full-time faculty, the more likely the coursework would focus on working with children and families from culturally diverse backgrounds.<sup>77</sup> With this in mind, EPPs should also provide incentives for current faculty to interact with local communities and schools to better understand the communities their candidates are striving to serve. **Ball State University has established sustained engagement with a number of local, diverse community groups to help facilitate relationships between a majority White faculty and the more diverse Muncie, Indiana community.**<sup>78</sup>

## Provide Licensure Assessment Support via Tutoring, Labs, and Scholarships

Exam requirements for licensure are documented barriers to licensure for candidates of color, with disproportionately high fail rates for candidates of color, ultimately creating a barrier to accessing the profession.<sup>79</sup> To address this, EPPs should provide candidates with support in preparing for licensure assessment by providing candidates with interactive checklists or structured work time, or incentivizing faculty to take relevant licensure exams to promote course alignment. One focus group participant shared that **Tennessee State University (TSU) has a Praxis lab that helps teacher candidates prepare for their Praxis exams and edTPAs. These labs are supervised by graduate students from diverse backgrounds that utilize these labs as opportunities to check in on candidates' journeys. For this candidate, these labs informally became hubs of community and mentorship, as well as academic support as they prepared for their Praxis exam.**

## Collaborate with other Educator Preparation Providers on Best Practices

Finally, EPPs across the country have seen a decade-long decline in college students pursuing education majors.<sup>80</sup> As the K-12 student population in the United States of America diversifies, it is critical for the field of education that these students see education as a prospective path. EPPs are well positioned to begin addressing this daunting task by ensuring that teacher candidates of color are supported, accepted, and prepared to teach in Tennessee schools. In order to improve, Tennessee EPPs must collaborate on best practices regarding recruitment, retainment, and improving experiences of teacher candidates of color. This is an opportunity for EPPs to convene amongst themselves specifically to address diversity in their schools. Alternatively, there is a window for organizations dedicated to EPP improvement, such as Tennessee Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (TACTE), to mobilize EPPs on developing inclusive communities.

## Conclusion

As of 2021, the Tennessee public school student population was three times as diverse as its teacher population. Not only are teachers of color crucial for positive student academic and social outcomes,<sup>81</sup> but they are critical to the future of Tennessee schools. In 2021, 40% of Tennessee public school students were students of color, continuing the consistent growth of this population. In contrast, only 15.9% of newly licensed teachers in 2021 were teachers of color. With a looming increased deficit of teachers on the horizon,<sup>82</sup> we must collectively find ways to encourage students in Tennessee schools to consider careers in education. It is evident that Tennessee must invest in recruiting and retaining more teachers of color through their largest Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs), the traditional EPPs housed in universities across the state.

Focus groups with teacher candidates of color at majority-White EPPs in Middle and East Tennessee indicated a need for financial support, social networking, and a robust curriculum. By utilizing the recommendations provided, Tennessee can create more inclusive and more diverse traditional EPP experiences for candidates, creating avenues that support retention and future recruitment.

## Recommendations for the Tennessee General Assembly

- Propose in legislation and incorporate into the Governor's budget expanding the Minority Teaching fellowship to alleviate the financial burden of tuition;
- Propose in legislation and incorporate into the Governor's budget a fund or waiver program that alleviates financial burdens of licensure exams;
- Utilize existing state-level scholarship mechanisms or competitive grants to build cohorts that can provide fellowship and mentorship programs to combat isolation that candidates of color face in their programs

## Recommendations for the Tennessee State Board of Education

- Explicitly ask candidates in the "Satisfaction" section of the annual EPP Report Card about their EPP-provided exposure to and experience with diverse communities;
- Provide guidance to EPPs on multicultural curriculum opportunities;
- Incentivize Tennessee's EPPs to hire diverse faculty and adjunct faculty through revised standards and a revised EPP Report Card

## Recommendations for Educator Preparation Providers

- Empower candidates with skills and practical experience to work in diverse communities;
- Address isolation that teacher candidates of color face in their programs by establishing community, mentorship programs, and highlighting diverse, expert voices;
- Provide licensure assessment support via tutoring, labs, and scholarships
- Collaborate with other Educator Preparation Providers on best practices regarding recruitment, retainment, and improving experiences of teacher candidates of color

## Acknowledgements

A special thanks goes to all the survey participants that vulnerably shared their experiences to contribute to this project. The responses of one focus group participant was excluded from our analysis to maintain scope, but her insight was nonetheless moving. Additional thanks goes to deans at EPPs across the state who worked to put us in contact with their candidates of color to uplift their voices and needs. Finally, thank you to Dr. Diarese George at TECA and Breanna Sommers, the The Education Trust in Tennessee team, and all the partners who provided feedback for their passion, dedication, and support throughout this process.

# Endnotes

- Collins, E., & Schaaf, K. (2020). Teacher retention in Tennessee. Tennessee Department of Education.
- Collins, E., & Schaaf, K. (2020). Teacher retention in Tennessee. Tennessee Department of Education.
- (2021). K-12 Dashboard. Retrieved from <https://comptroller.tn.gov/office-functions/research-and-education-accountability/interactive-tools/k-12-dashboard.html>
- Learning Policy Institute. (2018). *Diversifying the teaching profession: How to recruit and retain teachers of color*. Palo Alto, CA: Carver-Thomas, D.
- Morgan, H. (2019). The Lack of Minority Students in Gifted Education: Hiring More Exemplary Teachers of Color Can Alleviate the Problem. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues, and Ideas*, 92(4-5), 156-162. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00098655.2019.1645635>
- The Education Trust. (2022). P-12 Policy, Research, and Practice. Retrieved June 8, 2022, from <https://edtrust.org/what-we-do/p-12/>
- The Education Trust. (2022, April 18). Educator equity & diversity. Retrieved June 8, 2022, from <https://edtrust.org/issue/educator-equity-diversity/>
- Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance. Welcome to Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance. Retrieved July 20, 2022, from <https://teca-network-membership.mn.co/>
- The Education Trust. (2020, December 2). Educator Diversity State Profile: TENNESSEE. Retrieved July 20, 2022, from <https://edtrust.org/resource/educator-diversity-state-profile-tennessee/>
- (2022). U.S. Schools Report Increased Teacher Vacancies Due to COVID-19 Pandemic, New NCES Data Show. Retrieved from [https://nces.ed.gov/whatsnew/press\\_releases/3\\_3\\_2022.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/whatsnew/press_releases/3_3_2022.asp)
- Long Term Occupational Projections Retrieved from [https://projectionscentral.org/Projections/LongTerm?AreaName=Tennessee&AreaNameSelect%5B%5D=47&Name=elementary&NameSelect%5B%5D=689&items\\_per\\_page=10](https://projectionscentral.org/Projections/LongTerm?AreaName=Tennessee&AreaNameSelect%5B%5D=47&Name=elementary&NameSelect%5B%5D=689&items_per_page=10)
- Learning Policy Institute. (2021). How can states and districts use federal recovery funds strategically? Supporting the educator pipeline.
- Collins, E., & Schaaf, K. (2020). Teacher retention in Tennessee. Tennessee Department of Education.
- Collins, E., & Schaaf, K. (2020). Teacher retention in Tennessee. Tennessee Department of Education.
- Educator Preparation Report Card. (2021). <https://teacherprepreportcard.tn.gov/about>
- (2021). K-12 Dashboard. Retrieved from <https://comptroller.tn.gov/office-functions/research-and-education-accountability/interactive-tools/k-12-dashboard.html>
- Li, G., Sah, P. K. (2020). Critical Pedagogy for Preservice Teacher Education in the US: An Agenda for a Plurilingual Reality of Superdiversity. In B. Down, S. R. Steinberg (Eds.), *The sage handbook of critical pedagogies* (pp.884-898). United Kingdom: Sage Publications.
- (2021). K-12 Dashboard. Retrieved from <https://comptroller.tn.gov/office-functions/research-and-education-accountability/interactive-tools/k-12-dashboard.html>
- (2021). K-12 Dashboard. Retrieved from <https://comptroller.tn.gov/office-functions/research-and-education-accountability/interactive-tools/k-12-dashboard.html>
- Archived Educator Prep Report Cards. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.tn.gov/sbe/committees-and-initiatives/teacher-preparation-report-card/archived-teacher-preparation-report-cards.html>
- Mangrum, Meghan. (2022, Jul 11). Despite progress, gaps widen between students who are — and aren't — reading on grade level. *Tennessean*. <https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/education/2022/07/12/more-tennessee-students-reading-below-grade-level-year/7747730001/>
- Chalkbeat Staff. (2022). 'Age-appropriate' books, history, and CRT: What you need to know about the Tennessee curriculum debate. Retrieved July 10, 2022, from <https://tn.chalkbeat.org/2022/5/5/23048778/critical-race-theory-age-appropriate-books-history-tennessee-schools-curriculum>
- West, S. (2022). Tennessee students: CRT laws promote bias in school, hurt mental health. Retrieved July 10, 2022, from <https://tn.chalkbeat.org/2022/4/1/23004966/tennessee-schools-critical-race-theory-culture-wars-mental-health-memphis-nashville-knoxville>
- Digital Promise. (2020). Pipeline and Retention of Teachers of Color: Systems and Structures Impeding Growth and Sustainability in the United States. Washington DC: Nguyen, M., Gold, T.
- Center for American Progress. (2017). Revisiting the Persistent Teacher Diversity Problem. Brown, C., Boser, U.
- C.M. Achilles; Helen Pate Bain; Fred Bellott; Jayne Boyd-Zaharias; Jeremy Finn; John Folger; John Johnston; Elizabeth Word, 2008, "Tennessee's Student Teacher Achievement Ratio (STAR) project", <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/SIWH9F>, Harvard Dataverse, V1, UNF:3:Ji2Q+9HCCZAbw3csOdMNdA== [fileUNF]
- Intercultural Development Research Association and Learning Policy Institute. (2017). *Diversifying the Field: Barriers to Recruiting and Retaining Teachers of Color and How to Overcome Them*. San Antonio and Palo Alto: Carver-Thomas, D.
- Gershenson, S., Hart, C.M.D, Hyman, J., Lindsay, C., & Papageorge, N.W. (2021). The Long-Run Impacts of Same-Race Teachers. *National Bureau of Economic Research*. <https://doi.org/10.3386/w25254>
- Learning Policy Institute. (2018). *Diversifying the teaching profession: How to recruit and retain teachers of color*. Palo Alto, CA: Carver-Thomas, D.
- Tennessee Higher Education Commission & Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation. (2022). *College Going and the Class of 2021*. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/thec/bureau/research/college-going-reports/CGR-HSSO%20Report%20Draft\\_Final.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/thec/bureau/research/college-going-reports/CGR-HSSO%20Report%20Draft_Final.pdf)
- Learning Policy Institute. (2018). *Diversifying the teaching profession: How to recruit and retain teachers of color*. Palo Alto, CA: Carver-Thomas, D.
- Tennessee Alliance for Equity in Education and The Education Trust. (2022). *TN25: Mapping Our Future Together*.
- TN Department of Education. (n.d.) Data Downloads and Requests. Retrieved from <https://www.tn.gov/education/data/data-downloads.html>
- State of Tennessee Overall Performance. (2021). <https://teacherprepreportcard.tn.gov/state/TN/overview>
- Collins, E., & Schaaf, K. (2020). Teacher retention in Tennessee. Tennessee Department of Education.
- Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance. (2018). *Sharing Our Stories: Perspectives from Teachers of Color in Tennessee*. Nashville, TN: Dammu, I.
- State of Tennessee Overall Performance. (2021). Retrieved from <https://teacherprepreportcard.tn.gov/state/TN/overview>
- Pionero Scholars Program. (2022). Retrieved from <https://www.lipscomb.edu/education/academic-programs/pionero-scholars-program>
- Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance Launches Ascension Project in Partnership with Teach Plus. (2022). Retrieved from <https://www.tneca.org/blog/tennessee-educators-of-color-alliance-launches-ascension-project-in-partnership-with-teach-plus>
- Stanley, C. A. (2015). *Modeling mentoring across race/ethnicity and gender: Practices to cultivate the next generation of diverse faculty*. Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Intercultural Development Research Association and Learning Policy Institute. (2017). *Diversifying the Field: Barriers to Recruiting and Retaining Teachers of Color and How to Overcome Them*. San Antonio and Palo Alto: Carver-Thomas, D.
- ETS. (2022). Praxis: Tennessee: Test Requirements. Retrieved from <https://www.ets.org/praxis/tn/requirements/>
- ETS. (2022). Praxis Fees (For Test Takers). Retrieved from <https://www.ets.org/praxis/register/fees/>
- Tennessee State Board of Education. (2021). Candidate Assessment. State of Tennessee. <https://teacherprepreportcard.tn.gov/state/TN/candidate-assessment>
- Sleeter, C. E. (2017). Critical race theory and the whiteness of teacher education. *Urban Education*, 52(2), 155-169. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916668957>
- Sleeter, C. E. (2017). Critical race theory and the whiteness of teacher education. *Urban Education*, 52(2), 155-169. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916668957>
- Goldhaber, D., & Hansen, M. (2010). Race, Gender, and Teacher Testing: How Informative a Tool Is Teacher Licensure Testing? *American Educational Research Journal*, 47(1), 218–251. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831209348970>
- Goldhaber, D., & Hansen, M. (2010). Race, Gender, and Teacher Testing: How Informative a Tool Is Teacher Licensure Testing? *American Educational Research Journal*, 47(1), 218–251. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831209348970>
- Educator Preparation. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.tn.gov/education/licensing/educator-preparation.html>
- Sleeter, C. E. (2017). Critical race theory and the whiteness of teacher education. *Urban Education*, 52(2), 155-169. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916668957>
- Pellegrin, M. (2022). Tennessee Tax Revenue Tracker for FY 2022. The Sycamore Institute. <https://www.sycamoreinstitutenet.org/2022-tax-revenue-tracker/>
- Sleeter, C. E. (2017). Critical race theory and the whiteness of teacher education. *Urban Education*, 52(2), 155-169. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916668957>
- Minority teaching fellows program, Publ. L. No. 49-4, 706. (2020). <https://casetext.com/statute/tennessee-code/title-49-education/chapter-4-financial-aid/part-7-miscellaneous-scholarship-and-loan-programs/section-49-4-706-effective-712022-minority-teaching-fellows-program>
- Tennessee General Assembly. (n.d.) <https://wapp.capitol.tn.gov/apps/BillInfo/Default.aspx?BillNumber=SB2041>
- Minority teaching fellows program, Publ. L. No. 49-4, 706. (2020). <https://casetext.com/statute/tennessee-code/title-49-education/chapter-4-financial-aid/part-7-miscellaneous-scholarship-and-loan-programs/section-49-4-706-effective-712022-minority-teaching-fellows-program>
- Ten for Tennessee. (2022). The Education Trust. Retrieved from <https://edtrust.org/tennessee/ten-for-tennessee/>
- Tennessee General Assembly. (n.d.) <https://wapp.capitol.tn.gov/apps/BillInfo/Default.aspx?BillNumber=HB1900>
- Alliance for Resource Equity. (2021). *Resource Equity Guidebook: Teaching Quality and Diversity*.
- Alliance for Resource Equity. (2021). *Resource Equity Guidebook: Teaching Quality and Diversity*.
- Learning Policy Institute. (2018). *Diversifying the teaching profession: How to recruit and retain teachers of color*. Palo Alto, CA: Carver-Thomas, D.
- Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) Approval. (n.d.) Retrieved from <https://www.tn.gov/education/licensing/educator-preparation/educator-preparation-provider-approval.html>
- Tennessee Department of Education and The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) Partnership Agreement. (2020). <https://caepnet.org/working-together/~media/Files/caep/state-partners/tn-partnership-agreement-unsigned.pdf?la=en>
- 2022 Initial Level Standards. (2022). <http://caepnet.org/~media/Files/caep/standards/2022-initial-standards-1-pager-final.pdf?la=en>
- Intercultural Development Research Association and Learning Policy Institute. (2017). *Diversifying the Field: Barriers to Recruiting and Retaining Teachers of Color and How to Overcome Them*. San Antonio and Palo Alto: Carver-Thomas, D.
- Li, G., Sah, P. K. (2020). Critical Pedagogy for Preservice Teacher Education in the US: An Agenda for a Plurilingual Reality of Superdiversity. In B. Down, S. R. Steinberg (Eds.), *The sage handbook of critical pedagogies* (pp.884-898). United Kingdom: Sage Publications

- 66 Monto, C. (2019): Increasing Diversity in Teacher Candidates: An Oregon Model Using a Community College Pathway into Teacher Education, *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10668926.2019.1640144>
- 67 The Hunt Institute. (2021). Developing a Representative and Inclusive Vision for Education. <https://hunt-institute.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/HI-DRIVE-Final-Report.pdf>
- 68 Monto, C. (2019): Increasing Diversity in Teacher Candidates: An Oregon Model Using a Community College Pathway into Teacher Education, *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10668926.2019.1640144>
- 69 Tennessee State Board of Education. (2021). Educator Diversity Policy 5.700. <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/2021-sbe-meetings/february-5%2C-2021-sbe-meeting/2-5-21%20II%20A%20Educator%20Diversity%20Policy%205.700%20Cover%20Sheet.pdf>
- 70 Archived Educator Prep Report Cards. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.tn.gov/sbe/committees-and-initiatives/teacher-preparation-report-card/archived-teacher-preparation-report-cards.html>
- 71 Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) Approval. (n.d.) Retrieved from <https://www.tn.gov/education/licensing/educator-preparation/educator-preparation-provider-approval.html>
- 72 Li, G., Sah, P. K. (2020). Critical Pedagogy for Preservice Teacher Education in the US: An Agenda for a Plurilingual Reality of Superdiversity. In B. Down, S. R. Steinberg (Eds.), *The sage handbook of critical pedagogies* (pp.884-898). United Kingdom: Sage Publications
- 73 Shoun-Smith, J. (2020). Pionero program works to bridge the culture gap between students and teachers. Lipscomb University. Retrieved from: <https://www.lipscomb.edu/news/pionero-program-works-bridge-culture-gap-between-students-and-teachers>
- 74 Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance Launches Ascension Project in Partnership with Teach Plus. (2022). Retrieved from <https://www.tneca.org/blog/tennessee-educators-of-color-alliance-launches-ascension-project-in-partnership-with-teach-plus>
- 75 Monto, C. (2019): Increasing Diversity in Teacher Candidates: An Oregon Model Using a Community College Pathway into Teacher Education, *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10668926.2019.1640144>
- 76 Brenna, S. (2018, October). How to Get the Most from Your Mentor. *One Day*. <https://www.teachforamerica.org/one-day/magazine/how-to-get-the-most-from-your-mentor>
- 77 Sleeter, C. E. (2017). Critical race theory and the whiteness of teacher education. *Urban Education*, 52(2), 155-169. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916668957>
- 78 Sleeter, C. E. (2017). Critical race theory and the whiteness of teacher education. *Urban Education*, 52(2), 155-169. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916668957>
- 79 Learning Policy Institute. (2018). Diversifying the teaching profession: How to recruit and retain teachers of color. Palo Alto, CA: Carver-Thomas, D.
- 80 American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. (2022). AACTE's National Portrait Sounds the Alarm on Declining Interest in Education Careers. AACTE Research, Reports, and Briefs. <https://aacte.org/2022/03/aactes-national-portrait-sounds-the-alarm-on-declining-interest-in-education-careers/>
- 81 Learning Policy Institute. (2018). Diversifying the teaching profession: How to recruit and retain teachers of color. Palo Alto, CA: Carver-Thomas, D.
- 82 Long Term Occupational Projections Retrieved from [https://projectionscentral.org/Projections/LongTerm?AreaName=Tennessee&AreaNameSelect%5B%5D=47&Name=elementary&NameSelect%5B%5D=689&items\\_per\\_page=10](https://projectionscentral.org/Projections/LongTerm?AreaName=Tennessee&AreaNameSelect%5B%5D=47&Name=elementary&NameSelect%5B%5D=689&items_per_page=10)

## Join Our Mailing List

Stay up to date with The Education Trust in Tennessee, upcoming events and more.

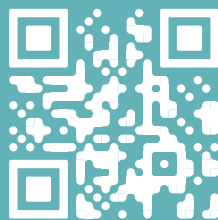




**The Education Trust**  
IN TENNESSEE

**TECA**

TENNESSEE EDUCATORS *of* COLOR ALLIANCE



VISIT [edtrust.org/tennessee](https://edtrust.org/tennessee)