

2020

## Perceptions of African American Males on Teaching in Elementary Schools

Reggie Wicker  
*Walden University*

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# Walden University

College of Education

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Reggie Wicker

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Review Committee

Dr. Shelly Arneson, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty

Dr. Peter Kiriakidis, Committee Member, Education Faculty

Dr. Narjis Hyder, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost  
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University  
2020

Abstract

Perceptions of African American Males on Teaching in Elementary Schools

by

Reggie Wicker

MA, University of Scranton, 2006

BS, Newberry College, 2004

Doctoral Study Final Oral Presentation in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

April 2020

## Abstract

There is a shortage of African American males teaching in primarily minority student population elementary schools. Understanding why the current African American male teachers accepted positions in schools will provide insight into what attracted them to the school systems and the pros and cons for retention. The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of African American male teachers on the challenges and benefits of teaching at a predominately minority elementary school, and to ascertain strategies for recruiting and retaining African American male teachers in the profession. These views and strategies can help gain perspectives on attracting more African American male teachers. The conceptual frameworks for this study was based on Vroom's expectancy theory and Ladson-Billings' culturally relevant pedagogy theory. The research questions center on how African American male teachers describe the challenges and benefits of teaching, and strategies for retention and recruitment at a predominately minority school. Using a qualitative case study design, interviews were conducted to better understand the perceptions of 9 African American male teachers. The data analysis process consisted of multiple steps in the analysis of the interviews and archival data. The audio and notes were transcribed, and the information compared and corrected for accuracy of thought. Next, coding was conducted, grouped into specific categories, and then analyzed for concepts and themes. Results showed that African American male teachers need to be recruited, mentored, empowered and retained to support minority students' learning. African American male teachers need to be a part of the decision-making process.

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## Dedication

I dedicate this work to my daughter, Myesha Wicker for showing unconditional love and support to me. To my two grandsons, Chayce Cohen and Cyrie Cohen for making me the proudest grandfather on planet Earth. It is my prayer that both of you will grow up to be educated, strong, well respected black males who make positive contributions to your community, state and country. “When you can do the common things in life in an uncommon way, you will command the attention of the world.” – George Washington Carver. Chayce and Cyrie, never settle for common to be good enough. Lastly, I dedicate this work to my best friend and partner for life Eric L. Jeffcoat. Thank you for being there with me and for me through the ups and downs. Thank you for refusing to give up. You are valued and appreciated more than you could ever imagine.

## Acknowledgments

First, I would like to acknowledge and give honor to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for providing me the wisdom, health and strength to undertake this research task and enabling me to its completion.

Secondly, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my Committee Chair, Dr. Shelly Arneson and Methodologist, Dr. Peter Kiriakidis for the continuous support of my doctorate study and related research. I would like to especially acknowledge your patience, motivation and immense knowledge you have provided me along the way.

My sincere thanks go to Mr. Jim Suber, Dr. Beth Brooks and Dr. Carson Ware from the School District of Newberry County for allowing me the opportunity to complete my research within the District and for your continuous support throughout the journey.

Thank you to Dr. Carolyn Hunter Rogers for the countless hours of collaboration and professional advice you provided me over the course of the program.

It would be remised of me not to acknowledge several of my elementary school teachers who loved me and refused to let me be another negative statistic. I will forever love and cherish each of them: Mrs. Marietta Steed, Mrs. Carol Dukes, Mrs. Charlsie Doolittle, Mrs. Jane Graham, Mrs. Raye Boyd, and Mrs. Lunelle Harmon.

Last, but certainly not least, thank you to my best friend and partner for life, Mr. Eric L. Jeffcoat. Thank you for always being supportive and encouraging me through this entire experience. I share this degree with you!

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## Section 1: The Problem

The demographics in America's public schools are changing (Boswell, 2010; National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). Minority students are now outnumbering White students, but minorities in the teaching profession have not kept pace. Waddell (2010) reported that of the 3,152,000 elementary and middle school teachers, only 19.3% are males; 10.8% are African Americans, 2.5% Asian, and 8.5% Latino. Waddell further indicated that African American teachers make up only 10.8% males and females, 1.81% are African American male teachers (Waddell, 2010).

The statistics demonstrate a dire need for African American teachers in the classrooms throughout the nation. Specifically, there is an absence of African American males teaching in elementary schools (McClain, 2016). The shortage of African American male teachers links to many possible issues. Some possible factors contributing to this problem could be low salaries, negative perceptions of male teachers in the elementary setting, one that was once exclusively a female, nurturing environment, and male teachers having to serve in the role of disciplinarian (Egalite, Kisida, & Winters, 2015; Nicolas, 2014). Often male teachers were recruited to middle and high schools, where they could organize and participate in athletic programs (McClain, 2016). At the elementary level, male teachers tend not to be the focus for recruitment.

### **The Local Problem**

In South Carolina, the perceptions of educators on student failure in schools have been evaluated from multiple perspectives (Jacques & Fireside, 2016). However, the opinions specific to African American male teachers remain under-investigated. Specifically, little is known about the reasons for the difficulties in recruiting and retaining male teachers in

underserved schools. The current study sought to examine African American males' perceptions in ABC school district about the lack of diversity among the teachers in their schools serving a primarily minority elementary student population.

### **Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level**

At ABC school district, there is a lack of diversity among the teachers that serve a primarily minority elementary student population. Although this district has hired more African American teachers in the last 10 years, there remains a relatively low number of African American male teachers in a district of approximately 11,500 elementary students in grades K-5 with 928 teachers, of which only 139 are African American (National Children & Education Statistics, 2017). The problem exists because little is known as to what attracts African American male teachers to this district and why they choose to stay.

According to the ABC human resources officer (personal communication, April 2, 2018), there is a diversity gap between students and teachers which tends to be wider at the elementary level with high percentages of minority students. Many experts believe minority students' achievement outcomes suffer because of this disparity that could be a factor for the gap between the White teacher and minority student (Howard & Milner, 2014). The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of African American male teachers on the challenges and benefits of teaching at a predominately minority elementary school, and to ascertain strategies for recruiting and retaining African American male teachers in the profession.

### **Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature**

American public schools reflect student diversity, but few school districts provide data to support the make-up of teachers based on race and gender (Howard & Milner, 2014). Despite research and literature that support the need for African American male teachers, most school

districts are still overwhelmingly filled with White female teachers (Milner, Pearman, & McGee, 2013). Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in North Carolina showed the majority of students at low poverty schools were White, compared to the majority of students at high poverty schools were African American and Hispanic and predominately taught by White teachers (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, 2018).

The U.S. Department of Education (2018) utilized data from the National Center for Education Statistics to create the annual Condition of Education 2018 report for the United States. The elementary and secondary enrollment provided current and projected information that indicated an increase by 3% of the PK-12 student population between fall 2015 and fall 2027 (from 50.4 million to 52.1 million students). The teacher population in the fall of 2015 was 3.8 million divided evenly between elementary and secondary. Approximately, 77% of the teachers were female and 23% were male, or which 11% were male teachers at the elementary school level compared to 36% at the secondary school level (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). While Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (2018) leaders have examined the data from the “Breaking the Link” data that demonstrates a need for greater diversity, the racial composite of the minority teachers is still not reflective of the minority students shift. By 2050, approximately half of the school-age population in America will be minority (National Education Association, 2017). The question still remains regarding the percentage of teachers of color and, more specifically, African American male teachers available to serve the changing demographics of students in public education. The challenge of locating African American male teachers is heightened in hard-to-staff schools when school leaders add highly qualified as a criterion for teachers, particularly those that serve poor, minority and lower achieving students (Jackson, 2014). The proportion of inexperienced and underprepared teachers and higher attrition rates



tend to be in schools with a high failure rate (Kreassig, 2018). Quality teachers tend to follow effective school leaders with likeminded, supportive colleagues with the knowledge and skills necessary to teach so students can learn (Bryan & Ford, 2014). With the national shortage of African American male teachers, students in particular demographic groups which are historically underachieving will approach success when they are served, led and mentored by teachers that are most like them (Hawkins, 2015).

### **Rationale**

The continual failure of children of color warrants the actions of educators at all levels to investigate options for increasing the achievement for all children, particularly children of color. Minority children throughout the nation are failing at alarming rates, and students in ABC school district are no exception. Table 1.1 shows the enrollment and poverty data of students in ABC School district. The district poverty index is 82.1%. There are 73% African American, 19% White, and 8% Other students enrolled in district (South Carolina Department of Education, 2017a). The information shows high poverty in a predominately African American school district. In most major cities in the United States, the majority of African American and Hispanic students attend schools where a majority qualify as low-income (Milner, 2015). Researchers noted the single most powerful predictor of racial gaps is the extent to which students attend low-income schools (Reardon, Robinson, & Weathers, 2017).

Table 1

*Enrollment and Poverty Index*

ABC School District			
	Number of students	Percentage of students	Poverty Index
District (K-12)	22,940	100%	82.17%
High	6,060	26%	
Middle	5,050	22%	
Elementary	11,500	50%	
Public Charter	330	2%	
Black	16,746	73%	
White	4,359	19%	
Other	1,835	8%	

*Note.* Enrollment and poverty index. Adapted from “South Carolina Department of Education (2017b) Annual Report.” Adapted with permission.

Academically, ABC School District, which is a high poverty, predominately African American student population is performing significantly lower on district average than the State on the assessments in English Language Arts (South Carolina Department of Education, 2017b). The difference is significant at all grade levels in ELA from grade 3rd to grade 8th (Table 2). The most significant difference is at the 5th grade level where there is a 10.5 difference between ABC School district and other districts in South Carolina.

Table 2

<i>District and State Comparison of State ELA Assessment</i>						
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>
	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade
ABC School District	66 (-2.9)	61 (7.1)	61.5 (-7.7)	68.3 (-3.1)	62.6 (-5.4)	65.4 (-6.7)
South Carolina	73.9 (-3.9)	70.5 (-5.3)	72.0 (-4.1)	76.3 (-3.3)	71.6 (-5.2)	72.0 (-5.6)
Difference	-7.9	-9.5	-10.5	-8	-9	-6.6

*Note.* District and state comparison of state ELA assessment. Adapted from “South Carolina Department of Education (2017b) Annual Report.” Adapted with permission.

Academically, the difference between the State’s average of all the districts compared to ABC School District is even greater in math than ELA (South Carolina Department of Education, 2017b). In a comparison of grades third through eighth, the average grade for ABC School District is lowest in seventh grade at 51.5% compared to the lowest at eighth grade in South Carolina at 68.5%. The students performed highest in the third grade at the district and state levels. The difference is significant at all grade levels in math from grade 3<sup>rd</sup> to grade 8<sup>th</sup> (Table 3). The most significant difference is seventh grade where there is a 17.5 difference between the state and the district average.

Table 3

<i>District and State Comparison of State Math Assessment</i>						
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>
	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade
ABC School District	64.1 (-3.4)	59.1 (-6.8)	57.6 (-11.1)	60.0 (-1.8)	51.5 (-12.9)	60.7 (-6.0)
South Carolina	77.8 (-0.7)	75.9 (-1.4)	72.1 (-5.0)	74.4 (+2)	69.0 (-4.4)	68.5 (-2.2)
Difference	13.7	-16.8	-14.5	-14.4	-17.5	-7.8

*Note.* District and state comparison of State math assessment. Adapted from “South Carolina Department of Education (2017b) Annual Report.” Adapted with permission.

More than 10 years ago, the district determined that student would perform better after being introduced to a culturally relevant curriculum schools as a means for closing the achievement gap (Milner, 2015; Milner & Lomotey, 2014). The rationale for conducting this study was to gain the perspectives of African American male teachers about the lack of diversity among the teachers in their schools that served a primarily minority elementary student population. Exploring the perceptions of these African American male teachers provided an understanding of the challenges and benefits they faced teaching at a predominately minority elementary school, and strategies they thought would be beneficial for recruitment and retention of those who looked like them.

Culturally, it is of the utmost importance to improve learning for all children. In 2001, the No Child Left Behind legislation was signed into law by President George W. Bush to hold all teachers and school leaders accountable for increasing the achievement for groups of failing children (National Education Association, 2017). While extreme attention was given to the problem, failure continued to exist. Unfortunately, African American males are still performing at significantly lower levels than students nationally (source, year). The 2015 National Assessment of Educational Progress reported 18% Black fourth grade students were proficient in reading and 19% proficient in math (U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2015).

School districts are charged with increasing the achievement and behavior of sub-groups including African Americans who still lag behind their Caucasian peers with a disparaging achievement gap (Carey, Farinde-Wu, Milner, & O’Connor, 2018). It takes a deliberate approach to minimize this gap. This study will provide school leaders with perspectives of

minority teachers that could cultivate a school culture that embraces all children. School leaders say it is important for children of color to have teachers as role models with diverse teaching perspectives (Deese, 2017).

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of African American male teachers on the challenges and benefits of teaching at a predominately minority elementary school, and to ascertain strategies for recruiting and retaining African Americans in the profession. Their views helped gain perspectives on recruiting and retaining African American male teachers. While all teachers, regardless of race, can be trained to teach students of color, minority teachers can be more proficient at motivating and engaging those students (Milner, 2017).

### **Definition of Terms**

The definitions of terms support the study's concepts and are associated with the problem:

*African American:* African American is the term used to identify African American people who live in America and of African descent (Merriam-Webster, 2010).

*Anti-social behaviors:* A person who lack empathy and disregards the feelings of others. Anti-social behavior can often be linked to criminal behavior (Tang, Jiang, Liao, Wang, & Luo, 2013).

*At-risk academically:* Students in schools who perform poorly with a higher probability of failure are considered academically at-risk. The academically at-risk student tends to have low skills and knowledge, lack of motivation and ability, and significantly below curricular requirements (Walsh, 2003).

*At-risk behaviorally:* Student who exhibit inappropriate behavior in schools that cause disruptions to self and others are labeled at-risk behaviorally. These students tend to be suspended or removed from class or school because they fail to control negative behaviors (Crone, Hawken, & Horner, 2010).

*Caucasian:* Caucasian is the term used to identify White people who live in America and of European descent (Howard, 2017; Merriam-Webster, 2010).

*Cultural synchronization:* Cultural synchronization is the connection used for creating relationships between two people based on similar experiences, commonalities, backgrounds, cultural identities, and commonalities (Irvine, 2003).

*School connectedness:* School connectedness is the way students react in a space based on their personal environmental experiences (Lemberger & Clemens, 2012).

### **Significance of Study**

The racial and ethnic demographics of education in the United States continue to change in PK-12 schools (National Education Association, 2017). Teachers in the U.S. are disproportionately female (75%) and White (83%) (Ingersoll, Merrill, & May, 2014) for the nation's public schools that are now made up a majority of minority students. While the number of White and African American students continue to decline, it is projected that by the fall of 2025 the percentage of minority students will be approximately 54% (U.S. Department of Education, 2018). Further, African American males make up less than 2% of the teaching workforce but are critical to the success of minority students for multiple reasons (Fasching-Varner, Mitchell, Martin, & Bennett-Haron, 2014). Additionally, this study sought to understand what reasons African American males provide for entering and remaining in the teaching

profession, and strategies they think could be used for recruitment and retention of African American male teachers in the profession.

This study is significant because the perspectives of the participants will help educators to become more informed on recruiting and retaining African American male teachers and address the obstacles that prohibit African American male teachers from entering the profession (Maylor, 2009; Milner, 2016). Further, this study was significant because if districts are successful in recruiting African American male teachers, the problem still exists with retention. Researchers suggest retention is a problem because minority teachers are usually hired to work in difficult schools of high poverty (Frankenberg, 2006). As a result, recruitment strategies are unlikely to solve the problem without accompanying teacher retention strategies. Understanding why the current African American male teachers accepted positions in the ABC School district provided insight into what attracted them to the school systems and the pros and cons for retention. This study was also significant because the racial make-up of schools is changing rapidly in American. Examining the efficacy of African American teachers who entered the profession provide information of their success as teachers.

The findings from this study could potentially change how counselors in high schools informed students on career options; how higher education attract perspective students; how school leaders recruit teachers; and how school systems retain minority teachers. Further, this study could support professional development for teachers to address cultural relevance in the classroom. This study is unique to this school district. The perceptions of African American males should aid in the provision of empirical data used for the enhancement and refinement of recruiting the under representative population to the profession. Clearly, the lack of a diverse faculty presents a problem, particularly in areas where there is a majority of minority students,

yet there is little diversity in the faculty and staff. The challenge to recruit teachers who can effectively teach low achieving at-risk students did not happen overnight (Hawkins, 2015).

Hawkins admits that hiring teachers with skills necessary to reach the at-risk youth has been their focus for more than 10 years. Similarly, programs such as The Call Me Mister program emerged from the need to serve children in highly minority low achieving schools (Call Me Mister, 2017).

This dissonance can be corrected when recruitment and retention tools, such as the Call Me Mister, yield teachers who are prepared to work in the schools they are hired to teach.

Multiple research studies have been conducted on diversity and race in the classroom that are significant for further understanding the importance of African American males in education (Waddell, 2010). Bryan and Ford (2014) and Garcia and Weiss (2019) addressed recruitment and retention for teachers in minorities' schools. This literature is significant because it provides a prospective of hiring and retaining highly qualified teachers in classroom, particularly the difficulty of recruiting teachers to teach in high minority and low-income schools.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this qualitative research study:

RQ 1: How do African American male teachers describe the challenges they face in teaching at a predominately minority school?

RQ 2: How do African American male teachers describe the benefits of teaching at a predominately minority school?

RQ 3: What strategies do African American male teachers suggest would improve the recruitment African American males in the teaching profession?

RQ 4: What strategies do African American male teachers suggest would improve the retention of African American males in the teaching profession?



## Review of the Literature

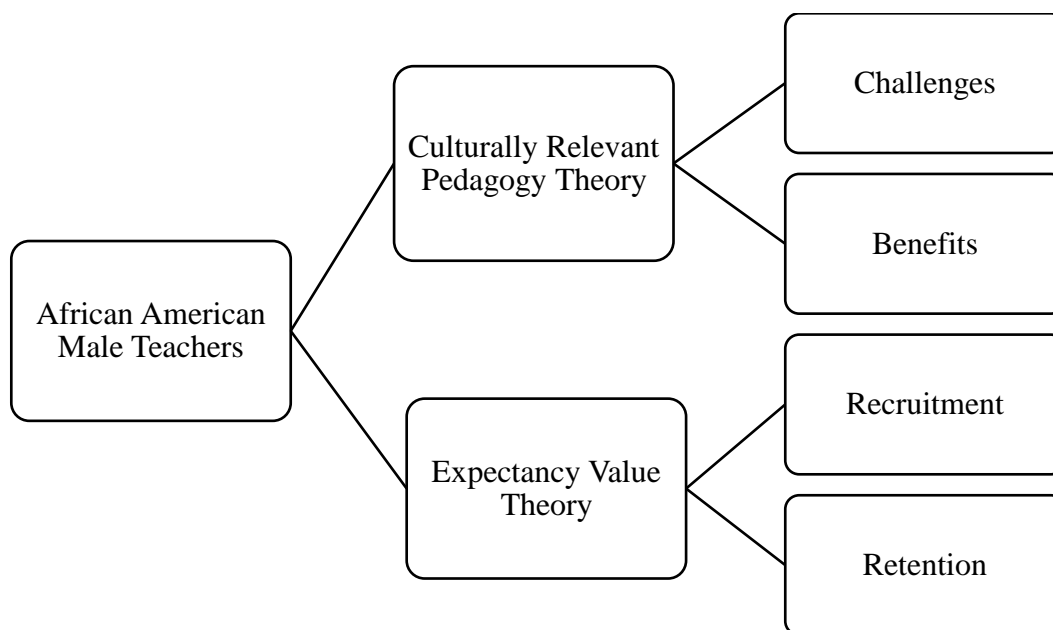
An extensive review of the literature was conducted on factors relating to African American male teachers and their perceptions on the challenges and benefits of going into teaching at a predominately minority elementary school will help to gain perspectives on recruiting and retaining African American male teachers. Further, the review of literature is written to describe how culturally relevant pedagogy theory and expectancy value theory aligns to the benefits and challenges associated with teaching in a predominately minority school and the need to retain and recruit additional minority teachers.

In addition to understanding the theories associated with this study, this review was designed to delve into current research on the following topics: African American male teachers in P-12 schools, African American recruitment programs, African American male teachers' experiences, minority school culture, recruitment strategies, retention strategies, and challenges facing P-12 schools. The search terms used in varying combinations were *African American male teachers, Black male teachers, African American male teachers in elementary schools, diversity gap, minority male teachers, recruitment, retention, recruitment programs, retention strategies, P-12 schools retention challenges, P-12 schools retention benefits, P-12 school statistics, culturally relevant teaching, disproportionality of African American males, benefits of retention, benefits of recruitment, poverty index, teacher expectations, teacher gap, challenges facing P-12 schools, and the underrepresentation of African American males in education*. I searched for peer-reviewed articles, books, and media from databases in the Walden Library and resources from two local libraries. The databases included The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC), ProQuest, and the EBSCO collection. Using the identified databases, I conducted advanced research for source and

document types for books, conference papers, magazines, scholarly journals, and websites. All information were examined for significance and appropriateness to the topic that would support a strong foundation to better understand why there continues to be a shortage of African American male teachers in high minority schools in the United States (Ndemanu, 2014).

### Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is based on expectancy value theory and culturally relevant pedagogy theory (Figure 1). Expectancy value theory is based on the expectancy theory. Expectancy theory is based on motivation of decision making and first used by Victor Vroom (1964) to measure job satisfaction in business management. Expectancy theory is about the mental process individuals undergoes to make choices (Cualfield, 2007). Expectancy value theory, derived from the expectancy theory, was founded by Fishbein in the mid-1970s (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).



*Figure 1:* Conceptual framework of cultural relevancy pedagogy and expectancy value.

**Expectancy value theory.** Expectancy value theory is based on the belief that a person's behavior is determined by the extent to which they value a goal and the degree to which they

expect to succeed (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Expectancy is a person's beliefs that they can successfully perform work at a high level. Value is the level to which a person would prefer to perform the job or how the value the completion of the job. Expectation and value are directly linked to motivation. According to expectancy-value theorist, a student's achievement is determined by success and subjective task values.

Additionally, the theory of achievement motivation is linked to the expectancy-value theory (Eccles, 1983; Eccles, Adler, Futterman, Goff, Kaczala, Meece, & Midgley, 1983). This theory helps researcher understand why teachers stay in the field of teaching. In the expectancy theory, the person considers tasks to be doable and logical base on the theory. The choice of task determines a person's performance and efforts about how well they perform the task (Burak, 2014). The expectancy theory is used in recruitment, selection, and performance. Aligned with the expectancy theory, African American male teachers were recruited and selected with the expectation that they were able to perform in the classroom of high minority low performing schools.

Battle and Looney (2014) conducted a mixed method study examining teacher retention. In the study, they used the expectancy-value theory to examine teaching and knowledge of adolescent development in comparison to teacher retention. The study revealed how teachers' enjoyment linked to their desire to continue in the field of education. In this study, the expectancy-value theory helped the researchers understand why teachers stayed or followed that course of action while examining the achievement-related behaviors of the teacher (Eccles, 1983). In a longitudinal study using the expectancy-value theory, the gender stereotypes of teachers were examined to determine if teachers' gender stereotypes related to girls reading better than boys. Using multilevel modeling, 54 teachers and 1,358 students, the researchers found a

negative association between teachers' gender stereotype (Retelsdorf, Schwartz, & Asbrock, 2015). For boys, the association yielded a significant result. Thus, the results showed the gender of the teacher does matter. In another study framed by expectancy-value theory, the relationship between teachers and the differential treatment and relevant math instruction on African American students' self-concept was examined (Diemer, Marchand, McKellar, & Malanchuk, 2016). In this study, 618 African American students (55 % male) were followed over a five-year period. It was found that the differential treatment of teachers tarnished students' belief over time that they had the requisite skills to achieve in math (Diemer et al., 2016).

**Culturally relevant pedagogy.** The conceptual framework of culturally responsive teaching for this study was based on Ladson-Billings (2005) theory of culturally relevant pedagogy (Figure 1). This theory addressed how culturally relevant teaching empowers students to learn. Ladson-Billings' work has been used extensively in K-12 education, particularly as it addresses the need for diversity of educators in the classroom. It addressed the teacher who is the person delivering instruction based on their cultural background. Ladson-Billings and Tate's (2006) conceptualization of sociopolitical consciousness, a belief of culturally relevant pedagogy, explained the classroom context and instructional practices of a teacher as she attempts to help her students see their lives as purposeful. The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of African American male teachers on the challenges and benefits of teaching at a predominately minority elementary school, and to ascertain strategies for recruiting and retaining African American male teachers in the profession.

Culturally relevancy pedagogy theory was significant to this study because it demonstrates how African American teachers in the classroom develop relationships through culturally relevant discourse (Bryan & Milton-Williams, 2017; Gay, 2017; Ladson-Billings,

1995). In a study on cultural response discourse, an African American male teacher in the Midwestern high school, participated in a classroom discourse analysis study (Thomas & Warren, 2017). Throughout the course of the semester, the African American male teacher stated objective on how learning discourse analysis structured more productive conversations with the student he mentored. As he became a teacher researcher, he reported a greater sense of professional self-efficacy. The African American male teacher in this study demonstrated an exemplar case of the unique and critical role of African American men who teach.

African American children of color and those from marginalized groups are receiving sub-par education, and thus the need for critical voices and perspective that hold minorities accountable for addressing the problem (Fasching-Varner et al., 2014). American authors and researchers provide a prospective of the need for diversity in the classroom based on personal experiences, research, and case studies (Frankenberg, 2006). Hawkins (2015) presents research on teacher education regarding race and diversity. Hawkins maintains that schools with racially diverse teachers have shown results in closing the achievement gap between subgroups of students based on state assessments (Ladson-Billings, 2005; Milner, 2016).

America is becoming more ethnically diverse, yet K-12 classrooms continue to be led predominantly by White, female teachers (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). The approach provides one way to address the academic success of African American and other children under-served by the public schools through culturally relevant teaching. Researchers and school administrators described this type of schooling as *culturally appropriate*, *ethnically responsive*, and *culturally compatible* (Adams & Rodriguez, 2017; Gay, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 2005; & Paris & Alim, 2017). The theorist of culturally relevant pedagogy examines areas that are significant for ultimately understanding the importance of African American males in the

classroom as it relates to cultural synchronization and school connectedness (Irvine, 2003; Lemberger & Clemens, 2012).

A study to examine the concept of cultural synchronization was conducted on the perceptions of African American teachers' classroom management practices with minority students (Monroe & Obidah, 2004). The findings suggest that cultural synchronization between the teacher and her students contributed to an effective style of classroom management that differs from traditional classroom practices.

### **Review of the Broader Problem**

African American male teachers have unique insight into the discrimination that can be experienced by students of color (Bryan & Browder, 2013; Bryan & Ford, 2014). African American males have experiences and connections for understanding the challenges experienced by many students. They can offer their students empathy that is often based on firsthand experience based on race, ethnicity, and culture that influence the way people think and perceive events (Sue & Sue, 2013).

Students of color tend to perform better when culturally responsive approaches are used in the classroom (Boyce & Chouinard, 2017). Despite the academic failure of minority children in public U.S. schools, many teachers complete teacher education programs with little or no knowledge of instruction based on culture, or interaction with students other than their own racial and cultural identity (Fasching-Varner et al., 2014; Hayes & Fasching-Varner, 2015). African American teachers were found to use more culturally responsive pedagogy when working with minority students (Knaus, 2014).

While educators have identified the need to recruit teachers to the profession, school leaders continue to struggle to understand what motivates teachers to teach. Multiple studies

have been conducted over the past 25 years on teacher motivation, recruitment and retention (Hargrave, Tyler, Thompson, & Danner, 2016; Shifrer, Turley, & Heard, 2017; Tamir, 2013). The reason for entering the profession has changed over time. Motivation and relationship themes remained consistent reasons for entering the teaching profession. Multiple studies were conducted in the early 1990s to determine why people wanted to enter the teaching profession (National Education Association, 2018). In 2015, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (2015) surveyed novice teachers to better understand why teachers entered and left the teaching profession.

In addition to understanding what motivates teachers to enter and remain in the teaching profession, multiple studies are being conducted at the P-12 and higher education levels to attract greater diversity in education (Field, 2017; Thompson & Tomlin, 2013; Will, 2016). Inherent in the studies was the need for recruitment of minority teachers in teacher education programs and in P-12 schools. Understanding the views of minority teachers as it relates to what attracted them to teaching could offer a perspective that focused on the importance of organized and planned recruitment (Thompson & Tomlin, 2013).

Another problem could be the lack of programs designed to attract minority teachers to the profession. The shortage of Hispanic teachers led to the creation of the Pathway project in Pennsylvania. The intent of the project was to work with in-state colleges and school districts with heavily populated low achieving minority students to cultivate teachers who mirror the student population. The concern for the Pathway project grew out of statistics in 2015 that showed 72% of the teachers in higher education were White, compared to 55% of the undergraduate students (Field, 2017).

Further, a need to create diverse hiring practices in education comparable to the racial make-up of student population continue to be a priority for P-12 school districts, local and federal leaders responsible for education students, and higher education (Will, 2016). The sense of urgency is due to minority students failing at high rates, high teacher turnover at high minority schools, and the need for culturally responsive teaching (Gunn & Brice, 2014). The Association of Teachers and Lecturers (2015) found that 75% of the teachers entered the profession because of their desire to make a difference, and 80% enjoyed relating with children.

### **Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in Minority Schools**

In culturally diverse schools, relevant instruction supports the needs of student learning (Ladson-Billings, 2005). In fact, culturally responsive teaching places culture as central to teaching and learning (Milner, 2016). It stresses how teachers used their students' experiences to support teaching and learning (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Using cultural experiences makes learning more relevant because it teaches to and through the strengths of students to enhance their achievement (Gay, 2013).

Student achievement is impacted by multiple factors including teachers' expectations, curriculum, instruction, lack of personal knowledge, inability to conduct need-based instruction, and cultural mismatch (Ladson-Billings, 2005). Those factors can have significant impact on achievement for children of color. The lack of student achievement for children of color and the racial gap that continues to widen in reading and math led to extensive research on culturally responsive instruction in the classroom. Culturally responsive instruction applies to practices that draw meaning from the environment from which the students reside (Ladson-Billings, 2005). The environment places a major role on how information is processed by students. It is



important for teachers to adopt strategies that allows them to connect with the students they serve relative to the students' backgrounds.

Universities and agencies are creating certifications in culturally responsive pedagogy (Mendoza, 2015). Santa Clara University in California included culturally relevant resources in their curriculum (Mendoza, 2015). Due to the success of the curriculum change, a partnership between Santa Clara University and the National Hispanic University (NHU) Foundation was established to develop culturally responsive teacher education curriculum. The University of South Carolina also included culturally responsive pedagogy in an introduction to university course after a request that Indigenous worldviews be incorporated into curriculum (Ragoonaden & Mueller, 2017). Albemarle County School District in Virginia had nine teachers and administrators to earn certificates in culturally responsive teaching. The district's commitment to reducing the achievement gap between student of color and Whites moved beyond the certificate program and hosted Cultural Diversity Conference for three years (Freedman, 2018). Bernard Hairston, the executive director of the Office of Community Engagement with Albemarle Public Schools, wrote the certification program for the culturally responsive teaching. Hairston believes that only when teachers embrace the culture of those, they teach will students begin to truly understand their value. A major component of the program is on micro-aggressions toward African American males (Freedman, 2018). Further, studies addressing culturally responsiveness continue to be implemented in urban schools and Pre-K through college (Milner, 2014).

The lack of culturally responsive instruction has been examined by researchers in classrooms throughout America. Ladson-Billings (2009) conducted extensive research that determined classroom practices that focus on cultural experiences tend to provide students with

more meaningful experiences. Au (2006) agreed that culturally responsive instruction for minority students provided richer classroom engagement and increased academic achievement. Acknowledging students' home languages and cultures, as well as pursuing student achievement for minority students are common views of culturally responsive pedagogy (Epstein & Gist, 2015). Equally as important is creating home and school connections (Dutro, Kazemi, Balf, & Lin, 2008). Howard (2010) conducted work that assessed the cultural mismatch between teachers and students, whereas the student behaviors of minority students are often misunderstood by teachers. Oftentimes, the cultural mismatch impacted the overidentification the lack of academic success of students of color and special education referrals (Howard, 2017).

### **Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and the African American Teacher**

Hiring and retaining African American teachers in schools provide opportunities for African American children to have teachers with similar experiences, backgrounds, and identities. Further, African American teachers in the classroom allow for student connectedness to their teachers based on their environmental experiences (Lemberger & Clemens, 2012). Therefore, this study is important to understand why African American male teachers are attracted to ABC school district and challenges associated with working in low performing school districts.

The continuous racial achievement gap in schools throughout the United states has led districts to examine multiple approaches to meet the needs of failing students (Kena, Hussar, McFarland, de Brey, & Musu-Gillette et al., 2016). Culturally relevant pedagogy became a focal point for some districts in the mid-1990s, when Ladson-Billings (2009) described the pedagogical practices of effective teachers of African American students and consequently conceptualized culturally relevant pedagogy as an effective method for instruction. At the same

time, districts were identifying a need to hire teachers who represented the student population (Milner, 2013). While this appeared to be a new approach to addressing the academic needs of students of color, research was also conducted in the mid-1990s on African American teachers' strategies for African American children (Milner, 2014; Milner, 2016).

In a study focused on identify what strategies were used in classrooms to motivate minority children to learn. Eight African American retired teachers revealed their success at reaching students through teaching and learning by understanding the importance of connecting the school with the home (Milner, 2015). The shared the importance of cultural understanding of the children they taught and the need to make the topic personal and relevant. In doing so, it was important to understand the culture of the children and being able to use their voice and perspective in making connections with the subjects taught (Gooden & O'Doherty, 2015).

In another study, an African American middle school male teacher described his culturally responsive practices in the classroom (Milner, 2017). The African American male teacher taught both math and science. He described how he used Gay's culturally responsive pedagogy framework to support his students learning and to bring instruction to life in the classroom. He described how student experiences helped students better understand the subject and brought the topic to life. Drawing from culturally responsive pedagogy the African American male teacher was able to bring cultural experiences to actuality (Milner, 2017).

Culturally, when minority study can relate to teachers based on relevant knowledge, they tend to feel more confident and willing to take risk (Wiggan, 2014). Children who take risk are more apt to develop into individuals confident in themselves (Boykin & Ellison, 2009). Cultural identity tends to have a social and emotional benefit to minority children from high-poverty neighborhoods, from knowing and being known and recognized by successful people who look

like them and of the same race (Albert Shanker Institute, 2015). Studies on the positive impact minority teacher have on African American children have revealed significant findings. Further, studies have suggested that thrive when they have access to demographically similar teachers.

### **Minority Teacher Shortage**

The shortage of teachers is seen in American public schools (Ingersoll, May, & Collins, 2017), although state and local programs are being developed to hire more teachers of color. Many school districts are making great strive in recruiting and retaining minority teachers (Ingersoll et al., 2017). Without addressing the shortage with a plan that targets not just address the teacher shortage, but specifically targeting the minority teacher shortage, the problem will become more acute each year.

Predictions for the next century indicate that the public schools with have 40% minority students' population and 5% minority teachers (National Education Association, 2018). As such, minority students will have even less role models and teachers with cultural and ethnical likeness (Martin & Mulvihill, 2016). This problem could contribute to a worsening urban plight and a process of extreme failure for all students academically and socially.

Researchers have examined date needed to be reexamined to find the root cause of the minority teacher shortage (Ingersoll et al., 2017). School, staffing and teacher follow-up surveys have been used in schools yearly to gain different perspectives on performance, exit information, teaching practices, and other information pertinent to the problem that needs to be examined. Using data from National Center for Education Statistics (Ingersoll, 2015) survey results were correlated to gain additional information on recruitment and retention. They determined that efforts to recruit minority teachers and place them in disadvantaged schools were successful.

However, poor working conditions caused high turnover rates for those minority teachers (Ingersoll et al., 2017).

In a report to its membership in 2006, the National Education Association declared the steady decline of male teachers in PK-12 schools a crisis (National Education Association, 2017). Eight years later, the problem at the national, state and local levels still exist. In 2014, the NEA readdressed the concern for minority teachers in a report, “Time for a Change: Diversity in Teaching Revisited” (National Education Association, 2014). The Montgomery County Education Association implemented a plan to hire a majority minority teacher workforce that was the source of a study entitles "The Status of Male Teachers in Public Education Today" (Johnson, 2008). Johnson, (2008) concluded that there was a 1 to 10 ratio of male to female teachers in America’s classrooms. The findings confirmed previous studies that reported the shortage created a threat to equality among genders and social justice. However, he also found that democratic values were reasons for the shortage of men in the PK-12 classrooms. While the shortage of male teachers’ decline was pervasive at every level in P-12 public schools, it was even more significant in the elementary grades. In 2013, a study was conducted to examine why there was a lack of males working in PK-12 schools (Medford, Knorr, & Cook, 2013). Some of their findings were directly related to Johnson’s findings citing sociological perspectives and gender differences. Men choose not to go into teacher due to the low pay and the low status associated with teaching, particularly African American male teachers.

African American males look at teaching as a social issue at avoiding teachings careers due to economics related to mandated examinations and licensure (Lewis, 2006). The second reason men tend to shy away from teaching is related to three theories: essentialist theory and gender theory (Drudy, 2008); and constructivism (Hedlin & Aberg, 2013). The essentialist

theory posits the differences exist socially among males and females. According to Drudy (2008), women are more inclined to teach, and thus teaching is a female profession.

Brockenbrough (2014) found that African American males prefer the interaction with other males which is lacking in the teaching profession which suggest more of a gender issue. The feminization of education is pervasive throughout PK-12 schools, especially in the primary schools. Some educators have linked the underachievement of boys in schools to the lack of male teachers (Skelton, 2012).

Recruiting African American male teachers requires collaboration with high schools and universities in order to have a chance at hiring one of the few who are in the selection pool (Hattie, 2015; Hattie & Yates, 2014). Henceforth, schools and teacher-preparation programs need to make significant changes in how they support attract African American males to the profession. Additionally, districts are looking more at data to refine teacher hiring (Flanigan, 2016).

### **Higher Education for African American Male Teachers Recruitment**

A growing number of programs are being created to address the need to recruit male teachers of color to increase the number working in the public schools throughout the United States, where “minority” students now represent the majority. Former U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan suggested that placing African American males in the classroom as teachers is a critical need in the American educational system (Toldson & Lewis, 2013). Colleges and universities have created programs for advancing diversity in the teaching profession. K-12 school administrators are charged with recruiting and retaining teacher who represent the school’s racial population. Program such as Call Me Mister, NYC Men Teach, Boston Public Schools (BPS) High School to Teacher Program, and Honoré Center for

Undergraduate Achievement are just a few that have been created to address the need for more male teachers of color.

**Call Me Mister.** Call Me Mister was founded at Clemson University in 2000 (Call Me Mister, 2017). Clemson University is a transformative leader in education and dedicated to the development of all students, particularly those in underserved communities. The School of Education saw the need to recruit African American males to the profession and created the Mentors Instructing Students Toward Effective Role Models Program (Call Me Mister, 2017). The Call Me Mister program was designed to increase the number of African American male teachers in the elementary classroom to support those minority students who are still failing in schools at an alarming rate. The mission of the Call Me Mister initiative was to increase the number of available African American male teachers from diverse backgrounds to teach in low performing schools (Call Me Mister, 2017). The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) study found that an analysis of the National Center for Education Statistics (2017) data showed minority students make up approximately 45% of the PK–12 student population, in contrast to minority teachers making up 21.85% of the educator workforce. The problem continued that the make-up of elementary school teachers is not commensurate with the make-up of the students in high minority low achieving schools. The Call Me Mister program was designed to address this problem.

The Call Me Mister program was initially developed to address the problem of underrepresented African American male teachers in elementary schools among the State's lowest performing elementary schools within South Carolina. The program evolved to increase the allocation of teachers from a diverse background nationally. Students for the program are selected from among underserved disadvantaged communities and mostly identified while in

high school. The Call Me Mister® program has moved from solely at Clemson University to more than 20 colleges and universities in South Carolina (Call Me Mister, 2017). Additionally, Call Me Mister program has national partners in nine colleges and university. Mister programs are at Edward Waters College, Georgia College, University of Illinois at Chicago, Kansas State, Eastern Kentucky, Louisiana Tech, Jackson State, University of Tennessee Martin, and Longwood University.

Nationally, Call Me Mister programs have graduated more than 1550 students and morphed into other programs in an effort to build a larger pipeline for greater teacher diversity (Jackson State University, 2018). However, Georgia College has developed the Rising Mister Academy to raise awareness to high school males in the area and those interested in knowing more about a career in education (Pound, 2018). This week-long academy provides a platform for high school students to meet Mister participants, leaders in education, and learn more about the need for African American male teachers in education. The program is open to African American male who desire to pursue teaching as a profession and want to become role models for young students.

**NYC Men Teach.** In 2015, major stakeholders in the city of New York joined forces to develop a program aimed at recruiting 1,000 men of color to become teachers in the public schools of New York City (Fink, 2016). Mayor Bill de Blasio and the New York City's Young Men's Initiative pledges to recruit 1,000 teachers over a three-year period. The Young Men's Initiative, the New York Department of Education, City University of New York, Center for Economic Opportunity, and Teach for America, excitedly joined force with the major to launch NYC Men Teach for the sole purpose of recruiting African American, Latino and Asian men to schools with diverse populations (Fink, 2016). NYC Men Teach was created to engage and



recruit men of color to become teachers. The program focused on providing early career support, professional development, mentoring, and networking services (NYC Men Teach, 2018). After examining the data and looking at the projections for the future regarding the student population in the public schools of New York, the numbers were staggering (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018).

Mentorship is a strong component of the NYC Men Teach program. Each participant is paired with an experienced teacher who they will meet with throughout the school year. The purpose of the mentorship is for the participant to have someone to share experiences and set goals, in addition to socio-emotional support as a means of preventing alienation (Fink, 2016). The program has three pathways for entry into the program. First is the alternate certification process which provides men with undergraduate degrees alternative ways of getting experience and certification. The second path is through the paraprofessional route. Men with or without degrees can become paraprofessionals in an effort to get educational experience, professional development, and academic support from certified teachers (Fink, 2016).

By 2020, the majority of students will be children of color (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). NYC Men Teach was created to ensure all of New York City's students have diverse role models, teachers, and mentors that represent the diversity of the city (Fink, 2016). The NYC MEN TEACH operates on the belief that educated and supported teachers are better prepared to teach students (NYC Young Men's Initiative, 2018). Focused on recruitment and retention, they provide they provide culturally relevant professional and leadership training for principals and mentors aimed at supporting teachers of color in schools.

**The Boston Public Schools Teacher Program.** Boston Public Schools are rapidly becoming a school district of diversity 57,000 students, of which 86% are Black, Hispanic, or

Asian and hail from 140 countries and speaking 80 languages. Focused on the diversity disparity, 37% of Boston Public Schools' teacher are teachers of color, compared to 17% nationally. The focus was on attracting culturally, racially and linguistically diverse teachers who would mirror the student population.

In an effort to recruit teachers at the start of their career and when they are unsure of what they what to do in life, the Boston Public Schools (BPS) High School to Teacher Program was created out of an initiative to attract high school students to the teaching professions (Gellerman, 2015). Boston Public Schools developed a pipeline initiative designed to identified high school students who mirrored the cultural, verbal, and racial diversity of the student demographics in Boston Public Schools. The pipeline routes begin in 11<sup>th</sup> grade to successfully completing high school, enrolling and graduating college, and returning to Boston Public Schools to teach (TeachBoston, 2018). The program involves monthly meetings, college visits, conferences/training, and a curriculum focused on leadership and teaching for the minority child (TeachBoston, 2018).

Another component of the program targets first year minority teachers. After minority teachers were hired in the Boston Public Schools, they were encouraged to participant in ALANA (African, Latino, Asian, and Native American) Educators Program. ALANA created to support new teachers of color, and to pair them with new and experienced teachers. to share expertise and experiences and to plan for career advancement (Gellerman, 2015). Additionally, Boston Public school has a Male Educators of Color Executive Coaching Program (MEOC). This 15-months leadership development program develops male educators of color interested in pursuing leadership roles in BPS (Gellerman, 2015).

The Boston Public Schools Teaching Fellowship program supports professionals and college graduates (district residents and district employees) who are devoted to the success of Boston's students. The program is an intensive selection and training process to teach instructional skills and licensure support. The goal is to build a diverse teacher pool of multiple background that match the student population.

**Honoré Center for Undergraduate Achievement.** Southern University in Louisiana established the Honoré Center for Undergraduate Student Achievement to increase the number of African American males graduating from college and becoming teachers in urban schools (Falk, 2016). Through the program, recruits are transformed and focused on integrity, responsibility and accountability (Norton, 2014).

The founder, Lt. General Russel L. Honoré believed young men who grew up in tough circumstances had the stamina to operate as a leader in the classroom children with challenging students (Carter, 2016). Participants at Southern University New Orleans in the Honoré Center program spends two afternoons a week at high poverty inner-city elementary schools. Donovan Woods, a participant in the program, noted, "Culturally I think that I relate to the kids. It's not just inside the classroom, I get them outside the classroom, there's a connection" (Falk, 2016, p. 1).

### **Recruitment and Retention Programs for Minority Teachers**

The retention of teachers in the nation is a critical challenge. The future of the profession can be greatly impacted without continued recruitment efforts coupled with retaining effective teachers and developing struggling teachers (Ingersoll et al., 2014). There is a national effort to increase teacher diversity and retain teachers in the profession (Albert Shanker Institute, 2015). A national search addressed the minority teacher's shortage in public schools (Ingersoll et al.,

2017). The teacher workforce should mirror make-up the student population based on race. Yet, due to the limited number of teachers of color, increasingly there is the nonexistence of minority teachers in classrooms who understand the racial and cultural background of the students they teach (Ingersoll et al., 2017). As such, school districts across the nation have developed programs to recruit teachers, and equal attention has been given to retention in an effort to address the minority teacher shortage.

Programs focused on retention have included residencies, mentoring, workshops, resources, cultural pedagogy, school site visits, shadowing, independent evaluations, leadership development, skill development, and others (Council for Educational Change, 2018). According to Dr. Martin Haberman, California and Texas were leaders in programs targeted at recruiting and retaining minority teachers (Hill-Jackson, Stafford, James, & Hartlep, 2018). Since that time, other states and districts have shown results on recruitment and retention of minority teachers. Boston has become a leader in minority teacher recruitment and retention with a focus on targeting African American males (Papay, West, Fullerton, & Kane, 2012). The Albert Shanker Institute conducted a study in 2014-15 that concluded there was a significant diversity gap nationwide between students and teachers (Jackson, 2014). The report highlighted several recruitment and retention programs that could serve as model recruitment programs (Albert Shanker Institute, 2015).

The Boston Teacher Residency program showed success at retaining teachers in the Boston Public Schools. The Boston Teacher Residency teacher participants showed an 80% retention rate in the district for three or more years, compared with 63% of those who did not participate in the program. While the results were a bit lower at 75% for Boston Teacher Residency participants who served five or more years, it was significantly higher than the 51% of

those who did not participant in the program (Papay et al., 2012). The results were even higher for minority teachers. Eighty-five percent of the Boston Teacher Residency participants stayed three or more years, and 74% at five or more years (Papay et al., 2012).

The Boston Teacher Residency (2018) goal for participants is to have continuous learning in content-based programs. Teachers are prepared for elementary teaching in grades 1-5, and the secondary levels to instruct English, Math and Science. The program provides a yearlong classroom apprenticeship while participating in master's courses. The program is designed within embedded reliability with a focus on providing the teacher with multiple instructional materials that support student learning. Another component of the Boston Teacher Residency called Teaching Academies, which are designed to continue the preparation for engaged participants in rigorous content as focal to teacher preparation (Bireda, & Chait, 2011).

Texas alternative certification has a successful minority teacher recruitment and retention component to the program (Texas Comprehensive Center, 2015). Approximately 30,000 teachers received teacher certification since the program started in 1985 with more than 50% minorities (Smith, 2014). The program averages from 3,000 to 6,000 teacher per year with approximately 50% minority. Most of the teachers come from schools within the state. Larger school district such as Houston and Dallas. Have had the greatest success. Utilizing this alternate method, potential teacher will go through a screening process before they are officially allowed to move to the next step. After being recruited and screened, the next step is to take methods classes and begin the internship. The program can be completed in one to two years. The process ends with an exit exam that test the participants' knowledge in pedagogy and subject area (Texas Comprehensive Center, 2015).

California also has a recruitment and retention internship program that has been successful with recruiting minority teachers. Approximately 3,600 or 45% of the new teachers were minority and 4,400 or 55% were White. Forty-five percent of the 8,000 students are minorities, as compared with 20% of the students that tend to matriculate from a traditional teacher program. The strengths of the California recruitment and retention program are the retention rates and the recruitment of males. The retention rates are one of the highest in the nation with 96% after first year, 93% after two years, and 78% five years and beyond. More than 350 male teachers are recruited into the program with 30% of the male teachers go into elementary education.

New teachers in the San Francisco's Teacher Residency program receive multiple supports including a reduction in cost into the master's program (Dubin, 2017). A counselor is designated specifically to recruit and hire African American teachers. Priority for San Francisco's teacher recruitment is to hire diverse, skilled teachers who mirror the race of students particularly if they are failing academically. Recruitment strategies include hosting recruitment events, visiting high schools, partnering with local universities, and offering early contracts to candidates, including candidates of color (Dubin, 2017).

Kentucky and Ohio have joined together to create the Multicultural Teacher Recruitment Program in partnership with University of Louisville, Jefferson Public Schools and Ohio Valley Cooperative (University of Louisville, 2018). The program's goal is to reduce the teacher shortages and increasing the number of minority teachers. The program supports the college of education in improving access to quality teacher preparation through professional development to minority students. Additionally, Multicultural Teacher Recruitment Program exposes middle school and high school students to careers in education (University of Louisville, 2018).

Multicultural Teacher Recruitment Program provides guidance in careers, academic classes, workshops and seminars, and financial assistance (Jefferson County Schools, 2018). The program is designed to assist educators and potential educators in obtaining certification to become highly qualified at all Pk-12 areas; to recruit from community colleges and support transition to a four-year college or university; and recruit professionals into alternative graduate teacher preparation programs (Jefferson County Schools, 2018).

### **Implications**

The current qualitative case study research explores the perceptions and lived experiences of African American male teachers on the challenges and benefits of teaching at a predominately minority elementary school, and to ascertain strategies for recruiting and retaining African American male teachers in the profession. There are potentials projects that could support educational leadership in public Pre-K to 12 school systems, colleges, and university. As such, there is the potential for PreK – 12 school systems to design a recruitment process for the leadership team to use when attending college fairs and working with colleges and universities in the preparation of potential teachers. Further suggestion that may derive from this study is an article on African American male teachers' perceptions on the benefits of working in predominately minority schools to be used as a tool for recruitment. Finally, there is a possibility of creating a minority awareness component for teacher retention.

The project was derived from the findings of this qualitative case study to ensure that there is appropriate impact for recruitment and retention of African American male teachers in elementary schools. It is believed that the findings will allow me to generate a list of challenges African American male teachers face when working in predominately minority schools. And while there are difficult encounters in the daily workings of academically challenging schools,

there are equal, if not more, benefits. There should also be strategies or suggestions on how to improve the process for attracting African American males to the school district. After reviewing and understanding the findings, I will approach the district's superintendent to discuss the findings and to share and discuss in detail the recommendations. I would also make an appointment with the local colleges and university to discuss with the director of the Career center and freshman recruitment.

### **Summary**

The qualitative case study will guide the project choice that will further improve the school district's recruitment and retention of African American male teachers. For this qualitative research, the local problem described the lack of African American male teachers serving a primarily minority elementary student population, and the rationale as to why minority teachers are needed. Definition of terms were presented to assure the readers have clarity when reading the study. The significance of this study addressed how the finding will inform educators on recruiting and retaining African American male teachers. Additionally, the literature review related to recruitment and retention of African American male teachers in low performing elementary schools. Culturally relevant theory will be further defined and explained.



## Section 2: The Methodology

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of African American male teachers on the challenges and benefits of teaching at a predominately minority elementary school, and to ascertain strategies for recruiting and retaining African American male teachers in the profession. Research on African American male teachers were selected for this study in order to examine the lack of diversity among the teachers that serve a primarily minority elementary student population. According to Creswell (2013), qualitative research focuses on the humanistic factors that are interacting in a natural setting. Choosing qualitative research provides opportunities to progress deeper into the teachers' personal perceptions by engaging them in dialogue through interviews that are related to their shared experiences (Hatch, 2002). The overall intent for utilizing qualitative research is to get an idea of how individuals make sense of their lives and experiences (Merriam, 2009).

Multiple methods can be used to gather data, including interviews, observation, and historical documentation. An in-depth review of qualitative research for the purpose of selecting a design to analyze in depth the perspectives of African American male teachers lead me to choose case study research design (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). The qualitative case study design can be applied to reveal methods, routines, and procedures of exceptionally competent individuals or groups in all types of environments (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2012). The study began after approval is granted from Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the district provides approval. The intent of this qualitative case study research was to collect the data in the natural settings of the participants. The study was written in full alignment with the information requested in Walden's IRB.

## Research Design and Approach

The nature of study was qualitative case study design. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the interpretation of experiences, the conceptualization of once world, and the attribution to their experiences (Merriam, 2009). For this study, the problem exists that there continues to be a lack of African American male teachers serving a primarily minority elementary student population. The case study design was chosen for this research to conduct an in-depth exploration of African American male teachers' perceptions. Yin (2012) explained that the unique strength of the case study strategy allows the researcher to examine a full variety of evidence including documents, interviews, and observations. The primary basis for implementing a case study design was to examine the perceptions of African American male teachers on the challenges and benefits of going into teaching at a predominately minority elementary school; and to gain perspectives on recruiting and retaining African American male teachers.

Case study research can be used by researchers to focus on (a) how and why, (b) observable behaviors, (c) understand a phenomenon, and (d) to understand boundaries between the context and phenomena (Hatch, 2002). Case study research is rooted in disciplines that include education, science, medicine, and law (Yin, 2014). According to Merriam, (2009), case study is an "in-depth description and analysis of a bonded system" (p. 40). Yin defines case study as an "empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 18). For the purposes of this study, case study was used to explore the perceptions of African American male teachers at the elementary schools in one school district. The participants in this qualitative case study were selected based on their characteristics and

knowledge as African American males teaching in predominate minority schools (Yin, 2014). A multiple-case (holistic) design was used to share the stories of each African American male teacher. The finding of multiple single cases would be more compelling and robust since the stories of each participant will be told. Multiple cases allow for cross-case comparison (Yin, 2014).

Two research designs were considered for this study, narrative inquiry and case study analysis (Creswell, 2013). In narrative inquiry, the researcher interviews participants who tell stories for interpreting the data. In case study research, the researcher uses direct interpretation and develops naturalistic generalizations of what was learned (Creswell, 2013). Case study research was used because it was important to for the direct voices of the participants to be shared in order for the learner to understand what was learned. Choosing case study research allowed me to capture the voices of the participants through interviews. For the purposes of this study, the African American male teachers were interviewed, and documents collected to explore the perceptions of African American male teachers on the challenges and benefits of teaching at a predominately minority elementary school, and to ascertain strategies. Through the voices of the participants, a better understanding of the challenges and benefits African American male teachers were explored and strategies they think will support recruitment and retention.

The problem exists that there continues to be a lack of African American male teachers serving a primarily minority elementary student population. The underachievement is most important regarding African American males underrepresented minorities in schools. Hearing from the African American males about what led them to the teaching profession will add to the conversations and better prepare school leaders to recruit and retain teachers in PK-12 public schools. This case study is being conducted to explore the casual link of the African American

males' perspective about working in a low performing minority school. The participants in this qualitative case study are selected based on their characteristics and knowledge as African American males teaching in predominate minority schools (Yin, 2014).

### **Participants**

Participant selection in the qualitative case study research is purposeful; informs the research questions; and enhance understanding of the phenomenon (Kuper, Lingard, & Levinson, 2008; Yin, 2014). Choices regarding participant selection are based on how qualitative researchers use detailed accounts from real people regarding their perspectives of specific issues and problems (Stake, 2010; Yin, 2014). "Qualitative inquiry method provided opportunities to achieve empathy and gives the researcher empirical bases for describing the perspectives of others" (Patton, 2002, p. 53). Qualitative research participants are controlled by what is practicable (Yin, 2014). Proper selection of inclusion criteria will improve its feasibility and minimize ethical concerns. Participants were selected from the number of African American male teachers currently working in predominately minority elementary schools from one urban school district.

### **Selection of Participants**

Case study research does not specify a specific number of participants (Yin, 2014). Qualitative case study research involves a small number of participants, who share similar experiences, common characteristics, and knowledge of the phenomenon specific to the study (Creswell, 2013). In qualitative research, the sample size is not usually predetermined because the number of participants required is depended upon the phenomenon being studied. The shortage of African American male teachers in elementary schools was a problem identified for this study. Therefore, in order to determine if there were potential participants who met the

criteria in this school district, I met with an administrator in the Human Resource Office to determine identify the number of employees in this school district who met the criteria. There were 10 potential participants identified. For the purposes of this study, the participants were purposefully selected (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). The participants in the study meeting eligibility criteria were African American male teachers, from one inner city school district, and currently teach at predominately minority schools. Having a small number of participants allows for deeper inquiry and greater opportunity to capture more in-depth data (Creswell, 2013).

Two gain access to the participant, I had to adhere to the district's policy for conducting research. First, the researcher was required to write a letter to the administrator who supervised the school or department. Because the participants work at 10 different schools, I was required to write a letter to the elementary administrator to gain district level approval to conduct the research and to get a list of the teachers meeting the participant criteria that include their names and schools. Once approval is granted and the list was provided, I emailed each principal with a copy of the approval to conduct the research and informed them that I would like to meet with a potential study participant in their school. While approval was not required from the principal, a letter to inform them of the study was sent and as a courtesy I asked for permission to contact the teachers. After acquiring permission from the principal, I emailed the teachers to invite them to participate in the study. Next, all the teachers who expressed interest in the study were invited to an information session. For the proposed study, I recruited participants who met the criteria and taught minority students. African American male teachers on special assignment or who did not teach students were not considered.

Multiple steps are used to establish a researcher-participant working relationship that ensures the participant fully understands the process for participant participation. First, the study

must be voluntary with an exclusive right to decline participation (Creswell, 2013).

Confidentiality was met by utilizing pseudonyms for the names of participants, the locations, and any other names that would violate security of information. The participants were assured that there is minimal risk of participating in this study. They were informed prior to starting the data collection that they would not receive any form of consequence or monetary reward for their decision to participate in this study. The participants were told that the benefits of participating in this study were limited to the opportunity to share their experiences and strategies as An African American male teacher working in a predominately minority school. Further, any personal information collected for the purposes of this study will not be shared during or after the study. A number was assigned to each participant to protect the identity of the participant.

Ethical guidelines will be followed to establish trust and ensure the participants understand they have rights regarding participation in this study. According to Creswell (2013), the study must be completely voluntary, providing teachers the right to decline participation prior to the start of the study and at any point during and after the study's implementation. The confidentiality of all participants will be secured for the entirety of the research study and afterwards. The participant's identity will be obscured by using a number as the identifier. The names of the participants, school district, and schools will remain confidential. Each participant will be assigned a pseudonym. The participants will be given a proper name during the presentation of findings to increase the readability and breathe life into the telling of the story. Further, this study is designed to not present a risk to the participants. The benefits of participating in this study are the opportunity to share experiences and ideas.

## Data Collection

The data collection process for gathering information began with a systematic process but may need to be rearrange for convenience. Further, changes may be necessary to ensuring accurate data is gathered and remains consistent. The advantage of using case study is that it is conducted within the context of its use (Yin, 2014). Interviews and two forms of documents will be used to collect the data (Yin, 2012). The interviews will be the main source of data. The two forms of documents will be those held by the participants such as recruitment documents used for hiring or teaching strategies that support cultural relevancy pedagogy. Therefore, my first step will be to clearly identify the participants based on the criteria, the schools at the identified school district, and purposeful sampling strategy. The study site was a public-school district with a large minority population with more than 50% free and reduced lunch. The participants were African American males who currently teach students at predominately minority elementary schools in ABC School district.

After identifying the site and participant, the next step for data collection was to gain permission to conduct the research. The first step in gaining permission to begin the study was to get IRB approval to begin (Appendix A). Next, I submitted a letter to the district administrator (Appendix B) via email to request permission to conduct the research and to request a list of teachers who meet the criteria (African American elementary teacher in high minority schools). When district approval is granted, and the list provided, I sent individual letters to principals (Appendix C) via email requesting permission to meet and discuss the study and to gain access to the identified teachers. After acquiring permission from the principal, I emailed the teachers a letter of invitation and statement of consent to participate in the study (Appendix D). The consent to participate was returned via email. When the consent was

granted, an interview was scheduled. The consent form outlines a description of the study and discloses potential risk and strategies to protect the privacy of the participant. Furthermore, this consent form affirmed that participation in the study was not mandatory and all subjects could discontinue their participation at any point in which they felt unethical. The informed consent form was delivered either by hand to all eligible participants at the information session, or to participants via email if they choose to participate after the information session. The approval process for this case study data collection was strictly adhered to according to the Walden Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Next, semi-structured interview questions were designed in order to gather focused, qualitative textual data. Interview questions was collected from recruitment and retention questions compiled by the South Carolina Education Association (SCEA) and the South Carolina Association of Black School Educators (SCABSE) used in previous research to collect data on recruitment and retention of African American male teachers. This method will offer a balance between the flexibility of an open-ended interview and structured questions. The interview process began with the creation of the interview protocol. For interviewing, I used audio tapes, notetaking and interview questions. The interviews were conducted in the schools of each participant and only the actions of the participants were noted using notetaking. Document data was used to confirm information gathered from the interview questions. An interview protocol was created to guide the interviewing process from start to finish. Lichtman (2014) suggests that qualitative researchers should review literature specific to the topic prior to beginning the writing process. Jacob and Furgerson (2012) provides a procedural process for creating a script for the interview protocol that guides how the data is collected. The protocol will include the interview questions, script for the researcher to use in guiding the interview process from beginning to end,



reminders for collecting the informed consent, and reminders about additional information that maybe needed to support the study (Appendix E). The interview script included the purpose of the current study, information informing all participants that participation in the study was voluntary and participants could withdraw at any time during the study, discussed confidentiality, and an explanation of the interview process (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). The information in the script was used to help participants understand the rights of participants to participate in ethical research should they choose to do so. Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim by the researcher to preserve the narrative (Riessman, 2008). Stake (2010) suggest researchers use member checking, the process to check for accuracy and provide feedback.

The final steps were to conduct the interviews and collected the documents. Interviews are one source that is used by researchers to generate qualitative data (Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008). Qualitative researchers depend on thorough interviews to gain rich data in 30 minutes to 45 minutes in length with participants (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). The interviews were audiotaped, then transcribed. Transcripts were reviewed and corrected to ensure audio recordings where accurately captured. Transcripts from the audio recording of the face-to-face interview were given to each participant to review detailed responses and verify accuracy. Document or archival data refer to pre-existing information that has been compiled or created by someone other than the researcher (Foster & Sheppard, 1995). The document list was researcher produced. A spreadsheet was created to record all data collected, the person providing the data, location of data, and the link to the interview question. The data was collected from interviews of African American male teacher, and documents identified by the participants and

collected through other sources, then compiled in a narrative format using NVivo 11® software to support the ease in the data analysis process.

### **The Role of the Researcher**

I currently serve as principal of an elementary school in a neighboring district. My responsibilities include but are not limited to establishing and maintaining an effective learning environment for the students I serve. I pride myself in leading a collaborative instructional environment geared toward meeting the specific needs of the school and more importantly serve my students of all racial ethnicities. In addition to my work as a principal, I am also the campus director for the Call Me Mister program at a neighboring college. It is my responsibility to mentor student participants in the program and expose them to classroom experiences. Further, I assist the students with tutorials in preparation for the Praxis examination. The goal of Call Me Mister programs is to attract students who are from underserved low social economic disadvantage and educationally at-risk communities. I do not work with or supervise any of the potential participants. All participants work in a neighboring school district at different elementary schools. The identity of the participants will not be shared, along with the data findings to avoid any form of threats or harm.

### **Data Analysis**

This section was organized utilizing the subsections provided in Section 2: The Methodology of the checklist items for data analysis

results. The responses for data analysis were provided giving the process by which data were generated, gathered, and recorded; the findings built according to the research questions; accounting of all salient data; evidence of quality; summary of outcomes; and a description of the project deliverables.

### **Data Generated, Gathered, and Recorded**

The study was conducted in one school district at ten elementary schools utilizing one classroom in each building. The district's staff population for elementary teachers totaled 309: 6.7% Black, .3% Hispanic, and 93% White. There was a total of 10 African American male teachers in the district and 9 of the 10 participated in this study. At each of the ten elementary buildings, the data was generated from an African American male teacher. Each teacher taught in predominately minority classroom of African Americans and Hispanic students.

The data were gathered from interviews and two forms of documents. The interviews were held afterschool in the classroom of each teacher. The classroom set ups, although not important for the collection of interview data, was referenced during the interview process to provide examples and other references. The two forms of data were gathered from participants, district personnel, and the Internet used documents for recruitment, hiring, retention, and teaching strategies that support cultural relevancy pedagogy. The codes and coding techniques were used to support the linking of data back to the research questions and the propositions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The data were recorded according to assigned pseudonyms used to ensure confidentiality of the participants. Data was analyzed within 24 hours of each interview.

**Participant demographics.** Participant criteria was identified for this study to include African American male teachers at the elementary level. Ten African American male teachers met the criteria outlined in the study. Nine of the 10 teachers agreed to participate in the study (Table 1). Whereas the sample size for this study could be considered large by some theorist (Merriam, 2009), it was important to hear the voices of all African American teachers willing to participate. The teaching experience of the participants ranged from 5 years to 24 years. All of the participants worked in another district prior to coming to this district. The in-district teaching

experience ranged from 1 year to 7 years. Four of the nine participants participated in a teacher recruitment program during their undergraduate program.

Table 4.1

*Demographics of the Participants*

Participant Pseudonyms	Years' Experience	Years in District	Recruited to District	Recruitment Program
Barry Bailey	12	7	Yes	No
Charles Cooper	5	3	Yes	Yes
Harold Harrison	19	3	Yes	Yes
Jerold Johnson	8	1	No	No
Jimmy Jackson	7	2	No	No
Marcus Mason	6	1	Yes	Yes
Nolan Nixon	16	6	No	No
Tyson Timmons	7	5	Yes	Yes
Will Washington	24	7	Yes	No

The participants worked at seven of the eight elementary schools in the district. Three participants worked at the same elementary school and each were recruited after attending a district recruitment fair. The participants taught students in one of grades third through fifth. The class size ranged from 19 to 25 students. The classes were mixed based on gender and race. Five of the teachers had self-contained classes and taught all subjects. Four teachers worked in a school that was departmentalized. One teacher taught only English/Language Arts (ELA). Three teachers taught two subjects; one taught math and science; and two taught ELA and social studies.

Table 4.2

*Participant Classroom Information and Student Demographics*

Name	Grade Taught	Number of Students	Demographics				Subject Taught
			Boys	Girls	Black	White	
Barry Bailey	5	25	13	12	14	11	ELA
Charles Cooper	4	21	15	6	9	12	All
Harold Harrison	3	21	12	9	13	8	All
Jerold Johnson	5	23	14	9	15	8	ELA/Social Studies
Jimmy Jackson	4	24	13	11	18	6	All
Marcus Mason	5	24	17	7	13	11	Math/Science
Nolan Nixon	4	20	8	12	12	8	All
Tyson Timmons	4	22	16	6	10	12	ELA/Social Studies
Will Washington	3	23	13	10	18	5	All

For this qualitative case study, three sources used to collect data from the participants included interviews and two forms of documents. The three data sources were used to triangulate the data. The documents collected were examined to verify and confirm the data collected from interviews. Data were collected within two weeks. Detailed below described how the interviews and documents generated, gathered, and recorded.

**Interviews.** Eleven interview questions were selected and aligned with the research questions in this study. For Research Question 1, there were four interview questions to determine how African American teachers describe the challenges they face in teaching at a predominately minority school. For Research Question 2, there were three interview questions designed to ascertain information how the African American male teachers described the benefits of teaching at a predominately minority school. There was one two-part question aligned to Research Question 3. For Research Question 4, there were three interview questions aligned to

obtain strategies the participants suggested for improving the retention of African American male teachers.

The data gathering process for collecting the data followed four basic steps for data analysis for qualitative research. The interview process itself consists of a number of steps. First, the time for the interview was determined for each participant. Next, copies of the interview protocol script and interview questions in Appendix E were rechecked for alignment, then emailed to the participants prior to the interviews. The interviews were recorded, and notes taken. The audio and notes from the interview were transcribed and the information compared for accuracy of thought. Each interview was transcribed within 24 hours of the interview to increase the accuracy of the information. The responses to the interview question were first checked with the recording and confirmed with the notes. The transcript was then sent to the interviewee and for member checking. Corrections were then made to three of the transcripts.

Next, the coding process began to determine themes. The data were analyzed to develop concepts and themes from the codes. The initial coding allowed me to break down the data into categories and sub-categories. Next, the data units were grouped into specific categories and then analyzed for concepts and themes. The purpose of identifying themes and concepts within the interview document was to get an accurate analysis of the participants' perceptions. During this process, themes were identified, supported by the literature, and helped to describe the structure of the African American male teacher's experience. The researcher studied the themes and the corresponding codes to determine the overarching themes. The final step of the data analysis process was synthesis from the written work for presentation. The NVivo 11® software was used to help synthesize the textual data from the open-ended interview questions that were used in data collection. Narratives and tables were interpretive, created and aligned to the four

research questions, and validated to make claims for the trustworthiness of the researchers' interpretations.

**Documents.** Documents were gathered and recorded using a Microsoft Word program to create a spreadsheet. The two forms of documents collected were recruitment and teaching strategies that support cultural relevancy pedagogy. The documents were collected from the African American male teachers, personnel at the Office of Human Resources and Office of Curriculum & Instruction, and the Elementary Department, and district websites. The spreadsheet was designed to keep track of the documents collected, document types, and the source. An additional spreadsheet was used to align documents collected to the research questions. The review of the documents was used to confirm the credibility of some information provided during the interviews.

### **Evidence of Quality**

Evidence of quality is related to the trustworthiness of the recorded work and dependability in the process. For this study, it was important to have accurate information collected and analyzed. As such, member checking was done to ensure the accuracy of the spoken words of the participants. Further, documents were collected to support and align to the interviews. Additionally, to ensure the quality of this study, triangulation of the data was conducted and the participants' right to refusal were used. Three types of data were collected and examined to confirm the quality and accuracy of the information: interviews, recruitment documents, and strategies for instruction. Dependability in a qualitative study was synonymous with reliability in a quantitative study. To ensure a thorough understanding of the research a case study research design was implemented for dependability of the process. As such, a step-by-step approach was used in the data gathering process to collect and analyze the data.

## The Participants

Nine African American male teachers from one rural school district participated in this study. The participants worked in elementary schools serving students in grades third to fifth. The participants represented varied backgrounds and experiences. This introduction in some cases may help the reader to better understand their positions about situations and responses to questions and the results are reviewed.

**Barry Bailey.** Barry Bailey proudly shared his elation at being the second person in his immediately family to attend and graduate from college. He grew up thinking that he would attend college and work in the field of education. He stated, “I knew from grade school that I would go to college and be a teacher. There wasn't a backup plan, because that was all I saw in my future.” Barry was fortunate to have several teachers who inspired him and many of his fellow classmates. He credits much of his desire to serve and never give up on children to those teachers who never gave up on him. At one point during his undergraduate work, he was a criminal justice major. “Imagine my parents surprise when I told them, “I wanted to be a SLED Agent.” My mother reminded me of the need for teachers in public education who looked like me. Barry shared, “Needless to say, fate won, and I became a special education teacher.” He went on to say, “For me, working as a Black man in a high poverty school is my spiritual calling. Inspiring the students who I teach is integral to ensuring their victory and encouraging them to fulfill their potential.”

Barry talked about his faith and how it contributed to his success as an educator. Barry said, “I believe my faith in God allows me the strength, knowledge, patience, will, and drive to do my job as an educator. Without my faith in God, I would resign and look for another career.” For those Christians in his school, they gather often to discuss hope for the future and to pray for



the school. Barry stated, "When we are faced with difficult challenges, we will pray with each other for guidance and protection as we try to do our jobs." It is because of his faith that he believes, "Being an educator is a calling! It is not merely a job, but an assignment to shape a young person's life forever!"

**Charles Cooper.** Attending college was not just a goal for Charles Cooper, it was an expectation. He shared, "I am not the stereotypical Black male child you read about. I was very fortunate and blessed to grow up with both of my parents in the household. They both received a college education as well and are both business owners." In the quest for excellence in education, both parents instill the need to be educated primed to take on whatever the world can throw at them. Charles stated, "The standard was already set from the beginning, and I thank my parents for leading by example and making sure my siblings and I had what we needed to succeed in life." Graduating from a liberal arts college allowed him to understand and see the world in a different perspective.

Charles had such great support and inspiration in his path to education. He stated, "I have a lot of mentors who inspired me to go into education. I was introduced to the Call Me Mister program. Also, my band directors also influenced me to go into education as well when applying for colleges." Charles' biggest struggle in middle school shaped how he teaches his students today. He shared, "I had a hard time with math in middle school. It wasn't my favorite subject. I had to have consistency with instruction, and one year I had multiple teachers, which threw me completely off." He credits this negative experience with why he teaches in a systematic method.

Just knowing that you are here to educate these young minds and also prepare them for the next stage in their life is the engine that keeps educators going. We as educators have the

power to shape the minds of our students and we must keep the faith that one day they will remember the things that we did to help them along the way. For the students he teaches, they are greeted daily with this quote, “Education is the key to open any close door that is in front of you.” He shares this with his students because of his belief that attending college helped mold him into the person he today.

**Harold Harrison.** Harold Harrison is a product of a profession where he experienced problems at the negative hands of other students. He shared,

My biggest struggle in school was growing up and personally experiencing bullying at its best. My twin brother and I lived in a single parent household and my mom worked two jobs to provide for us. We didn’t always have the best clothes and many times older boys would make fun of our clothes and/or shoes. My mom always talked about college to my brother and me. She would always say get an education. Once you get it, nobody can take it away from you. My mom read to us each night and always made us think about what we wanted to be when we grew up.

The Call Me Mister program at Clafin University sparked his interest based on the professionalism he saw in the students at school. He shared, “I loved seeing how well dressed the guys were and loved hearing about their experiences in the classroom. I wanted to help other young guys be successful.” He later shared that his memory of being bullied was one that he did not want other young children to experience.

Harold speaks of his faith as for how he keeps on doing what he sees as a calling and his life’s purpose:

I have leaned on my faith my entire life. I am a firm believer that my faith has been and continues to be the driving force behind my success. The quote, “Pick up the torch and

continue to run” has guided much of my thoughts and actions throughout life. There are so many young African American males who are looking for a mentor and a role model. I cannot let them down. I have to continue to educate, inspire and empower them to be their best!

Harold failed to mention during his entire interview that he was nominated Teacher of the Year for his school multiple times and represented the district on one occasion. Harold’s love for his students and his love for teaching resonated in his thoughts and his actions.

**Jerold Johnson.** Jerold Johnson was inspired to enter the teaching profession. His struggles as a student during his K-12 years have helped him in his quest to be the best teacher possible. In talking about himself, he felt it necessary to share his struggles: “My biggest struggle in a content area in school was social studies. Even though the teacher constantly said to think of it as a story, I always struggled putting the pieces together. It was so difficult for me to visualize the events and understand how many times one was either the cause or effect of another one.”

Post high school education was not something he thought about, growing up in a home with parents who did not attend college. Jerold’s parents were hard workers who seldom if ever spoke of college. He shared, “Unfortunately, I did not grow up in a household where college was an expectation at the end of high school. My mother and father always stressed the importance of working hard, but a college education was never at the forefront of their conversations.” As he spoke, you could hear the pride in his voice when he spoke about what guided his thoughts and actions.

I am the first to graduate from college in my family. I grew up in the church. My grandmother did not allow me to stay home. I contribute all my success to my faith. My faith has been the rock that has supported me through all my difficulties.

Fortunately, the desire to choose one's career choice does not always start in the home.

Jerold spoke about who planted the seed for teaching for him:

My eleventh grade English teacher inspired me to become a teacher. I remember how he connected to each student and made each one of us feel as if we were the only one in his class. I never felt afraid to ask a question or to say I didn't understand. He always encouraged me to do my best and the days I wasn't at my best, he would say, "you will do better tomorrow won't you?" Each day in my class, I try to be just like Mr. Harvey. He also helped me to understand my personal thoughts that guide my actions on a daily basis, "Don't be afraid to do something positive that has never been done."

Jerold spoke about his work as a teacher and how he was inspired to become a teacher.

However, it was only as I left the building that I found out he represented his school as Teacher of the Year the previous year. He continued to be modest in his accomplishments.

**Jimmy Jackson.** Jimmy Jackson was eager personal information about himself and his family:

My name is Jimmy Jackson and I'm 30 years old, and I'm the youngest of four siblings. I currently have no children and one jack-a-poo that's 11 years old and takes up all my time when I'm home. I'm currently working on my Master of Arts degree in Elementary Education and Special Education. I have many talents under my sleeve.

It was an understatement regarding Jimmy's talents. He plays the violin, viola, cello, base, guitar and piano. He was also the editor of a major magazine for about six years including doing graphic layouts.

Jimmy continued to share some personal struggles including his adoption, his faith in God and his entry into music:

My biggest struggle was feeling like I didn't belong or fit in. I have dealt with acceptance most of my life. I was adopted and felt like I wasn't loved or wanted, but it motivated me. It was never my goal to be an educator, I just simply wanted to find where I belonged and after many failed attempts the education field took me in. The person who I thought inspired me was my mom, she was first my music teacher. But after being completely honest to myself it was the hurt of my past that pushed me to prove that I was worth it. When it comes to my faith, its actually the foundation of what I do. At times I could possibly be the only God that a parents, students, staff, and community members will see. One of the quotes that I live by and actually say every day is actually a prayer. "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the thing I can, and the wisdom to know the difference." Example... I can't change what a person thinks about me, but I can how I act or treat that person.

**Marcus Mason.** Marcus Mason comes from a household in which education was not valued. He shared examples of his family's high school years"

I cannot recall ever having a conversation with my parents or anyone else about why getting an education was important. My parents were both high school dropouts. My eldest brother dropped out of school, and my sister graduated, but went straight to work.

With that being said, college was not an expectation for me, nor did my parents expect me to go to college.

Without a football scholarship, he is sure he would not have attended college since his plan was to go to the Navy. Although Mason was not raised in a family of scholars, school came very easy to him. He stated,

I never really gave a lot of effort to it. The only real struggle I can remember having in school was staying engaged and actually giving my best effort. I knew exactly what I needed to do to get a good grade and that is all I did. This transpired from grade school all the way through college.

When asked to share his path to his current career choice, he was more than eager to share the inspiration he got from his high school teacher:

I never thought I'd be an educator when I was growing up. The thought of becoming a teacher didn't happen until high school. My 11<sup>th</sup> grade chemistry teacher at the time, an African American woman, told me I should think about teaching chemistry and it just stuck with me. It was more of an afterthought because college wasn't in my plan, but it was always there. When I got the scholarship, and I got to college I picked chemistry education as my major all because of my high school chemistry teacher. I later changed my major to elementary education to be a part of the initial cohort of Call Me Mister program at Newberry College.

The Call Me Mister program helped further his interest in teaching and also helped develop him as a teacher. According to Marcus, "Call Me Mister gave me a sense of purpose as to why I was needed in the classroom and I just ran with it. I believe everyone has a purpose in life and often

we never find that purpose, but I found mine at a summer internship at Clemson University where the Call Me Mister headquarters is located.”

Marcus had much to share about his work as a teacher. He even said, “Teaching is a thankless job and often I feel underappreciated.” However, he considered it purpose in life. He also credits the Call Me Mister program for guiding how he teaches the student he serves:

However, I would not change what I do right now. Ghandi said, “The best way to find yourself, is to lose yourself in the service of others.” This quote inspires to me to keep doing what I do. I found myself by serving the high-risk youth of our nation. I serve those who think they do not have a chance until they meet me. As the Call Me Mister vision statement says, “I teach them not only reading, writing, and arithmetic. I also teach them self-esteem, imagination, and determination.” With that being said, my advice to any African American male that’s contemplating a career in education is to do it selflessly. Do it for the kids who need to see someone like you, who looks like them, in a place outside of a video, field, or court. Be willing to inspire the next, because at one point you were the next.

**Nolan Nixon.** Nolan Nixon understands poverty all too well. He was a product of the system. As he spoke, I could sense his life’s struggles.

Just thinking about my upbringing takes me to poverty and what I often heard growing up – *We just don’t have the money.* My biggest struggle was dealing with the effects of generational poverty and attempting to break through the stereotypes associated with poverty. There was often a lack of motivation, empathy and low academic performance.

It was his personal struggles in school that has helped him to better understand his students and how to help them through periods of struggles:

As a teacher, my greatest struggle is providing consistent tiered interventions for the students who need them. Time, resources, and personnel are common challenges that present themselves with this concern. However, I can understand what my students are experiencing since I fell prey to be an inconsistent student during high school and parts of college. It was not the goal for me to attend college.

People often think that it is every mother's dream to have their children finish high school and go to college, but such was not the case in the Nixon household:

Every male in my family worked in the same textile industry. When I decided to attend college and major in education, it was not accepted easily by my family. My family's lack of enthusiasm for me to attend college did not deter me from moving forward.

Nolan did not enter the profession because he wanted to be an elementary teacher. It was the financial incentive and the lack of African American teacher:

I was inspired to enter the field because I learned that there was a shortage of African American male teachers and there were federal dollars that would pay for college. It was a resource that I needed in order to pay for college and not have debt. My faith has guided me to continued success and opportunities in this field. I pray continually! A quote by Roy T, Bennett has inspired me to keep on keeping on. Instead of worrying about what you cannot control, shift your energy to what you can create.

**Tyson Timmons.** Tyson Timmons describes his upbringing in a two parent Christian household:

I lived my life in what I consider to be a working-class poor suburban neighborhood. My parents come from a generation where you go to church for everything, and this was something that they entrusted upon myself. Many of my childhood memories revolve



around the church. Sunday school, Sunday service, usher board meetings, Wednesday night bible study, Saturday church meetings, vacation bible school, church revival season, you name it and we were there.

At one point in his life, his father was into landscaping, with the contract to do work at his church. So not only was he at church to worship and participate in ministries, he also helped his father maintain the exterior landscape of the church.

Other significant contributions to Tyson's early life and childhood were focused around sports, education and parental support. He shared,

I was athletically gifted, but "vertically" challenged, as I stand at 5'7 on a good day. Sports and academics always seemed to come easy to me. Education was one of the utmost priorities in my household, as my parents imposed not only faith in God, but success in academics. I have vivid memories of my mother forcing me to read different literature as a *punishment* whenever I would get in trouble. Although this initially taught me to dislike reading, I helped me become good at it. In a household like this, with a strong and consistent father present, there was not a lot of *struggles*.

Upon graduation from high school, it was up to Tyson to make some decisions about what he would do next. One thing that was clear to him from as early as he could remember, that after high school it was either college or the military. He laughed as he shared how the decision was made, "Considering the fact that my mother threw all military promotional mail addressed to me in the trash as they came to our house, the decision for me to go to college was made before I even decided." Attending college was not a negative choice for him since he never found school to be difficult. She shared,

The biggest struggle to me was actually figuring out what I wanted to do with my life once I discovered I was not going to be a professional athlete. Coaching football seemed like the next best thing, since I couldn't play. Therefore, I researched the qualifications and began understanding what I would have to coach football. I quickly discovered that I would have to teach, and this is what started me on my journey into education.

Finding friends was never a struggle for Tyson. However, deciding what position his friends would play in his life was always the non-issue:

In my entire educational career, I think my biggest "struggle" came with finding a social circle that I "fit-in" with. What I came to realize is that I had different "sets" of friends. I had a set of friends that I would hang out with when I wanted to have fun, experience the night life, and just enjoy all the social elements of college. I could connect with these friends on a social level. I also had a set of friends that were academically gifted. I could connect with these friends on an intellectual/academic level. I also loved playing video games. Therefore, I connected with friends who loved doing this too. I could connect with these friends online or in my room as we shared the excitement of playing video games. Lastly, I had my athletic friends. We could always get together and workout, play basketball or indoor football together. We could connect on an athletic level. All of these circles that I was in were different and most of these friends couldn't cross over into another area. My social friends weren't my athletic friends, my athletic friends were not my intellectual friends, etc. As I got older, I found that even though I could be comfortable in all these different areas most of these friends didn't always connect. The one thing that brought us all together was the fact that we were in college. Some friendships didn't last, and some friends I lost touch with, but out of them all few of us

actually stuck around to graduate. Another “struggle” that I look back with regret on is knowing that I could have done more to help some of my friends who were struggling to graduate.

Tyson’s faith has contributed to his success as an educator in so many ways, but it was not hard to extrapolate and put into words:

The faith that I learned at an early age and continue to walk with everyday led me to the teachings of Jesus Christ. I am not professing to be the biggest, most devout Christian in the world, but I do try. With that said, as I read scripture and grow spiritually, I never let the “highs” and “lows” of education get to extreme. Whenever I am expiring something in life or in education that I think is beyond reason/explanation I have stories or scriptures from the bible to reflect on. I have come to realize that there is nothing in life that I can experience that Jesus didn’t experience. This keeps me grounded in my leadership and practices as an educator. I know this because Jesus was perfect, and he still had a lot of trials and tribulations in his life. I am far from perfect, so I know to expect things to happen. Knowing these facts always helps me get through the tough times.

When we started this conversation, Tyson said he needed to think about what he would do if he was not passionate about his career. This is what he shared:

For me, the answer to this question is best served through an old Native American story about two wolves. The story tells about an old Cherokee who is teaching his grandson about life. I think this story can be metaphorical representation of perspective. Being in education you have to feed the “wolf” inside of you that tells you that you are making a difference, that you can impact the lives of your students. There will be many who tell you that you can’t. Essentially, these people are projecting their insecurities and failures

on to you because They can't. Happiness, sadness, triumph, or failure all comes from within the person. Whatever you want to do in life is up to you. Just decide. Once you decide, pursue that goal and do not look back.

Tyson went on to share how he was passionate about education and purposeful about wanting to join and make a difference. He ended out interview with final thought, "the universe will bring you the right people and the right opportunities to make it happen. However, if being an educator is truly not inside of you, this will be one of the biggest mistakes you will make. So, in closing, I say this, which *wolf* are you feeding?"

**Will Washington.** Will Washington's thoughts of going to college came by way of his father. He shared, "I remember the day that I told my father of my first career choice. He informed me that I need more, and that I should go to college. I made it a personal mission to succeed regardless of the obstacles that were thrown my way."

Will was inspired to teach from his aunt who also is an educator. He remembers his Aunt Dianne taking him to her classroom during the summer to prepare her classroom. "I would be so excited — as if I was actually preparing my own classroom. I would arrange desks, create bulletin boards, organize bookshelves, and place name cards on each student's desk. It was a joy to be there and to do what I was doing. I am told that as a kid I would teach and preach to the cats and dogs and they would listen."

There were some academic struggles for Will in math. Yet, he persevered. He talked about how he sought help, "While in college, I also attended study groups and had tutorial sessions with my instructors. It was challenging but worth the struggle. It helps me realize that nothing can stop you if you but in the necessary time. I remember that when my students are struggling."

Will's faith was the foundation that has held him together, kept me grounded, and kept me hopeful. Faith goes hand in hand as it relates to his success as a teacher. "I believe the biggest obstacle is [not having] the belief that nothing is impossible. We have to remove the limits of where we are from and release the potential to make dreams a reality for all."

He often thinks about his work and his role as an African American teacher. "I live by and often share this quote of inspiration with young African American male contemplating college and a career in education. Nothing Is Impossible. Take the limits off of where we are from and release the potential to make dreams a reality!"

### **Data Analysis Results**

The data analysis results were presented according to the research questions and themes. Personal narratives were told in the first person, based on the individual narratives of each participant and supported by the data from the document analysis. The themes were identified based on the data collected and analyzed from the interviews and documents. After the background introductions of the participants, the findings were presented by research questions and themes.

Themes were gathered from the participants' interviews and examination of multiple documents that evolved from the data. Thirteen themes were developed from interview questions that were aligned to the research questions. After grouping and regrouping the 72 sub-themes the 10 themes emerged. Table 4.3 represents the alignment of themes and sub-themes to data sources. There are three themes for Research Questions 1 and 2. Research Question 1 themes were poverty, discipline problems, and cultural conflicts. Research Question 2 themes were communication, relationship, and culture. Research Question 3 are recruitment plan and

grassroots programs. Research Question 4 themes are empowerment/leadership and support/mentor.

Table 4.3

*Raw Data Matrix*

RQ	Themes	Sub-themes	Data Sources		
			I	D1	D2
1.	Poverty Discipline Problems Cultural conflicts	Poverty, Lack of Communication, Support, Handle Discipline, Isolation, Inconsistent, Consistent, Limited Promotions, Race, Classroom management	X		X
2.	Communication Relationship Culture	Backgrounds, Support, Communication, Relationship, Culture, Understandings, Intentional, Understanding, Learning Environment, Knowledge, Working Together, Teaching, Building Capacity, Safety, Reflection, Decision-making, Compliant, Selective, Experience,	X	X	X
3.	Recruitment Plan Grassroot programs	Recruit in Churches, Men Volunteers, Incentives, Programs, Plan, Observe, Calling, Commitment, Under-representative, Educator, Competitive Salary, Minority Teachers, Educators, Exit Interview, Leadership Roles, Professional Development, Scholarships, Respect for the Race, Practical Experience, Exit Interview, Promote Career in Middle and High Schools, Teacher Cadet program, Work with HBCUs, Community College	X		
4.	Empowerment/ Leadership Support/Mentor	Respect from Colleagues, Respect for Profession, Salary, Incentives for Advancement, Leadership Opportunities, Professional Development, Diverse Student Body, Incentives for Student Loans, Model for Minority Students, Promise of Support, Good Retention Program, HBCUs, Sign on Bonus, In-charge of Something, Motivation, Mobile Assignments, Advance Degrees, Think Tank	X		X

\*Data sources: I = Interviews; D1 = Documents from Participants; D2 = Documents from Other Sources

## **Research Question 1**

*How do African American male teachers describe the challenges they face in teaching at a predominately minority school?*

Education leaders and community representatives call for increasing the numbers of African American males in teaching to solve systematic and institutional challenges (Milner, 2017). In a conversation with the nine African American male teachers, each was asked a series of questions that ascertained information about the challenges they faced in teachings at a predominately minority school. Initially, they were asked to describe their experience in serving or teaching in an underrepresented community. They then shared their experiences and education as it related to understanding methods for dealing with difficulties in historically marginalized communities. Further, research suggests that public school teachers experience a series of conflicts when working with students in predominately minority schools (Kohli, Pizarro, & Nevarez, 2017). The participants shared examples of conflict and how the situations were handled. Their responses varied which could be attributed to their background. Each teacher was highly engaged in their responses. Although the responses differed, the dominant themes that emerged were poverty, classroom management, and isolation.

### ***Theme 1: Poverty***

Schools throughout the United States are becoming increasingly poorer. According to an analysis of 2015 data from the Southern Education foundation, 51% of students in PK-12 programs received free or reduced-price lunch which is an indicator for poverty (Coleman-Jensen, Rabbitt, Gregory, & Singh, 2017). Children in poverty often experience emotional and social challenges due to housing conditions, family issues, and physical problems (Coleman-Jensen et al., 2017). Seven of the nine participants in this study felt the level of poverty most of

their students endured was one of the greatest challenges they encountered in their classrooms.

**Barry Bailey.** My greatest challenge came with the socio economics status of the students I taught. The challenges I experienced teaching in a high poverty area being empathetic for the challenges my students faced was hard for me to overcome. I have been in teaching long enough to know what I need to look for and how I need to address it. When my student walk in the room, I can tell those who are hungry, in danger, and the list goes on. I keep crackers in my desk drawer, so I do not draw attention to their issue. I do not want other children to tease them or call them out. I also look for signs of trauma. Many of my children come from abusive homes. Although they may have not been beaten, they have seen their mother fighting with husbands or boyfriends and they bring those feelings of helplessness to the classroom. Because I know my children, I know when I need to take them outside the classroom, just for a few minutes and have reassure them.

My experience with serving underrepresented communities has been rewarding as an educator. Saddened, however that many of my students do not have the privilege of certain experiences that middle to upper class students enjoy. But in spite of them not having many material things, there is no doubt in my mind that they have so much love in their homes. However, I do feel obligated as an educator and mentor to give those extras to my students to afford them some of the same dreams. Yet, all is not that easy.

**Charles Cooper.** I am entering into my second full year in the educational system. I really haven't had to face many challenges in my first year. However, I have come to appreciate my upbringing, my childhood by my parents a lot better, especially for the safety I felt and providing me the things that I need. The children I teach tend to be very poor. I know for a fact



that when you are dealing with difficulties with minority students and communities, it is best to stay consistent with handling the issues your students face. There are issues on a daily basis. I refer my students to the counselor to deal with the struggles they face. I try to keep instruction in the classroom consistent so that they know what they can always expect in my classroom.

**Harold Harrison.** I often found myself being reflective when I thought about poverty, because I grew up in communities just like the one my students live in. I have become more and more grateful for my single-parent mother, raising us in poverty. She made the role as a mother look very easy, despite obvious circumstances. I am able to reflect on the lessons she gave me as a child which led to my productivity as an adult. I take these lessons, and I transfer them to my classroom. I know that just like my teachers did for me, I have to do for my students. I do not have to teach them like they are poor. I have to teach them like they are students. I always remember hearing Jessie Jackson speaking about living *in the ghetto, but the ghetto not living inside the person.*

**Jerold Johnson.** My experience in serving underrepresented communities was nonstop hard work but it was the most fulfilling experience of my life. As an African American male teaching in a high poverty low achieving school, you are more than a teacher. You have to become part of the community. Due to the lack of African American males that are viewed as positive you are innately believed to represent the entire male genre. You are expected in many cases to be a father figure to most students. Many of my students are raised by non-parents. You know, grandparents, cousins, aunts, sibling. As a teacher, I provided what little consistency in life many of them experienced. I would have grandparents calling me early in the mornings because the kids didn't come home. I wanted to be intentional in my involvement by supporting those grandparents. I wanted to let them know that I would be that one consistent figure in their

life. I wanted my students to know I cared about them. When they know that you cared, they would do more for you in the classroom. Students would come to my class with homework and on time when they did not do the same in other classes. I know that it was because they knew that I cared about their welfare. Knowing that all of my students were safe eased my mind, as much it did their parents and other caregivers.

**Jimmy Jackson.** I work in the special education field and have struggled with teaching due to the limited resources that are often provided for students and staff alike. To make matters worse just about 60% of our students live in poverty and highly minority. The hardest thing for me is the sense of pride that the parents have as if they are too good to receive help when they need it most. How are you supposed to teach a child that is starving? How do you teach a child who doesn't have a place to stay? How do you teach a student whose parent doesn't want them? These are just a few questions that we deal with and work out throughout the year. Honestly there was no classes that prepared me for communities that have poverty issues. Through experience and going out in the communities to see the needs and taking out personal time to show students I care. Teaching not only the student, but the parents, to have hope and forward thinking with their child's education.

**Nolan Nixon.** I do not think there is a job on earth without challenges. I have taught in high poverty schools where I was the 5<sup>th</sup> teacher. My students were high performers, but not because I was their teacher. They performed amazingly because I learned that it was my job to bring out the best in each of them. There were many times that I would have liked to have some other resources to teach a concept, but growing up I had to be resourceful, and my classroom was the same. The different I found teaching in high poverty schools is that my parents are too poor to support the classroom with the resources I need to enhance or support instruction.

**Will Washington.** My experiences in dealing with marginalized or should I say poor communities has been mainly based on my own experiences. I know who I am dealing with, so I start each day prepared for almost anything. When the students walk in my room in the morning, I check on my usual students. Those are the ones who do not get to school in time for breakfast and do not eat at home. I send them down to the cafeteria to Mrs. Martin. She has put aside those breakfasts for me. Then there are my two who do not have the best hygiene. So, I have their toothbrushes, soap and wash clothes in the supply room. I have worked out a plan with my custodian for them to wash in the bathroom in the basement. The custodian has stocked a few clothes items, socks, underwear and other things we have found they may need. We are discreet about how we handle these challenges. We do not want to make this an issue. We want to make sure all we do is about learning and not about the need.

### ***Theme 2: Discipline Problems***

Discipline problems are becoming more and more disruptive in schools throughout the United States. There are many issues that negatively impacts teaching and learning in all schools. However, discipline ranked among the highest type problems in schools of high poverty, high minority (Tamir, 2013). Schools with a high percentage of poverty and minority tend to recruit minority teachers when possible (Barnum, 2018). Researcher have found that many teachers of color indicated that they were hired to be disciplinarians and not for their intellect (Gasman, Samayoa, & Ginsberg, 2016). A study conducted in Boston Schools revealed discipline issues in other teachers' classrooms are usually handled by the Black male teacher in the building when one is available and other minorities when a Black male teacher is not available. Further, the study found the school leaders looked to the Black male teacher as

disciplinarians (Harper, 2018). Several of the teachers felt the same regarding how they were looked upon as disciplinarians.

**Charles Cooper.** I know for a fact that when you are dealing with difficulties with minority students and communities, it is best to stay consistent with handling the issues your students face. Children act out and engage in inappropriate discipline, which is something I am often confronted with. Yet, if you ask my principal, he would say my classroom is always under control. That is because I have high expectations for exceptional behavior. When you have high expectations for such behavior, you will see chaos with others see calm. The key to my control looking classroom is behaving consistently. There are rules throughout life, and consequences for when for inappropriate behavior. Everyone does not need to know when you have broken a rule, and everyone does not know the consequences you face. The trust you gain within the students and community is imperative for teachers and educators alike to be effective in understanding the issues your students face on a day to day.

Practicing law, particularly civil litigation and public administration in rural communities has always been a passion of mine. Therefore, I treat my classroom like a courtroom, and do not have to use the system often (laughter). Poverty has nothing to do with knowing how to behave. My students are poor, but they are not criminals. They are children. They are learning the rules.

**Harold Harrison.** My colleague looked to me to handle the Black males in the school when I was first hired. With good intentions, they assumed I could handle the difficult Black males simply because I was a Black male. However, I learned to deal with difficult people no matter their race or gender because of my training in the Call Me Mister program. Instead of becoming offended, I used it as an opportunity to share my learning with my colleagues, as a

result serving more students. Children of all ages will challenge you if you let them. You simply have to give respect and it will always come back to you.

**Marcus Mason.** The main challenge I would say that African American male teachers face at predominantly minority schools are being a disciplinarian for troubled kids by default due to a similar skin tone. Normally kids who have a history of behavior problems are sent to the African American male teachers in hopes that we can fix them. With that being said, most African American male teachers come from the communities much like our teaching community, so it is not difficult to relate or understand the situation. It is also why we do not accept excuses or believe the lies. Being familiar with their experiences, can be a double-edged sword as we are the relatable image, we also come with the stereotypes we must combat from initial introduction. Relationships are important because it requires a sense of trust, and if students trust and parents trust you then it's makes teaching a little easier.

**Nolan Nixon.** I do not think there is a job on earth without challenges. I have taught in high poverty schools where I was the 5<sup>th</sup> teacher. My students were high performers, but not because I was their teacher. They performed amazingly because I learned that it was my job to bring out the best in each of them. There were many times that I would have liked to have some other resources to teach a concept, but growing up I had to be resourceful, and my classroom was the same. There were also discipline concerns, but that is what students do. They will try you if they can. Once they realize they cannot get away with inappropriate behavior, they confirm and move on. Through it all, I always finish the year on a high note. I have always had a positive experience with the students.

Nolan shared how he earned the support from the principal to reverse the discipline issue:

I was constantly given a class of the rowdiest Black boys. And although I did not mind having them, I was constantly working with them on behavioral skills. Their behavior greatly improved. The principal was very happy, that is, until the State assessment scores! I had to let him know that I could do both discipline and assessment, but when I had all the behavior problems, my time was limited for instruction. The next year, the classes were evenly distributed, and my students blew the assessment out the roof! My class was the best-behaved class in school, as well as the smartest. I was no longer considered the school disciplinarian (laughter).

**Tyson Timmons.** Working in my school can be challenging, but I have come to adopt a simple philosophy that I took from my younger days of playing sports. Each day I wake up, I try to *win the day*. I think each school and community have certain challenges that are unique to that educational organization. I do not want to ever stop being prepared to teach children, even the ones who have problems that they find difficult to control. I think the biggest challenge I have faced as an African American male teacher is what I refer to as the *superhero complex*. Being a minority male working in these types of schools, often time colleagues, parents, and community stakeholders look to you as being the biggest “answer” to the problem with what is wrong with schools, especially when it comes to dealing with Black little boys behaving inappropriately. People assume that by putting an African American male in a teaching position to serve as a mentor and positive male role model, the students will magically behave, and the discipline problems will vanish.

### ***Theme 3. Cultural Conflicts***

Culture is defined as socially inherited, shared, and learned ways of living in a group (Avruch, 2000). Conflict is a competitiveness among groups or between individuals.

Conversely, cultural conflict is when different social groups have different ideas of acceptable behavior. In other words, different social groups have different cultural beliefs and ideas that conflict, and this conflict sometimes leads to discourse (Fong, Catagnus, Brodhead, Quigley, & Field, 2016). Cultural conflicts are problems that exist among teachers and teachers, teachers and students, and teachers and parents. Five of the participants mentioned cultural conflict in their responses.

**Barry Bailey.** My greatest challenges came from White classroom female teachers who made assumptions about me simply because of my race and gender. I can recall when President Obama was running for office. I had a White colleague say to me, 'I do not like him! He is a Muslim. I am a conservative republican.' I simply stated to her that being conservative does not make you a republican, there are conservative democrats. Furthermore, individuals should vote for candidates based on their platform and if it aligns with their personal belief system and most importantly their livelihood. A few months later, that same colleague was released as an employee from the district for being intoxicated and high from alcohol and marijuana. Her actions did not line up with being a conservative, which further led me to believe that her comments about President Obama had nothing to do with being a conservative, but prejudice based on his skin color and name. So, I did have issues with teachers as a challenge at my school. I also worry about what thoughts and beliefs she would be imposing on our students.

**Jimmy Jackson.** I have seen many instances of students and teachers struggling to bridge cultural gaps that exist between them. When they cannot make it happen, there is pure chaos in the classroom. Cultural conflicts with people of different background is very sensitive in retrospect. I am very considerate when listening to my teacher colleagues' comments and concerns, and in return demand the same respect from all parties. I try to help my White teacher

friends understand that Black folk do not want to be like White folk. They simply want to be respected for what they bring to the table.

**Marcus Mason.** I have had the opportunity to teach kids that come from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Since I've been teaching, I've never really had a conflict with my students or parents because I've always tried to respect every person no matter where they come from. In my experience, if you get to know your students then you know what is not culturally acceptable with them and it's important to not force your culture on them. For example, in most southern states we consider saying "ma'am and sir" to be respectful. However not all people are from these states and not all people agree with it. I've seen teachers get upset to the point that they will write discipline referrals for students who don't say "ma'am or sir". I find it unnecessary and culturally irresponsible when teachers try to force this on students.

Experience is the greatest teacher so to be culturally competent we must experience different cultures. I feel it's important to keep an open mind and always accept people for who they are despite differences in any capacity.

**Tyson Timmons.** I know that I do not know everything, so in the future, I will continue to volunteer in my community in order to be culturally responsive. You can't be culturally competent if you are not a part of the culture itself. Secondly, continue to establish relationship with those in the community to help leverage the best possible outcomes for our students and community. All these things are important to me in cultivating my cultural competency.

**Will Washington.** Challenges are challenges, that is simply how I look at things. I have had great success as an educator in communities that are culturally rich. This is a community that understands who they are and where they came from. There are Black communities like that. The parents from those homes or communities want the same things you and I want. They



want their children to learn and do great things just like you and I do. Culturally, they are different, but inherently, we are all the same. I don't make excuses for the lack of student success. Instead, I look for the good and build from there. That is what we do in the Black community, and that is how I teach. If a student makes a 20 out of 100, I focus on that 20 and not the 80. I always ask the question, "What is it that my student knows?"

## **Research Question 2**

*How do African American male teachers describe the benefits of teaching at a predominately minority school?*

Based on research studies and media reports, teaching at predominately minority schools can be challenging for teachers (Achinstein, Ogawa, Sexton, & Freitas, 2010; Carey et al., 2018). However, the results of several studies found hiring minority male teachers as one answer to those challenges, particularly for African American students (Boswell, 2010; El-Mekki, 2018). African American male teachers in predominately minority schools have been found to communicate efficiently with parents and students, form relationship that are essential to teaching, and respect the culture of those they serve. They seek opportunities to improve the learning environment while utilizing different techniques to better meet the needs of students they serve. Here are 9 mini cases of African American male teachers describing the benefits of teaching at a predominately minority school. Their voices will be heard in one or more of the three emerging themes: communication, relationship and culture.

### ***Theme 4: Communication***

In all that we do, communication is paramount. However, in schools, when ineffective communication happens, the system can be disruptive. As a teacher, verbal and written communication becomes necessary on so many levels. Teachers have to communicate with

administrators, parents and students. Student-teacher communication is needed to make sure our students are successful. There are restraints and factors that often get in the way of effective communication such as, time, resources, and language barrier. Several of the participants discussed communication as a beneficially to teaching.

**Barry Bailey.** Being an African American male in a predominantly minority school, I communicate and function as a professional in the same manner I would at any of the other schools I have worked in my career. The students are no different from other students I have taught throughout my professional career. I have always had a great rapport with students. It starts with respect, trust, and relationships. Communication is key in and out of the classroom. Once students trust me and know I genuinely care about them, the sky is the limit. I use technology in and out of the classroom so that my students always have access to instruction. Also, I want my parents to be able to reach me when they need me, not just when I need them. Communication is a two-way street if it is going to work. Plus, I just love talking to my students. They brighten my day.

**Harold Harrison.** One of the ways I improve my classroom environment is by building capacity in the of my students and other teachers and assistants on my team. A technique I am currently using is single gender training and teaching with poverty in mind. The brains in males and females are different and address any different techniques you may use base on race, ethnicity or gender. Discussion is the best way to communicate. Listening to their commentary, and clearly communicating with them based on an appropriate relationship has proven for be effective for me.

**Jimmy Jackson.** I am a talker, and in the African American community, we talk. So, the biggest benefit for me is that I can communication with my students daily with the

expectation that they will learn. Communication is key when teaching at any school, but it is also the hardest things to do in a predominately minority school because most of the student do not understand or know how to use their language. Minority students, particularly African American students, are very smart. However, they often use their voice to speak inappropriately when they are trying to manipulate the European school system.

**Marcus Mason.** Teaching at a predominantly minority school gives me a sense of pride and fulfillment. In my experience the best way to communicate is to be upfront. I think having discussions with people who have different opinions is beneficial to everyone. One way I do this in my class is through a strategy known as philosophical chairs. With this strategy I give students a topic in which they must agree, disagree, or be neutral. They must explain their reasoning and listen to others with different opinions. When implemented correctly the activity provides everyone a safe way to express their feelings.

**Nolan Nixon.** Teaching for me is more of a calling and not just a job. That is why I involve parents to help me be successful with my students. Parents are the main people who want their children to be successful. I think communication is key to success in the classroom, so I solicit input from my parents often. I know that nothing can happen with instruction if I do not keep an open line of communication with my parents. Additionally, I have an awesome time with my students and families. We celebrate success continually. I communicate with parents daily. I also explain their role as a recipient of the communication...daily. We are both held accountable. I also work with my principal and other teachers to do what is best for my students. There are times when we disagree based on what I think is culturally correct. On those few times, I am able to agree to disagree while still remaining professional.

### ***Theme 5: Relationship***

Building relationships is necessary to student success but cannot happen overnight. In schools, particularly elementary schools, it takes commitment to the process from teachers, parents and students. Understanding what make students feel successful and how they learn and function, can benefit both the teacher and the student.

**Barry Bailey.** The first technique I employ before trying to teach students the curriculum, is building relationships. my communication with students is all the same regardless color, nationality, or gender. I have always had a great rapport with students. It starts with respect, trust, and relationships. Children have to know that they can trust me and know that I care about them. Relationships do not just happen overnight, and they do not just happen because you are the teacher. Effective relationships take some time and they continue to build. I try a lot of techniques, but the one that most often works is food and treats (laughter). I bring food to share during my *Talk Time*. This is the time when I have one-on-one conversations with my students about academics and any other thing that is on their minds. Allowing my students to have voice and use it helps them to see that I care about them.

**Charles Cooper.** Building relationships with my students is most important if we are going to work together. I believe it's about gaining a trusting relationship with your students. Find out what the student like to do outside of school and find out what they love most about school and build from there. Most students predominately minority school don't communicate with their parents or guardians at home. The conversation or relationship they have with an adult is more than likely with their teacher and it is important for the teacher to go the extra mile and build a trusting relationship with their students.

**Harold Harrison.** I think teaching in and of itself is beneficial. I do this through building relationships and teaching strategies that are beneficial to all students but particularly

for student with my hue. While I am color conscious, I prefer to think of myself as a teacher who can impart knowledge to those who I teach. Sharing educational strategies with my colleagues is what I try to do when I see those who are receptive to learning more. I am intentional about inviting others who are willing to work with me and not by pushing them away with intimidating jargon that goes over their heads and not to their hearts.

**Tyson Timmons.** Building strong relationships is crucial to everything that goes on in my classroom. I have to know my students in order to teach them, and they have to be able to relate with me. In order to build effective relationship, I try to know their learning styles and things that they enjoy doing outside of school. By know this, I can make learning relevant to them. I also keep the students at the forefront of my classroom decision making. I allow the students to take various leadership roles in the classroom, even teaching (to a certain degree). I am also highly observant and reflective of what is going on in my classroom. If something works or doesn't, I notate this. If it doesn't work, I do my best to analyze why it didn't work and what I can do differently next time to make it more effective.

### ***Theme 6: Culture***

Public education is dominated by White middle-class teachers. The race of the children in public education is in stark contrast to those heading the classrooms. More and more, the same profile does not hold true for students. Schools leaders and classroom teachers have to be color conscious in order to be appreciative of the culture in which they live and the value they bring to learning. Culture is not a list of traditions, holidays, or languages; it is a lived experience unique to each individual (Carver-Thomas, 2018). As African American male educators, several shared how they benefitted more when they appreciated and valued the culture of their students and how they worked to stimulate their intellectual development.

**Charles Cooper.** I honestly believe that the benefits of teaching in a highly minority school is both beneficial to the teachers and to the students. The culture of African American people is particularly engaging and quite colorful. Understanding that will help teachers be more understanding of what these young people bring to the classroom. I believe it is important to know and understand the background that your students come from. Intentionally staying engaged with students showing them a positive consistent force that puts them first. Show up in their neighborhood and personally witness where they come from, drive through their favorite hangout spots they talk about at school. Find out what music they like to listen to and go look it up for yourself. Learn the jargon they use in their speech at recess. Learn things that they are interested in and try to tie it in with a school lesson. Use it in your own vernacular to effectively communicate, understand the behaviors and beliefs of your students.

Students today are not fans of the traditional classroom setting (Belvel, 2009; Hensley-Pipkin, 2015). For example, students like to move around in the classroom and hate being assigned to one area or desk in the classroom. So, I believe having a non-traditional type classroom setting will benefit the learning environment. Instead of having desk in rows or in groups, you will have fewer desk in the classroom and have couches, maybe a rocking chair, or allowing students to have an area to work on the floor. Also, have two or three long tables where students can work in groups as well. This will allow students to work together with different people in the class regarding race, and gender. Also, at the same time it will allow students to have their own space in the classroom to work independently as well.

**Jerold Johnson.** Teaching at a predominantly minority school gives me a sense of pride and fulfillment. We all know that these schools and students benefit from strong male role models. As a teacher we understand how important it is and it's a great feeling knowing the

difference we can make. One of the major things I do is infuse cultural scenarios into my teaching. I incorporate topics that are meaningful to my students. If I have a class of mainly boys, I use more sports-based questions. With girls I typically try to figure out what is going on culturally for them and incorporate that into instruction. I have taught in schools that are 98% Black, so infusing cultural scenarios into instruction comes naturally for me, particularly in schools with a high number of students of the same ethnicity. I honestly create a culture in my class in which I use the same method of communication with all students, because I have the same expectations of all students.

**Jimmy Jackson.** I benefit when my students benefit. If I am to help my Black boys and girls be successful, I cannot minimize their culture and I have to meet my students where they are. My African American students are products of kings and queens and need to be treated as such. Teaching them morals and giving them a sense of an ethical code is how it was done in African, and it is what I do. The Golden Rule probably seem so cliché, but most of them don't have any guidelines. By starting them with this simple rule, it helps them become better people.

My students are loud by nature and very musical. I have brought Hip-Hop, Pop, and R&B music into instruction simply to teach math and reading, or concepts like counting numbers, sight words, or the days of the week and month of the year. Black kids would learn so much more if we incorporate music into instruction. Honestly, I don't change a thing, just because I am a different race, creed, religion, or gender than my student, I'm still going to teach them through my lenses. The world wants us to live in a racial specific world, but in reality, everything is derived from the blending of cultures.

**Tyson Timmons.** I do my best to stay open minded when I am teaching in a predominately minority school. I know that Black people are more direct and not

I make it a point to treat everybody the same. I am a person that says what I mean and mean what I say. I also make it a point to be positive/optimistic all the time. I am very selective and descriptive with my comments and forms of feedback. What I have found is that for the most part, when I keep a “high standard” for praise, most students want to work to meet my satisfaction to receive my praise. When I keep things positive and work to help students improve, I seldom have to say negative things to my students.

**Will Washington.** Working in a predominately minority school has worked well for me, and I think it has also been beneficial for my students. I feel that I function very well with my students, parents and my colleagues. I certainly understand the culture, beliefs and backgrounds of the Black students in this area. As a minority, my own experiences prepared me to meet the needs of the population that I serve. I believe that respecting one’s culture is the key to effective instruction. Teachers can find the joy in teaching and do a better job of teaching when they are not trying to mold children into who they are, but instead, learn to appreciate what they bring to the classroom.

### **Research Question 3**

*What strategies do African American male teachers suggest would improve the recruitment African American males in the teaching profession?*

The lack of diversity in public school classrooms is a big problem, particularly as it relates to African American males. Research has shown that when students have role models who remind them of themselves, they succeed at a greater rate (Carver-Thomas, 2018). African American male students with same-race teachers between third and fifth grades are 39% less likely to become high school dropouts. Hearing the voices of these nine African American male teachers share strategies and recommendations to improve the recruitment of men of color in the



teaching profession was inspiring. Their voices lead to the emergent of two themes: recruitment plan and grassroots programs.

### ***Theme 7: Recruitment Plan***

There is little doubt that school districts strive to recruit the highest quality teachers available to serve the children in the district. More and more districts are being strategic about how they go about meeting the demands of the district. Although it is not a requirement, some districts have found that creating a recruitment plan allows them to meet the growing demands of the district with planned recruitment strategies and goals.

**Barry Bailey.** Teaching can be a calling, but it is not often something that is answered (laughter). Yet, I am almost always trying to recruit other Black males into the profession. I tell my Black male friends and those I meet who I feel a vibe that they would be good candidates, that they are needed in our schools to lead and guide our students especially young Black boys. They need to see someone like them in the classroom who understands what it is like to be a Black male. I would recommend to our district to be vigilant in recruiting Black men by ensuring it is explicitly stated in the recruitment plan.

**Charles Cooper.** Educating our children is not something that I think should be a one-off. It is something that I believe the African American community should be charged with making a conscious commitment to doing. I believe it is a charge that every African American should keep. It is important to always have others in the fight with you to conquer the issue at hand. Whether it's, trying to make the underrepresented communities better or recruiting more African American males into the school system. I truly believe that in order to persuade any male into the education system is to provide a reasonable salary or incentives within the district.

**Jerold Johnson.** I would recommend that school district include programs such as Call Me Mister into their recruitment plan. This will ensure support is given to high school students prior to going to college. I was a part of the second cohort of the Call Me Mister program. This was during the foundational years where they offered a full scholarship. This was an awesome tactic for getting African American males into the study of education. Most people realized beyond the scholarship it wasn't a passion and quit or dropped out of the program. It is program such as the Mister program that are needed because they guide those who have the passion and weed those out who will not be best for children.

**Jimmy Jackson.** Recruitment, recruitment, recruitment is what I would continually say for attracting African American males into the profession, particularly at low achieving, high poverty, high minority schools. Honestly, I feel that most African American males who teach at highly minority school have been effective in changing the lives of students of the same race, and other minority students. I could be in denial about this, but in South Carolina that is all I see. I see a bigger percentage of African American males at the majority minority school or all African American school than others. The only recommendation would be to make sure you put it in writing, that you are recruiting for Black male teachers, not just teachers.

**Marcus Mason.** I think it should be a state mandate to train teachers of color. If it is state mandated, then it will happen. You can be sure that the state will put it in a formal plan.

**Nolan Nixon.** As I look at the faculty make-up at my school and in my district, I can honestly say that we need help for the sake of our minority students. We have a predominately White faculty who tend to recommend suspension for minority students because they so not know how to work with that group of children. My three recommendations to change the racial and gender make-up of school staff would be to create a recruitment plan that (1) require African

American male teachers to train and/or partner with White teacher to conduct cultural awareness training; (2) Have engaging programs on the college campus to support teacher training programs; and (3) Provide opportunities for the education majors to increase the practical experience time in schools.

**Will Washington.** There are multiple strategies that can be used to attract minority teachers to the profession. However, I believe that an intense recruitment program that focuses on minority teachers based on the student population will benefit all schools and is definitely necessary. The current teacher shortage is a direct reflection of the need for more minority teachers. Many college students are selecting other majors that would yield higher wages after completing college. I would recommend that we promote careers in teaching in middle school and high and continue to encourage high school students to participate in Teacher Cadet programs and other opportunities that would increase their interest in educational careers. More importantly, I think society needs to understand the teaching profession as professional people and reward all of them as such. African American males and other males enter other professions in order to support their family. A career in teaching is cost prohibited if you want to operate in a middle-class world.

Also, I would suggest hiring more minority teacher would be a recommendation that I would make in order for students to see more people who look like them. As I understand it, there are only about 2% African American teachers, so the supply is low. Therefore, the focus for hiring should be on race and not gender. Further, we need to make sure we understand the needs of the school teaching staff mirrors that of the student population. It enhances my understanding of the needs of my school population.

***Theme 8: Grassroots Programs***

This theme was called grassroots programs because the participants recommended approaches that are not common and would be good start ups for district personnel to consider for recruitment. Webster defines grassroots as something totally new. While some of the recommendation may be used in some district or communities, they were not readily available in the literature for strategies for recruitment. Four African American male teacher participants provided unique strategies for consideration.

**Barry Bailey.** I think if we truly want to recruit Black men into the teaching profession, we have to step outside the traditional box. It will not happen by happenstance. Start by going into churches to express the need. Have the preacher ask the congregates, missions, and auxiliaries to volunteer in schools. This will capture their interest. Also, I would ask that school district partner with the military. The military has more men than any other organization. Most retire when they are in their 40s. This would be an opportune time for them to begin working with children.

**Charles Cooper.** I do not know if it has been considered, but often times communities provide housing incentives to have police officers in the area. It would be good to provide such incentives to African American male teachers. Also, incentives for student loan forgiveness within the school district could be an added incentive to increase the wages or student loan forgiveness.

**Harold Harrison.** Attracting African American males to the community is not something that will just happen. However, I do think that it is the responsibility of educators to be mindful of the needs of their district and their school, and work to bring those people into the profession. As a Black male teacher, I so feel it is my responsibilities for two reasons. One reason is to keep the wrong people out of the profession, and the other is to bring the right people

into the profession. Being an African American male doesn't automatically qualify one to be an effective teacher in high minority schools. As an effective African American male educator, I know the impact that can be made predicated upon competence and character. This goes for any person, no matter their race, but particularly for African American males, because of the tremendous shortage and the tremendous need. So, my recommendation would be for me to get together with other Black male teachers and form a 501c3 that focuses on recruitment for Black male teachers in P-12 schools.

**Tyson Timmons.** I firmly believe that we need to have more African American males in schools. However, I do not think we should use the word recruit to attract them to the profession. I think the word "recruit" has a negative connotation. I feel like this because at some point in recruiting comes "convincing". Over the years, I have seen people of all races and genders come and go. I think the people that stick it out over time are passionate and have a deep connection with the education minority students. I feel it is a waste of time and resources to truly "pour" into a person and they end up quitting after a couple years. As an educator, controlling the things we can control, I think the emphasis should be placed more on "teacher development" and turning those that want to teach into better teachers, versus just trying to get people into the profession. I also feel this way because a passionate, highly effective teacher does not have a race, gender, sexual orientation, etc. If you are good, you are good, and students will learn from you. I think there is no "true" magic to be an African American male teacher. It is a convenient starting point because we are the anomaly in education, but if they can't teach, the students will be better off in the classroom of a teacher that can.

#### **Research Question 4**

*What strategies do African American male teachers suggest would improve the retention of African American males in the teaching profession?*

Black male teachers make up only 2% of the total teacher core in the United States. That number has remained flat because African American male teachers experience more barriers than their White colleagues with fewer opportunities for mentorship and career advancement; and feeling of isolation due to the limited or only teacher of race and gender on the staff (Bryan & Milton-Williams, 2017; Hanford, 2017). Although there are barriers, the strong impact that African American male teachers have been found to have on students who similar background is significant to academic success. A recent study found that when at least one African American teacher is present in the classroom, particularly in the elementary grades, there is a decrease in African American students' likelihood of dropping out, especially among the most economically disadvantaged African American males (Gershenson, Hart, Lindsay, & Papageorge, 2017). These nine African American male teachers shared their thoughts on retention to increase the number of African American male teachers in elementary schools.

#### ***Theme 9: Empowerment/Leadership***

School districts that thrive encourage others to stay in the profession by empowering teachers and staff to be active members of the decision-making process (Kafele, 2012; Sargent, 2014). According to Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017), teachers may leave the profession when there are limited opportunities to advance, overload of behavior issues, and lack of cultural opportunities. The participants in the study spoke about empowerment when discussing strategies to retain teachers in their district.

**Charles Cooper.** I went into education because I wanted to be a principal. I have never really wanted to be a teacher, but I knew I had to teach before I could be in any leadership role. I would like to see a minority leadership program as part of a retention plan.

**Jerold Johnson.** As a Black male teacher who went through K-12 public schools I only had only one male Black teacher. I remember that there were two other Black male teacher who I was looking forward to being in their class. Well you guessed it. By the time I got to that grade in 5<sup>th</sup> and again in 6<sup>th</sup>, both were no longer at that school. This would lead me to believe that they should have had a good retention program. A retention program that has a leadership and an empowerment component. I think when you empower others, you can be sure that they will make choices that will benefit all. I for one know the importance of have a more diverse staff. I know what it felt like to sit in class and feel as though the teacher did not understand me. I make it my mission to never have a student in that same position. I then went to an HBCU that was predominately black and saw how teachers of different ethnicities somewhat struggled to understand the experience of the students.

**Jimmy Jackson.** My motivation is my heart for my students. They are what make me want to come back to school every day. I have a wide range from non-verbal, developmentally delayed, autistic, physical impartment, down syndrome and students with other disabilities. Even though it's my name on the door as teacher, they really are the ones who teach me because of their different ways of looking at the world. I know other African Americans who believe they could do more with others who look like me. But I also know that they will not come to a district that does not have a minority leadership program with a special provision for African American males who want to have advancement opportunities.

**Marcus Mason.** I have been fortunate in this district. The superintendent and the principal have included me in multiple leadership positions. Sometimes I feel like a rock star (he laughs). There are times when my principal is headed out the door and he will ask me to tag along for potential leadership opportunities. I think district and school leaders should ensure leadership or other opportunities for African American male teachers to have ample chances for advancement. I also think it would be important for the school and district leaders to have a think tank to understand what is important for the African American males they employ and to gather strategies from us that would be useful to the district in hiring and keeping other African American male teachers.

**Nolan Nixon.** I am an affective, diplomatic, and democratic educator. My leadership style allows me to work in harmony with individuals while accomplishing the tasks at hand. I absolutely love making a difference with students, parents, and educators. As such, I think district include a retention plan with a leadership component that meet diverse needs of all teacher with a line drawn to African American males. In terms of what needs to happen in order to retain other educators such as myself, I think it would be important to the district to set up a recruitment program and working with HBCUs in the state and other southeastern university.

**Tyson Timmons.** I don't see a lot of representation at the highest levels of educational leadership. I would like to be a part of the leadership executives that make the decision to have education be a more attractive, teacher-friendly career. I also want to bring balance to education. I would like to see an educational system that is fairer and more equitable, especially to minority students. I am in no rush to get to this point, but these two goals give me determination to continue the journey I started on in college.



**Will Washington.** Every retention plan needs some sort of leadership component. I do not know who want to advance in my school, and I am not just talking about Black people. I don't know what White or Hispanic person wants to be a principal or supervisor. What I do know is that we do not have anything in place to prepare them for the opportunity should it happen. We do not have a transition plan or succession plan. We need to know of potential opportunities and have measures in place so that we are ready. My grandma would always say, "Be ye ever ready. When the opportunity comes, know that you have a better chance of getting what you seek if you are prepared".

### **Theme 10: Support/Mentor**

Minority teacher comprise of 17% of the teaching profession in the United States, and less than 50% of the nation's schools fail to employ any teachers of color (Gasman et al., 2016). As such, school district leaders must be even more concern about supporting those teachers who are hired in order to retain them over time. One of the challenges to retaining minority teachers of color is the clustering of the most hard-to-staff, economically disadvantaged and lowest performing schools with little to know support (Gershenson et al., 2017). The participants discussed the types of support, ways to empower leaders, and respect for the system.in this small school district as a means for retaining teachers in the district and school. Several of the participants found the working conditions to be exhausting and, at times, overwhelming, but the support that they got in this district made the challenges bearable and a real reason for staying in the district.

**Barry Bailey.** My identity as an African American male educator has had a significant impact on the schools in which I have worked. My colleagues and students have seen me as a positive force, role model, and leader. I do see providing respect as a way to retain me in the

profession. While I do value the respect that I have gotten, I also am mindful that I give respect in return. I think the support begins with how I as a Black man is respected in the profession.

**Charles Cooper.** Having a diverse working environment impact the teaching very much, especially in a predominately minority school. It allows the teacher to see a different perspective between each student and as well with their colleagues also. Maybe on teacher weakness maybe another teacher (co-worker) strength, which that particular teacher can help out in a situation that the needs help in. I truly believe that in order to persuade any male into the education system to remain in the district they will need local, state and national support. Support comes in many different ways. It would have been helpful for the district to provide me with a reasonable salary, so I did not have to get a part-time job just to survive. Or, if the district could have provided financial incentives, such as providing a housing stipend for living within the community of the school district; or incentives for student loan forgiveness. Many people leave just because they cannot afford to stay.

I participated in the Call Me Mister program during college. In fact, they were instrumental in me moving to this school district. When I have questions as it relates to student instruction, handling situations, or advanced education, I can pick up the phone or text and they are giving me advice. I can also reach out to other *Misters* who are in the district or at other schools. The program is like a fraternity. There is always a brother willing to help.

**Harold Harrison.** Our district has a mentoring program, but it is not specific to the needs of African American male teachers. Sometimes I feel like I am on an island all by myself. If the program was specific to my needs and not generic, my feelings would be addressed. I also think the mentoring program should be fluid so that it could be revised to meet the needs of the person and not a cookie cutter approach to support.

**Marcus Mason.** I have been a part of efforts to recruit minority teachers, but we have not done much to keep them. This is my second year in this district. I was recruited to come to this district. I think the district I had worked at for the past 6 years would have benefited from finding out why I was leaving. There was not an exit interview. That interview would have provided the district with data for retaining other minority students. You see, I left because I was only good enough to teach the students with discipline problems. I did a great job with them, and my test scores rose to that of the classroom with little behavior problems. I was able to get my test scores up, not because I am a Black man, but because I was a good teacher. My prior district would have benefited by allowing me to lead professional development sessions on effective strategies for working with student of color. Had they valued me, I would still be in that district because I loved my students, the families and the other teachers.

**Nolan Nelson.** My principal provided support for me with several discipline, but this is one that I remember clearly. I was constantly given a class of the rowdiest Black boys. And although I did not mind having them, I was constantly working with them on behavioral skills. Their behavior greatly improved. The principal was very happy, that is, until the State assessment scores! I had to let him know that I could do both discipline and assessment, but when I had all the behavior problems, my time was limited for instruction. The next year, the classes were evenly distributed, and my students *blew the assessment out the roof!* My class was the best-behaved class in school, as well as the smartest. I was no longer considered the school disciplinarian (laughter).

### Summary

Three forms of data were used in order to triangulate the data. The data were analyzed from interviews and two forms of documents. Four research questions guided this study and five

major themes emerged from the results of the data. Section 2 delineated the methodology that guided this qualitative case study. This section was designed to share information on this qualitative study. Information was written to address specifics about research design, the researcher's role, participant selection, data collection, data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, results, findings, and conclusions. A case study design was selected for this study because it was important to ascertain the information from a descriptive account of what happens in nine mini cases.

It was found that the challenges for African American male teachers at predominately minority schools were minimal when they were empowered and a part of the decision-making process. It was also found that that African American male teachers thought communication was important for teaching minority students. African American male teachers felt they should be targeted when recruiting but offered little recommendations for recruiters. They did, however, believe the guidance given from mentoring programs in college help guide African American male teachers into the professions. Further, it was found that African American male teachers thought strategies such as mentoring and empowering the male teachers to be a part of the decision-making process were effective strategies for retention of African American males in the teaching profession. This study revealed how a plan of action was operating in one school due to the principal's desire to recruit and hire minorities, but the district did not have a formal plan.

Throughout the data analysis process, the participants continually referenced the need for diversity in the classroom. While the participants did not negate the involvement and work of their European colleagues, they did believe the children would benefit more if they had people in charge who looked like them and who understood their struggles. As such, *Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms* was the theme of the three training sessions that will be

woven throughout the three workshops. Session One will focus on: *Crisis for Minority Teachers in the Classroom*. Further, the participants expressed their concern that although they may use culturally relevant pedagogy in their classroom, it was not a district initiative therefore the teacher tend to teach based on strategies that they were familiar with and not strategies specific to the children they serve. While it was difficult to specifically identify instructional strategies used by African American males to support student success, it could be noted that they did use culturally relevant pedagogy to meet the needs of their student with very significant achievement results. Additionally, it was found that African American male teachers shared stories of the importance of communication and engagement with students and parents. Finally, it was found that cultural diversity was an important aspect for instruction, but it was not built into the curriculum as a key aspect for teaching.

Session Two will address: *Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms: Recruiting Teachers of Color and African American Male Teachers*. The participants in the study were pleased with their assignment but felt the recruitment process could be more intentional. They also believed that some recruitment of African American males was done for the purpose of hiring a disciplinarian. Participants discussed their concerns about being assigned majority classes of discipline problems. These findings underscore the ways in which African American males are perceived as disciplinarians and not for their intellect.

Session Three was created to address the need to retain African American male teachers: *Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms: Retaining Teachers of Color & African American Male Teachers*. The findings revealed a need for district training that not only focused on the need to recruit minority and African American male teachers, but the retention process was equally as important. Districts spend thousands of dollars seeking to attract the most

qualified candidate and minorities, but there are often times limit initiatives on how to keep them in the district.

In Section 3 of this project study, I will develop a workshop with three sessions that will happen one day per week for three days. After the data were analyzed, a finding supported the need for my project to address strategies specific to recruiting and retaining minority teachers including African American males. One session will provide the recruiters with relevant information, interactive discussions, and statistics that support the for recruiting and hiring minority and African American male teachers. The second session will focus on recruitment strategies to support the diversity in the school district. The third session will address strategies that will support the retention of African American male teachers and other minorities.

### Section 3: The Project

This project gather data from nine African American male teachers from six elementary schools in one school district. The results of this study found that the district made efforts to recruit African American males, but the plan for recruitment was an initiative of a former superintendent and not that of the current administration. Further, there was little evidence to support cultural relevant instruction although the literature and research suggest the increase in achievement when students can make connections when taught. Based on the findings, three training sessions will be developed. The sessions are based on the theme: *Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms*. Session 1 will address the crisis that exist for minority teachers in the classroom. Session 2 will address strategies the need for purposeful recruitment. Session 3 will provide relevant information regarding being intentional after hiring minority teachers in order to retain them in the classroom.

Session 1 provides research, data and personal stories that support the crisis that exist in classrooms throughout the United States for minority teachers, particularly African American males. Session 1 provides data that addresses the minority teacher shortage. African American Male Teachers. African American male teachers, “make up only 2% of the total teaching force in the U.S. School and district leaders can use research and information gained from this session to better understand the need and why it is important to address diversity as it relates to increasing student achievement. Additionally, the information gained from this session is valuable when developing district goals specific to the diversity of faculty and staff. Further, this session is important because the participants get the opportunity to hear the perspectives of African American male teachers regarding hiring, instruction and retention. They also provided recommendation for recruitment and retention.

Session 2 will examine the needs for recruiting teachers of color and African American male teachers. Many districts miss the opportunity to recruit minority students simply because they fail to visit Historically Black College and Universities (HBCU) or training programs that with targeted support for African American male students. Knowing where to look and the characteristics to look for is critical when recruiting minority teachers. Further, knowing the critical importance of hiring based on the supply and demand for minority teachers. “Minority teachers are more motivated to work with minority students in high-poverty, racially and ethnically segregated schools, a fact that could reduce high attrition at those schools” (Shanker Institute, 2016, para 3).

Session 3 will address strategies for retention of Minorities and African American Male Teachers who make up only 2% of the total teaching force in the U.S. Many districts miss the opportunity to recruit minority students simply because they fail to visit Historically Black College and Universities (HBCU) or training programs that with targeted support for African American male students. Knowing where to look and the characteristics to look for is critical when recruiting minority teachers.

The three training sessions should be conducted twice yearly at the beginning of each semester. The project is intended to support the minority hiring and retention program in the district. The goal of the training sessions is to support the district leadership in understanding the need for diversity in the classrooms.

### **Rationale**

The study was conducted to understand the perceptions of the African American male teachers in this one school district. As such, the perceptions of that one group should be the guiding factor when creating the training sessions. It is predicted that in the next century, there



will be 40% minority student population and 5% percent minority teachers that will create a critical shortage of educators and role models (National Education Association, 2017). Failure of districts to focus on increasing the number of minority teachers and leaders in schools could contribute to a failing urban dilemma National Education Association, 2017).

The trainings are designed to provide educators with requisite skills that would prepare them to recruit minority and African American males to their schools and district. To address the preparation of the school leader, recruiters and elementary teachers in this district, collaborative activities, statistics and relevant information will be embedded in the training.

Further, the literature review will focus on the supply and demand theory. It is widely known that there is a shortage of minority teachers. While there are multiple reasons associated with the minority teacher shortage and even more reasons for the African American male teacher shortage, the demand for minorities in education still exist. In addition to the increasing number of career choices, there are other barriers that prohibit minorities from entering the profession in addition to remaining in the profession after they enter that path. The result is the minority-teacher shortage.

### **Review of the Literature**

A scholarly review of the literature was conducted on the importance of hiring a diverse and talented workforce in public schools; hiring African American male and minority teachers in public education; and culturally relevant teaching strategies. The literature presented supports strategies for the identification, recruitment, and retention of minority teachers. The literature on the shortage of minorities in the teacher workforce is not as diverse as researchers note is necessary for teaching students of color. Efforts to increase the teacher diversity supply have led to slight increases in the number of teachers of color (Partelow, 2016).

## **Literature Search Strategy**

Multiple search strategies were used to examine the literature pertinent to this study. The examination of materials housed in the Walden University library was the primary source for gathering literature on the need for diversity in the classroom, recruiting a diverse teaching workforce, and retaining minority and African American male teachers. The Walden University Library led me to searches in ProQuest, EBSCOhost databases, and Education Research Complete. The key search terms included *African American males, minority teachers, training, recruiting, retention, culture, cultural development, diversity, teachers of color, minority school leaders, diversity plan, recruitment plan, mentoring, mentoring programs, mentoring minority teachers, best practices for recruitment, and supply and demand theory*. The selection criteria were on literature within the last five years, sources, and peer reviewed. These criteria were followed as often as possible. However, there were times when the literature search was exhausted, and the most current literature did not meet the criteria but was pertinent to the need to provide specific information.

## **Conceptual Framework and Knowledge for Minority Recruitment and Retention**

The conceptual framework for this project is guided by the supply and demand theory as it relates to the need for minority teachers and African American male teachers and the lack thereof (El-Mekki, 2018). In creating this project, I focused on the findings from the perceptions of nine African American male teachers that lead to the need for training to address the need for limited supply and demand of minority educators. In order to understand the supply and demand for minority teachers in this district, the school leaders will need to assess the current teaching personnel management prior to the knowledge series. The school leaders in collaboration with human resources will examine the constraints and opportunities the for hiring and retaining

minority and African American male teachers. After they generate the knowledge, the training session will begin to disseminate and share the knowledge during the training session.

**Supply and demand theory and the depiction of knowledge.** The theory of supply and demand in schools is an economic model that focuses on a performance-driven culture (Phillips, 2013). In American schools, districts tend to operate in a culture that rewards improvement and achievement (Phillips, 2013). Supply and demand are an economic model of price determination in a market. In a school system, schools receive funds from taxes, which are paid via income taxes, property taxes, and other forms of federal and state taxes. In most cases, the public schools determine how the funds are spent and who is hired to work for the funds. There are some federal and state mandates, but for the most part, there are little demands on who is hired and how the curriculum is implemented (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016a). For the purposes of this review, the supply of African American teachers will be examined, and the demand for their services in schools will be discussed.

There are multiple factors that determine the supply of teachers who enter today's schools. Most teachers enter through the traditional method of entering into a teacher preparation program. The alternative route for most teacher candidates would require a minimum of a bachelor's degree, preferably with a major in the potential academic subject (Goldhaber, Krieg, & Theobald, 2013). There are also online and traditional teacher preparation programs for post-graduate certificate or a master's degree. Further, there are states that have "teaching residencies." Teaching residencies are created based on the needs of the state (National Center for Teacher Residencies, 2018).

Goldhaber and Theobald (2012) point out that the potential supply of available newly prepared teachers, labor market for recruitment, and that future labor market conditions can

differ from past conditions. In fact, our estimates of supply include those recent graduates who are entering from preparation programs, and delayed entrants who may delay teaching for up to four years (Rich, 2015). Also, there are teacher who may be considered reserve pool of teachers. Reserved teachers are those who meet the requirements but chose to enter another profession or may have started a family prior to teaching (Sutcher et al., 2016a).

With the increase in student enrollment and factors such as retirement, compensation, working conditions, and turnover rates, there will be a great demand for teachers (Phillips, 2013; Sutcher et al., 2016a). When we couple that with the crisis for minority teachers, then the supply is even lower and due to the limited number, the demand will be greater. Over the next decade, there will be an increasing demand for about two million teachers (Phillips, 2013). The changes in pupil-teacher ratio can be impactful on the teacher demand, particularly due to the expected impact retirement will have on the need for more teachers (Cowan, Goldhaber, Hayes, & Theobald, 2016; Partelow, 2016). Queries as to the possible training program to address the shortage of teachers in more than 40 states to support the training and hiring of teacher depend on the states and cities throughout the nation (Sutcher et al., 2016a; Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016b). Amid this diversity is a continuing concern that some racial-ethnic groups are disproportionately placed at risk (Sutcher et al., 2016a). Further, with only 2% African American male teacher, the demand for that select group will be even greater (Hanford, 2017). Therefore, the focus remains on the supply and demand of minority teachers.

### **Minority Crisis in Schools Date Back to Brown**

The crisis in America's public schools continued to rise due to the need for minority teachers to teach students of color in the classroom. The review of literature examined the crisis dating back to the *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision that resulted in the nonrenewal of

40,000 African American teachers in southeastern states as a result of desegregation (Milner & Howard, 2004). African American teachers who believed in the success of children and looked at them as smart, were replaced by White teacher who viewed African Americans as inferior and taught the students as such (Hanford, 2017; Milner & Howard, 2015). Educators beliefs and mindsets tend to minimize the effects of race in American's classroom by using social class in preferential decision making (Milner & Howard, 2015). However, in traditional K-12 school setting, children of color are marginalized in classrooms lead by White teachers who believe students of color are not successful due to socio-economic status (Rosen, 2018).

This review delved into the effects of the Brown decision and other causes that have led to failure of students of color in the classroom. The statistics, cause of the shortage, the major locations impacted by the lack of minority teacher, and the impact of classrooms of minority children led by White teachers were also examined in this review. Further, recruitment of minority teachers was reviewed in a more intentional manner. Conceptually, the supply and demand for minority teachers were examined to find out if the teachers were actually available for hiring, or if the strategies used by districts were ineffective. Additionally, a keener examination of the retention policy provided greater insight into the statistics, programs designed to for all teachers versus those programs that targeted minority teachers. The literature will be reviewed not only to collect information to learn more about minority hiring, recruitment and retention, but specifically about the hiring of African American male teachers.

There is no denying that minority teachers are underrepresented in public schools throughout the United States, (Villegas, Strom, & Lucas, 2012), but can it be considered a crisis. While there continues to be an increase in hiring of minority teachers, the underrepresentation of minority teachers compared to the number of students of color continues to widen (Achinstein &

Ogawa, 2011). Students of color represent 47% of the population in 2015, compared to 17% of teachers of color (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). Conversely, White teachers are over-represented, whereas, White students represent 49% of the population and White teachers are at 82%. Yet, race would not matter if teachers were taught to teach all students in a manner that they all learned.

### **Teachers of Color Matter**

Research continues to be conducted on the importance of diversity in the teaching workforce to determine if the investment is worth hiring minority teachers. Throughout the United States, failure as measured by standardized test scores exist in inner city and rural areas of highly populated minority and low socio-economic students staffed when possible by minority teachers. In fact, a review of 70 studies, found minority teachers are more likely than Whites to teach in high poverty, high minority, and most times high discipline problems in schools with high proportions of students from low income cultural communities (Achinstein et al., 2010). Further, teachers of color have been considered valuable to the success of students because they are role models, culturally relevant, impactful in the learning process, mother figures, and communicators.

All students benefit when classrooms are led by teachers of color because they are seen as role models, especially students of color (Gershenson, Holt, & Papageorge, 2016; Quiococho & Rios, 2000). However, when schools were closed due to desegregation, Black students were no longer taught by teachers who looked like them and served as role models of academic success (Egalite & Kisida, 2016). It has been found in numerous studies that students of color benefit from role models who look like them, since the expectations were higher (Buck, 2010; Egalite & Kisida, 2016). This *role model effect* is sometimes called the *race match effect*, a term that gets

at why the researchers think African American teachers can have a lasting impact on African American students (be so lastingly beneficial for black students. Dating back to segregation, students of color were taught by teachers of their own race with the expectation that they would achieve (Tatum, 2003). If all teachers had similar expectation for the children they serve today, minority students in particular would benefit. Mainly, minority students might benefit from seeing adults with a similar racial and ethnical background as teachers, principal, or other positions of authority. Such representation could increase the cultural value students place on academic success (Buck, 2010). Therefore, increasing the diversity of teachers would be beneficial to students of color.

In a community forum of school leaders and African American community members, African American parents and concern citizens gathered to voice issues they observed or perceived in their local schools (Bridges, Awokoya, & Messano, 2012). The objective was to voice concerns associated with the failure in schools and to provide recommendations to increase the achievement and confidence of students of color. The most telling part of the meeting happened when African Americans shared their experience in segregated schools and what they wanted from integration. One woman shared,

I remember my teacher assigning homework and never once thinking I would not get it done, and I did not have parents waiting at home to check homework or encourage me to do the work, but I did have a teacher who assigned the work and there was no question that I would not get it done. She spoke with authority and I knew she expect that it would be completed. In contrast, I remember my first White teacher assigning homework. Her word will be etched in my mine for the rest of my life. She said, “I know this is a lot of

work, but do as much as you can.” Her expectation was either I couldn’t do it, or that I would do it. Either way, she did not have high expectations for me to get it done.

This reason forum confirms the need for African American teachers in schools with teachers of color, particularly schools with predominately African American population (Milner, 2016). At the forum one story lead to many others sharing their school experiences and all of the stories centered on teacher expectations. Milner (2015) and Milner and Ross (2006) confirmed that African American teachers motivated students to achieve academically in school and understood best how they learned.

Research further suggest that minority teachers would benefit from teaching students of the sane race in any racial mix within the school or district (Milner, 2015). Knowing that information, there continues to be a sharp decline in the number of African American and other minority teachers in public school over the last six decades (Milner & Howard, 2004). The voices of the African American women speaking at the forum confirmed research conducted in the late 1990s by Ehrenberg (2004). Ehrenberg found that African American teachers in the southeastern states expected much from their students and thought that they needed to work twice as hard to be equal to Whites of any age. The teachers during that period often behaved as substitute parent in multiple roles including that of a motivator, mentor, disciplinarian, and encourager (Armstrong, 2014; Egalite et al., 2015; Ehrenberg, 2004).

### **African American Male Teachers Matter**

Research has found that minority teachers make a difference in the classroom (Milner, 2015). Specifically, research studies found that African American male teachers in the classrooms. The data show that there are only 2% African American male teachers in public schools throughout the United States, of which, most are hired to high poverty, high minority



inner city schools (Hanford, 2017). Research has shown the benefits of coupling students with teachers of the same race has limited benefits. In contrast, Gershenson, Holt, and Papageorge (2015) found that the positive impacts of having just one African American teacher can continue over many years. The Fellowship is trying to increase the number of African American men in Philadelphia schools through recruitment of professionals from non-traditional methods and retaining the ones that are currently employed in the district. The retention component was added to the plan based on the data that showed the high turnover rate for male teachers of color.

### **Research Support Need for Minority Teachers**

Researchers continue to find ways to improve academic achievement for students of all races and gender. Although research is conclusive that race and ethnicity makes a difference in student performance, there continue to be a gap in achievement of student. Many studies have attempt to identify the impact of the race and ethnicity of teachers have on student achievement, particularly of those of high poverty and low socio economics. Research has shown that a predominately White teaching workforce in a school system where most of the students are African American or other racial minority other than Asian is not good academically for the students, especially African-American students (Egalite et al., 2015; Gershenson et al., 2015; Milner, 2015). For this review, numerous studies were examined and the finding of those that support the need for minority teachers and African American male teachers will be shared.

The first study shared for this review was conducted approximately 30 years ago, and although dated, this study speaks to the heart of why a crisis exist among African American teachers in schools and the need to purposefully and intentionally recruits teacher of color. A qualitative narrative study was conducted explore the perspectives of African American teachers from seven public schools that were deemed exemplary (Foster, 1991). Foster (1991) found that

African American teachers were generally not proportionately hired as they were previously prior to desegregation. She concluded that there were several positive characteristics in the segregated schools that did not readily transfer to the desegregated schools. One was that there was a constant variable found in the predominately African American schools: a positive connectedness among the teachers and the community (Foster, 1991). Teachers were aware of student's culture and the communities that they lived, and these African American teachers also were race consciousness and built community solidarity in the community (Foster, 1991).

Gershenson et al. (2015) conducted a study on teacher expectancy. They found that White teachers expect less academic success from African American students than African American teachers do from the same students. Further, they found that White teachers are about 30% less likely to predict an African American student's future success as it relates to attending college. The study found:

- 12% Non-minority and White teachers more likely than African American teachers to expect African American students not to graduate high school.
- 5% White teachers more likely to expect African American male students not to graduate high school.
- 20% African American female teachers less likely than White teachers to be optimistic about the ability of African American males' students to graduate high school.
- 10 to 20% White male teachers more likely to have low expectations for African American female students.

- Bias expectations of White teachers contribute to African American students, particularly African American male students in 10<sup>th</sup> grade subject made them less likely to pursue that subject at a higher level.

Studies have been conducted on gifted programs and the advantages of increase student's achievement, but few studies have been conducted on the impact of African American teachers and their impact on African American students in the program. Grissom and Redding (2016) conducted a study on the discretion and disproportionality of the underrepresented high achieving students of color in gifted programs. He found that African American students were 50% less likely to be placed in gifted programs, given the same identical standardize test scores and grade point averages. What tend to be the deciding factor, particularly with limited availability was the teacher recommendation of which was in most situations a White teacher. The race of the teacher affects the selection and placement of students in gifted programs (Brasher, 2016). The U.S. Department of Education's Early Childhood conducted a longitudinal study using data on 10,000 elementary school students from a cohort of kindergarten student who were identified for inclusion in the gifted program. The study found that African American students were 66% less likely and Hispanic students 47% less likely than White students to be assigned to gifted programs. Grissom and Redding (2016) examined the discrepancy while controlling for gender, socioeconomic status, and age. They found that the racial gap did not change.

Another study was conducted on school suspension and the effects of having an African American teacher on the disposition of the suspension. In a study conducted by Wright (2015), the teachers' perceptions of students' disruptive behavior and the effect of racial equivalence and penalties for school suspension were examined. It was found that when African American

students had African American teachers, it was less likely to see behavioral problems with the African American student than when the same student had a White teacher. Hispanic teachers also give worse assessments of African American students' behavior. It should be noted that the African American teachers did not give a worse assessment of White or Hispanic students. Based on the findings, one conclusion was drawn that if schools doubled the number of African American teachers, the African American-White suspension disparity could be reduced by as much as 50%.

Another study replicated between 2001 and 2005 found that African American students perform better on standardized test when they have teachers of the same race (Gershenson et al., 2015). More than 100,000 African American students who entered third grade in North Carolina Public Schools with 13% dropping out of high school. Of the 87% students remaining, 50% graduated from high school with no plans to pursue college. They found that the affect one year had on the African American's student chance of attending college. The low-income African American students randomly who were assigned to one or more African American teacher during their third, fourth and/or fifth grade year, were not only less likely to drop out of school, but 29% more likely to consider college. The most significant finding was that low-income African American boys' chance of dropping out of school fell nearly 40%.

### **Options for Recruiting and Retaining Teachers of Color**

Teacher of color have been found to reduce the achievement gap for all children including student of color (Carver-Thomas, 2018). Further, teachers of color have been shown to reduce the achievement gap for students of color and non-students of color (Carver-Thomas, 2018). Although teachers of color are being recruited at a higher rate, the need is still not meeting the demand due to the limited supply. As such, it is important to focus on effective

recruitment and retention plans to increase the minority teacher pool for improvement in learning for students of color and for closing achievement gaps.

### **Research Findings on Benefits and Barriers for Teachers of Color**

Research has found that teachers of color are needed in the classroom if we are to continue to improve the achievement of students of color. School leaders throughout American are seeking ways to recruit, hire and retain teachers using multiple methods. In doing so, it is important to examine the research finding and to understand the pitfalls that may prevent hiring and retaining teachers of color who are in demand by multiple districts. Carver-Thomas (2018) has examined research to determine benefits of hiring a diverse teaching workforce; and studied barriers that may prevent districts from having an opportunity to hire the limited pool of teachers of color.

The current teacher shortage for teachers of all race is a crisis, but the need for teachers of color is even more severe. Teachers are not only entering teaching through the traditional teaching methods, there are alternative methods that provides even greater opportunities for pathways for teachers of color to enter the profession. Research of more than 50 articles, journals, websites, books, and interviews have led to a compilation of ten strategies and practices that were found on multiple recommendations for increasing the placement of teachers of color and for attracting them to the profession. The list ranges from alternative pathways to hiring strategies to retention techniques. The recommendation includes:

- Loan forgiveness in exchange for signing to work in the district for a define number of years (Carver-Thomas, 2018).
- Providing a scholarship to endorse the cost of traditional teacher preparation (Goldhaber et al., 2013).

- Create Grow Your Own programs (Carver-Thomas, 2018; Long, 2017).
- Partner with churches and local non-profits to recruit teacher via non-traditional pathways to teaching (Goldhaber et al., 2013).
- Providing state funds for teacher preparation programs designed to meet the rigors of teaching (Sutcher et al., 2016a).
- Pay incentives for hard to staff schools that show a reduce in the achievement gap with students of color and other groups (Carver-Thomas, 2018).
- Creating state programs that monitor the hiring and retention of racial diversity of participants in teacher preparation programs ((National Center for Teacher Residencies, 2018).
- Create in-house incentive programs for training potential teachers of color through the para-professional and other classified positions (Sutcher et al., 2016a).
- Create a scouting program and pay incentives for signing to districts early (Goldhaber & Theobald, 2012).
- Partner local teacher preparation programs, HBCUs, and other university teacher preparation programs with PK-12 school districts to sign commitment letters prior to graduation (Goldhaber et al., 2013).
- Including minority teachers on the recruitment teams to create a diverse hiring team at recruitment fairs (Carver-Thomas, 2018; Phillips, 2013).
- Offer comprehensive monetary incentives to support teachers of color in their first years of teaching (Carver-Thomas, 2018).

- Providing professional learning for teachers of colors to share and train other teachers on strategies used to support the growth and achievement for students of color (Carver-Thomas, 2018; Sutchter et al., 2016a).

### **Project Description**

This project is designed to create district and school recruitment and retention plans that focuses on training district and school-based educators on intentional and purposeful hiring and retaining minority teachers and African American teachers. *Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms* is the theme that resonated throughout the data collection and analysis. The three-day workshop, *Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms*, should occur over a three-week period in order to provide time for participants to collect necessary data that warrants the need for minority hiring. The three-day workshop should be completed within a month to avoid the loss of information, and to be prepared for hiring based on the supply and demand for hiring minority teacher, particularly African American males.

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of African American male teachers on the challenges and benefits of teaching at a predominately minority elementary school, and to ascertain strategies for recruiting and retaining African American male teachers in the profession. It was found that the challenges for African American male teachers at predominately minority schools were minimal when they were empowered and a part of the decision-making process. It was also found that that African American male teachers thought communication was important for teaching minority students. African American male teachers felt African American male teachers should be targeted when recruiting but offered little recommendations for recruiters. They did, however, believe the guidance given from mentoring programs in college help guide African American male teachers into the professions. Further, it

was found that African American male teachers thought strategies such as mentoring and empowering the male teachers to be a part of the decision-making process were effective strategies for retention of African American males in the teaching profession. This study revealed how a plan of action was operating in one school due to one principal's desire to recruit and hire minorities, but the district did not have a formal plan, and need to be further developed to meet the recruitment needs of the district.

Research shows that minority teachers help close achievement gaps for minority students of the same race and other races at significant levels (Carver-Thomas, 2018). Regrettably, most minority teachers are being recruited nationally at a slow pace with a high attrition rates, leaving a continuous gap between the demand and the supply (Carver-Thomas, 2018). Based on the findings and the need, a 3-day workshop was created to train district and school level teams in understanding the need for diversity in the classroom and to assist in the development of a formal retention and recruitment plan.

The purpose of the *Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms* training is to provide intense training to those working directly with the recruitment and hiring of teachers in school and at the district level. The ultimate goal is to prove strategies for hiring and retention, to get educators communicating about the need, and to understand the data. Creating intense days of understanding the need for a diverse faculty can support improved retention of minority teachers. Currently, the district does not have a recruitment and retention plan with a focus on diversity. The three-day workshop will provide the background information for a plan and the diversity research that supports increase student achievement when taught by teachers of color. The training is designed to target three days of training over a three-day period to ensure an



opportunity for reflection on the knowledge gained, and time to create a recruitment and retention plan that is data specific.

### **Project Evaluation Plan**

The project evaluation is designed to ensure the training is specific to the needs of the audience. Therefore, a goal-based evaluation was created. The goal-based evaluation was used because the district believes the hiring of teachers of color and African American male teachers as a way to close the achievement gap and improve the achievement for students of color.

According to the research, student of color responds better and have a greater chance for success when taught by teacher of the same race (Carver-Thomas, 2018; Hargrave et al., 2016; Howard, 2017). It is important for the training to meet the needs and intended goals of the participants.

This evaluation was personalized to meet the needs of the district and schools.

The target audience to participate in the three-day training workshop were educators directly involved in the hiring of teachers and those who work with teachers on a daily basis. The key stakeholders were district and school leaders, recruiters, interview team members, and classroom teachers. The district and school leaders are ultimately responsible for the academic achievement for all students. When students fail, they fail as leaders. Therefore, they have a vested interest in the hiring of teachers who have shown that achievement for failing student can improve if we seek to attract minority teachers. The recruiters are key stakeholders. Their job is to attract teachers who meet the diverse needs of the district. Knowing who to look for and how to attract those teachers is critical to hiring minority teachers who are in high demand.

Classroom teachers are also key stakeholders since they will work with the teachers hired on a daily basis. Additionally, some of the teachers will serve as mentors and will need to understand the culture.

The evaluation for each day of the training will help the participants understand the needs of the school and district and how to use the information for recruiting and developing retention programs. Data collected from each daily training will help the trainer and planners improve the next training. The evaluation uses a five-point Likert scale ranging which ranges from 5 = *strongly agree* to 1 = *strongly disagree*. Each evaluation had common components as well as components specific to the training objectives. The evaluations are included in the project (Appendix A). The findings in the study address the need for training in how to recruit effectively. Therefore, the responses from the participants in the study were valuable in creating the training. Overall, developing this workshop allowed me to understand how to exam data to meet the individual needs of the district and not simply a generic training program. At the conclusion of this process, the participants will be given an opportunity to provide input using the evaluation instrument.

### **Project Implications**

The study sought to generalize issues about the need for recruitment and retention training specific to a group of teachers who are in high demand. There are social change implications for districts that fail to understand the need to recruit and hire teachers of color who mirror their student population. Attracting and retaining teachers of color who have the requisite skills and knowledge to teach children of color to perform academically and at high rates would result in closing the achievement gap while increasing the performance of children in that school system. Districts are examining the research that says children of color perform academically better when taught by teacher who understand their culture and how they learn. However, the demand for teachers and a demand for teachers of color, presents a problem when the rate of teachers leaving the profession are already a threat to the academic success of minority students.

Therefore, the training has to be developed with the intent to be competitive when attracting the high demand for teachers of color to work in a school district with limited minorities.

Implication for this project can be evident at the school and district levels.

Recruiting and retaining teacher of color is critical in schools serving a high concentrations of minority students in poverty. Teachers of color make up less than 20% the public-school workforce compared to students of color representing the majority in P-12 schools (Carver-Thomas, 2018). Finding in research proved that students of color perform significantly better when taught by teachers of color. Therefore, the implication for not developing a program for recruitment of minority teacher who mirror the student population can continue to have adverse effects of students in the district. It is important that students see a reflection of themselves during their formative years in school. Further, school leaders must put forth a meaningful effort to work with other districts, colleges, and alternative programs to attract teachers of color into the profession. Once teachers are hired the retention continues as the next group of recruits are sought.

### **Conclusion**

In Section 3, I presented a description of the project, *Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classroom*, which provides a three-day workshop that will provide training for school and district leaders, recruiters, classroom teachers, administrators, teachers, and members of the interview team. The workshop will provide knowledge and skills to the participants in how to effectively recruit and retain teachers of color and African American male teachers needed in the district of high minority low achieving student. This section provided a detailed description of the project that was recommended by participants who participated in the data collection for this case study. A review of the literature supported the need for this project.

Further, the project implementation, evaluation, and implications were discussed in detail.

Section 4 will provide reflections and conclusion to this project study that resulted from this body of work.

## Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

### **Project Strengths and Limitations**

The shortage crisis of teachers of color exists throughout American and a major lack of leadership in addressing the achievement needs for students of color. Creating this project was difficult due to the multiple aspects and needs for hiring, recruiting, and retaining teachers of color, specifically African American male teachers. Further, while there were many recommendations and recruiting practices, the research and successes for retention had shown results in limited schools districts across the county. As such, there were strengths to this project that resulted from hearing the voices and recommendations of the participants in the case study. Additionally, there were limitations for this project as well. This project study focused on providing a workshop over a three-day period focused on training a school and district team using research and practices about the crisis of minority teachers. The strength of this project was supported by the finding from the case studies on the perceptions of nine African American male teachers about the recruitment and retention practices for teachers of color and African American males.

### **Project Strengths**

The strength of the project was based on the credibility of the findings from this study. The analyses of data revealed five themes. The themes were captured from data collected and analyzed from interviews and documents aligned to four research questions. The themes that emerged:

- **Theme 1: Consistency.** Consistent or consistency was repeated multiple times during the interview process with the 9 African American male participants. Consistent was

used when discussing recruitment, retention, and mostly when discussing strategies for instruction.

- **Theme 2: Empowerment.** The participants mentioned empowerment multiple times throughout the interview process. School districts that thrived also encouraged others to stay in the profession by empowering teachers and staff to be active members of the decision-making process.
- **Theme 3: Culture.** Culture and culturally relevant were common themes shared during the interview process and on some of the recruitment materials. Researchers continued to conduct studies on the experiences of African American male teachers. This study brought voice to African American male teachers as to how they understood culture and culturally relevant instruction. Understanding the culture of the students served in any school as a major factor in determining how and what to teach.
- **Theme 4: Communication/Engagement.** Effective students/teacher and teacher/parent communications and/or student engagement were shared by the participants throughout the interviews. Communication and engagement allow teacher to get to know their students and their parents, which helped teachers understand the cultural influences that shape students' points of view and behavior
- **Theme 5: Support/Mentor.** The participants in this study discussed the various types of support they had in this small school district. Several participants spoke about the mentoring program and its value. There were others who discussed the mentoring program and how it could be improved.

The project was created to be intentional in setting up a recruitment and retention plan that was aligned to the needs of the district and provided data of the student teacher population.

Increasing teacher diversity did not happen by accident. School leaders had to be intentional in how the plan is created and have the data that supported the district's demographics. This plan allowed the recruitment team to recruit with an ultimate purpose and be better prepared in the process.

### **Project Limitations**

The project limitations were based on the supply and demand theory. The supply of teachers of color, particularly African American males were limited. In fact, there were approximately 2% of African American male teachers available to meet the growing demands and needs of high poverty, low achieving district with students of color. Further, the workshop was developed based on the available research and literature for recruitment and retention. The majority of initiatives focused on minority teacher recruitment have been successful, but there was limited success on the retention of those teachers. Further, those schools tend to be inner city schools with discipline problems, particularly in hard to staff schools (Long, 2017). The majority of the studies were conducted on recruitment and retention programs for all teachers and not specific to minority. There were limited programs specific to recruitment of teachers of color and specifically African American males. The project limitations were addressed in the recommendations for future research and future practice.

### **Recommendations for Alternative Approaches**

There were three specific recommendations for alternative approaches made for this district designed to attract and hire teachers of color and African American males. The recommendations are based on the literature and supported by research to support the study.

The first alternative approach, Grow Your Own, was recommended by Carver-Thomas (2018) and others. There were multiple districts that could develop this program to increase their

minority teacher population. The Call Me Mister program began at the high school level. Targeting students at this stage, then underwriting the cost of college, coupled student teaching opportunities would serve two purposes. The student would have a cultural connection to the children and the community, and the district would benefit from knowing the student has a strong academic foundation from their school district and is committed to the community. Another advantage is the personnel department would be able to better forecast teacher commitments. Other benefits would be instructional assistants in the classroom could be identified as potential teachers and placed in a training program.

The second alternative approach would replicate a program called The Fellowship. The Fellowship: Black Male Educators for Social Justice is a professional membership and activist nonprofit organization comprised of African American males in Philadelphia, PA. Their goal was to double the number of African American male teachers in the school district. They used data from the U.S. Department of Education and current research that showed African American students perform better when working with minority teachers. The Fellowship was recommended as an alternative approach because of this one goal focus and because of the types of this activity that was recently launched. The Fellowship teamed up with Teaching Partners to provide a 10-part professional development series on resources, tools and supports for African American male educators.

The third recommendation would be to create a partnership with local HBCUs and community organization such as churches and businesses. The partnerships would help gather research and provide support for trainings on hiring and retention. The alternative to the project recommendation would be that the recruiters would have additional support and would better be



able to define the recruitment and retention goals for placing and keeping teachers of color in the classroom.

### **Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, Leadership, and Change**

Conducting this project-based case study allowed me to grow scholarly and professionally, and further develop my skills and a program evaluator and change agent. I have provided a description of what was learned during this process from the beginning stages of defining the problem to the development of the project. Furthermore, I have provided a reflective analysis about things I have learned personally as a scholar, practitioner, and project developer.

### **Description of Learnings in the Process**

This project-based study has provided me insights into the world of a researcher. At times the process was daunting. I say this because the beginning stages took me some time to understand how to formulate the problem. For practitioners, we tend to want to delve in and get the job done. Oftentimes, we do not take the time to understand the real problem and the cause or background associated with the problem. However, once that was understood and clarity of the problem and purpose of this study was clear, I entered into a scholarly mode of understanding how to conduct scholarly work. Reviewing the literature was probably my most engaging experiences. The problem for me was discovering that there was a wealth of research being conducted on minority teachers and teachers of color. While the research for African American male teachers existed, most was embedded in studies associated with minorities teachers and emerged as a finding. When it was time to conduct a second review of literature, it also started off a bit challenging, until I understood that no longer was my problem. Once I understood, the additional literature revealed alternative recruitment and retention programs.

Further, throughout the process, I learned that you have to constantly reflect on your work. What you thought was final changes when you conduct additional research.

After completing the study, deciding on the project to pursue was my next challenge. At times, I simply wanted to create a comprehensive list of available strategies for recruitment and retention. However, my work as an educator gave me pause to that idea since I have often seen those lists shelved when there was limited, or no training associated with how to implement. The next idea was to create a curriculum plan that would provide teaching strategies for non-teachers of color to use when working with children of color. That idea was quickly put to rest for a project since the ultimate goal was to increase the number of teachers of color in the district. As such, what I learned was that creating a project that was meaningful and goal specific required me to have a clear understanding of the needs of the district and the problem that existed.

### **Reflective Analysis of Personal Learning/Growth**

As I reflected on this process in its entirety, I could say without reservation that I understood the operations of a scholar-practitioner, and more importantly, I understood the need for school leaders to behave as such. I had several clear take-aways from this process. First, in order to best understand a phenomenon of a problem, research needed to be conducted. Research is not simply the reading of one or two articles, but investigating into classrooms, programs, websites, and hearing the voices of those who operated in that field of study. Secondly, I learned to identify a problem. Understanding the root of the problem provided better results. Finally, I understood that there were multiple ways of getting results. Prior to this study, I thought the Call Me Mister program was the best and most effective way for recruiting African American male teachers. Although I still believe in the program and this it is a wonderful means for development and recruiting African American males into the education field, I learned that

there are so many other programs and means of bring men of color into the profession. This study allowed me to learn about hundreds of programs throughout American that were designed to meet the shortage of minority teachers.

As a result of my learning, I have grown as a researcher and project developer. My current job required me to create workshops, developed trainings, and lead meeting. However, this experience allowed me to develop a long-term workshop in its entirety based on my personal research. I learned how to listen more during the data collection period. I had always felt that interviewing was my strength, but for the purpose of this study, I had to practice patience so as not to insert bias into the process. I also learned how to analyze the data and create themes.

As I examined myself as a scholar practitioner, I am reminded of why I went into teaching. Learning is continuous and valuable. This journey is one that I had taken with a mission to do more for the children I served. I was grateful for the opportunity and feel that the journey was worth the effort.

### **Reflections on the Importance of Work**

My Walden journey has led me into uncharted waters. The opportunity to create work for social change was not something I have really thought much about. While I did for others, creating social change was work that made me think more about my personal value to public education and what I could do further to increase opportunities for young men who look like me.

I had learned that social justice was not something that simply happens. You had to be thoughtful and deliberate in your work as an activist. You have to need and want change. More importantly, you have to understand the need. I will be forever grateful for the time spent at the beginning of this process in me fulling understanding and identifying the problem. I had often heard that obtaining a dissertation is a journey, not a sprint. I now have a greater appreciation for

what that meant and the time necessary to appreciate the journey. Spending night reading articles about programs being started all over the United States made me think about the path I have chosen and opportunities that I can later pursue. The synthesis of information took me from the cursory evening reading to yearning for additional information on the subject.

I can say without a doubt that this process had opened my eyes to new learning and new opportunities. I now know that the work ahead of me would be done with intent and purpose. My future work will draw on my strengths and the people I love. I found that I am a great educator who is comfortable in my own skin. It is that work that I have pursued as I seek to work with other like-minded individuals in replicating a Fellowship with the African American male educators in my state. I know that my purpose is to become a leader in increasing the number of African American male educators in my home state. This is what I have learned.

### **Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research**

Project study research provided me with the opportunity to create a new project that I hoped would improve the recruitment and hiring practices for the school and district leaders in this area. The social change linked to this project would be the increase of African American male teachers and teachers of color who would ultimately support the learning opportunities for students of color. The project would ultimately change the life of individuals since the participants would gain new knowledge on how to examine the data to determine the need, and when to begin the recruitment process to ensure the supply of minority teacher is still available to meet the demands of the district. The positive social change for the organization would be the increase academic achievement for all the student at the school, particularly those of color who are currently failing. More importantly, when the school improved, the community improved. Based on the performance of children on the state assessment, the school and district are

assigned ratings (Carver-Thomas, 2018). As this study ends, there are implications and future research that could potentially guide the next phase of my work.

### **Implications**

Implications for social change were few if this project was not implemented since there were other options that could be considered. However, there was the need for faculty and/or staff to be intentional in training and understanding the need to recruit and hire teachers of color who mirror their student population. Attracting and retaining those who hire, and recruit was equally as important as securing the teachers of color who have the requisite skills and knowledge to teach children of color to perform academically. Further, it was important to understand the need to have teachers of color when the student population is diverse. Therefore, the training had to be developed with the intent to be competitive when attracting the high demand for teachers of color to work in a school district with limited minorities. Implication for not properly training those who recruit will be apparent in the classrooms when children continue to fail.

### **Recommendations for Future Practice**

Children of color continued to fail in America's schools at alarming rates, while research findings have provided multiple ways of ensuring the performance of minority children can improve. Therefore, the following recommendations were made for future practice:

- Create focus groups for the purpose of examining the research associated with hiring and retaining a diverse teaching staff. The group will be charged with educating the faculty and staff on the need to hire a diverse teaching workforce.

- Schedule the three-day workshop that was created as a project for this study. Add additional stakeholders as need, then adjust an modify based on the needs of the district to create a diverse teacher workplace.
- Add a research component to all district and school level meeting that address the real problem of minority student failure. Providing the research and articles associated with the problem will bring the awareness to the forefront and get the faculty and staff to talk about the problem. This is a very important first step.

### **Recommendation for Future Research**

The review of literature provided me multiple opportunities to examine materials on recruitment and retention. Limited studies were conducted specifically for African American males. Therefore, I would like to recommend the following future research:

- The Fellowship, a non-profit group in Philadelphia, was formed to increase the number of Black male teachers to work in the inner-city schools of Philadelphia. A case study should be conducted with the teachers who were recruited through this process. It would be interesting to learn from them as to the process that was used to recruit them; how were they trained; and what do they see themselves as change agents for increasing the academic performance for children of color.
- The Fellowship and other similar programs would be studies using a qualitative ethnographic research design in order to immerse yourself into the environment of the members of the Fellowship and the teachers. This study would allow the research to better understand the goals, cultures, challenges and motivations for the purpose of recruiting African American male teachers.

- Conduct a quantitative study on traditional and nontraditional teacher preparation programs. Determine which method attract more teachers of color. Additionally, data collection should be included to determine the type of training and the link to student success in low performing high minority schools.

### **Conclusion**

Attracting and retaining teachers of color was one of the most important drivers of increasing the academic performance for students of color. Training educators to purposefully recruit and retain quality teachers of color is especially important and urgent in schools that serve a high concentration of low performing, high poverty students of color. The problem that existed was that children of color are failing in our public schools daily, and research findings had provided multiple options to address how to fix the problem. One such way was to hire teachers of color and African American males. Yet, the supply was low for teachers of color and even lower for African American males, while the demand was high. Therefore, as educational agents of change, it was our duty to address this problems and work to attract people of color to the profession. This project has helped me to look beyond the cursory walls of *what is* and to dig deeper into the possibilities of *what can be*.

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## Appendix A: Project

### **Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms: Recruitment & Retention Workshops**

#### **Three Days of Information, Research, Planning, Data Gathering**

This project is designed to create district and school recruitment and retention plans that focuses on training district and school-based educators on intentional and purposeful hiring and retaining minority teachers and African American teachers. *Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms* is the theme that resonated throughout the data collection and analysis. The three-day workshop, *Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms*, should occur over a three-week period in order to provide time for participants to collect necessary data that warrants the need for minority hiring. The three-day workshop should be completed within a month to avoid the loss of information, and to be prepared for hiring based on the supply and demand for hiring minority teacher, particularly African American males.

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of African American male teachers on the challenges and benefits of teaching at a predominately minority elementary school, and to ascertain strategies for recruiting and retaining African American male teachers in the profession. It was found that the challenges for African American male teachers at predominately minority schools were minimal when they were empowered and a part of the decision-making process. It was also found that that African American male teachers thought communication was important for teaching minority students. African American male teachers felt African American male teachers should be targeted when recruiting but offered little recommendations for recruiters. They did, however, believe the guidance given from mentoring programs in college help guide African American male teachers into the professions. Further, it was found that African American male teachers thought strategies such as mentoring and

empowering the male teachers to be a part of the decision-making process were effective strategies for retention of African American males in the teaching profession. This study revealed how a plan of action was operating in one school due to one principal's desire to recruit and hire minorities, but the district did not have a formal plan, and need to be further developed to meet the recruitment needs of the district.

Research shows that teachers of color help close achievement gaps for students of color and are highly rated by students of all races (Carver-Thomas, 2018). Unfortunately, although more teachers of color are being recruited across the nation, the pace of increase is slow and attrition rates are high, leaving growing gaps between the demand for teachers of color and African American male teachers and the supply (Carver-Thomas, 2018). Based on the findings and the need, a 3-day workshop was created to train district and school level teams in understanding the need for diversity in the classroom and to assist in the development of a formal retention and recruitment plan.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the *Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms* training is to provide intense training to those working directly with the recruitment and hiring of teachers in school and at the district level. The goal is to prove strategies for hiring and retention, to get educators communicating about the need, and to understand the data. Creating intense days of understanding the need for a diverse faculty can support improved retention of minority teachers. Currently, the district does not have a recruitment and retention plan with a focus on diversity. The three-day workshop will provide the background information for a plan and the diversity research that supports increase student achievement when taught by teachers of color. The training is designed to target three days of training over a three-day period to ensure an

opportunity for reflection on the knowledge gained, and time to create a recruitment and retention plan that is data specific.

### **Rationale**

It is important to build the capacity of school educators assigned to recruit, hire, supervise, and mentor minority teachers. Building the capacity of those educators will help to address the issues of recruitment and retention in high-need districts. This model also has the potential to support systemic change and building of the teaching profession, especially in the most challenging districts. Initial research is promising as to the impact school district training can have on increasing the diversity of the teaching force, improving retention of new teachers, and promoting gains in student learning.

### **Workshop Goals**

- Provide intense training in three days.
- Support consistent and ongoing knowledge, dialogue and planning focused on recruiting, hiring and retaining diverse teachers in the classroom.
- Educate administrators, teachers and staff at the school and district levels on the need for a diverse faculty.
- Provide district and school educators with the necessary knowledge, skills, and support to understand supply and demand for teachers of color and African American male teachers.
- Provide district and school educators with the opportunity to collaborate and plan for recruitment and retention for a minority teaching workforce.

### **Learning Outcomes**

The learning outcome for the workshop is for district and school educators to gain knowledge on the importance of having a diverse teaching workforce. Specifically, the training

will allow the participants to understand the importance of a diverse teaching workforce and to learn strategies for recruiting and retaining a diverse teaching faculty.

### **Trainers and Target Audience**

- The trainer must be knowledgeable of designing recruitment and retention plans; and knowledgeable of diversity strategies in the classroom.
- District leaders, Recruiters, Interview teams, Classroom teachers, and School leaders

### **Timeline**

The intense three-day workshop will be conducted at the beginning of each semester and prior to the recruitment season, with the content focused on training district and school level teams in understanding the need for diversity in the classroom and assisting in the development of a formal retention and recruitment plan. The workshop will happen over three weeks to provide information about diversity and to develop a recruitment and retention plan.

<b>Workshop Dates</b>	<b>Part 1 8:30 – 10:30</b>	<b>Part 2 10:45 – 12:00</b>	<b>Part 3 1:00 – 2:15</b>	<b>Part 4 2:30 – 4:30</b>
Session 1	Research, Supply & Demands	Minority Student – Teacher Gap	African American Male Teachers	African American Male Teachers’ Panel
Session 2	Changing the demographic Makeup up of the teaching workforce	Basics of teaching in a diversified classroom	Why is diversity important in education?	Recruiting minority and African American male teachers
Session 3	Examining the Data	S. C. Program for the Recruitment and Retention of Minority Teachers	Examining Effective Recruitment & Retention plan	Creating Recruitment & retention plan
The workshops should be held the first month of the semester for three days over a three-week period.				

### **Materials and Equipment (Will be available for three-day training workshop)**

- Group Work Materials
  - Index cards

- Post-its
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Tape
- Trainer Materials
  - PowerPoint Presentation
  - Printed copy of PowerPoint presentation
  - Handouts and presentation articles
  - Evaluation forms
  - Smartboard/Laptop



**Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms:  
Crisis for Minority Teachers in the Classroom  
Session 1 Workshop Agenda**

Time	Session 1 Activities
08:00 – 08:30	Breakfast; Interactive discussion on <i>Diversity in the Classroom</i>
08:30 – 09:00	The superintendent or school leader will outline the workshop that will be conducted for 3 days over a three-week period. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Welcome and house rules.</li> <li>▪ <b>Outline the three sessions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Session 1: Crisis for Minority Teachers in the Classroom</li> <li>• Session 2: Recruiting Teachers of Color &amp; African American Males</li> <li>• Session 3: Retaining Teachers of Color &amp; African American Males</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Introduction Session 1/Purpose/Goal/Learning Outcomes/Problems/PowerPoint Slides 1-6].</li> </ul>
09:00 – 10:30	The trainer will lead the session: Focus: Research Findings, Supply & Demand for Minority Teachers PPT Slides 7 – 14
10:30 – 10:45	BREAK – PPT Slide 15
10:45 – 12:00	The trainer will lead the session: Focus: Minority Students: Teacher Gap PPT Slides 16 – 26
12:00 – 01:00	LUNCH – PPT Slide 27
01:00 – 02:00	The trainer will lead the discussion: Focus: African American Males: Are they needed in the classroom? PPT Slides: 28 – 36
02:00 – 02:15	BREAK – PPT Slide 37
02:15 – 04:00	The trainer will introduce the panel: Panel: African American Male Teachers PPT Slides: 38 – 40
04:00 – 04:20	Share Time – PPT 41 (Participant will engage in Q&A with panel)
04:20 – 04:30	The trainer will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ summarize Session 1 with guiding questions</li> <li>▪ discuss evaluation process</li> <li>▪ provide time for participants to complete evaluation forms (Session 1 Evaluation).</li> </ul> PPT Slides 42 – 43
	Note: The trainer from the State Department of Education and a trained presented on Diversity and Minority Recruitment and Retention

## UNDERSTANDING THE NEED FOR DIVERSITY IN THE CLASSROOMS

~~ Session 1~~

### Crisis for Minority Teachers in the Classroom

### Purpose

- ◊ To understand the cause of the minority shortage in the classrooms the knowledge of school leaders at the district and school levels.
- ◊ To examine the supply and demand as it relates to the minority shortage of teachers in the classrooms.
- ◊ To hear from the voices of African American male teachers about their experiences.

### Goal

- ◊ Increase the knowledge of school leaders at the district and school levels on why diversity is needed in the classroom
- ◊ To raise the awareness of the supply and demand for minority and African American male teachers nationally
- ◊ To begin the preparation of school personnel for targeted recruitment of minority teachers

### Learning Outcomes

- ◊ The participants will understand the need to create a recruitment and retention plan.
- ◊ The participants will be able to express ideas, identify behaviors, and actualize practices that support the need for minority teachers.
- ◊ The participants will understand supply and demand as it relates to the recruitment of minority teachers with a focus on recruiting African American males.

### PROBLEMS

There are limited number of teachers in the classrooms. However research shows that:

- students of color often see increased academic performance when taught by those of similar backgrounds
- teachers of color are more likely to incorporate culture-specific references into their instruction
- teachers of color remain significantly underrepresented relative to the students they serve.
- teachers of color are leaving the profession at a higher rate than other teachers - especially male minority teachers.

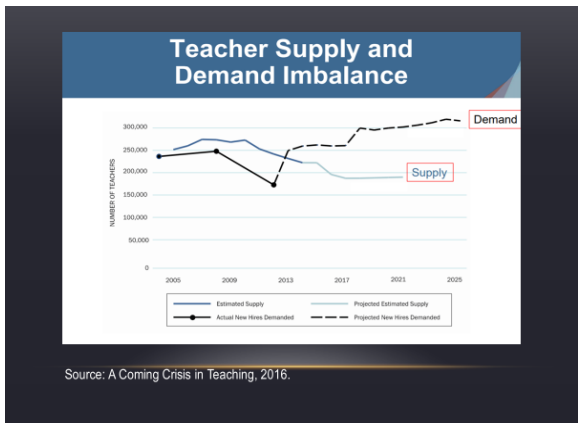
### TARGET AUDIENCE

- District leaders
- Recruiters
- Interview teams
- Classroom teachers
- School leaders

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

- Teacher Supply and Demand: Getting the Numbers and the Solutions Right
- report on teacher supply and demand around the country.
  - more than 40 states reported severe shortages in subject areas
  - hiring of substitutes and individuals without credentials by the thousands
  - Districts Surveys reported that finding enough candidates for open positions in 2014–15 was a “big challenge.”

- ### WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE PRODUCTION OF NEW TEACHERS
- Reports on the current “teacher shortage” often begin by citing diminishing enrollment in teacher preparation programs in recent years
  - Students who attend college during periods of higher unemployment tend to select majors that result in higher wages and better opportunities to get jobs in their field of study.
  - The number of teachers produced by teacher preparation programs has grown steadily since 1952.



- ### National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research
- Survey shows that between 175,000 and 300,000 teachers were produced during survey years (every 3 years between 1987 – 2011), but only 60,000 to 140,000 of these new teachers were hired. While hiring is likely to increase in the coming years due to an aging teacher workforce, hiring of new teachers will continue to trail the production of new teachers.
  - Teacher licensure rules inhibit mobility through their complexity.
  - Another factor worth noting is the impact of teacher retirement and licensure structures on the ability of teachers to switch positions. Pension programs have been traditionally viewed as a policy tool that increases the career length of a teacher while licensure is viewed as an important quality control mechanism.



### THINK TANK ISSUES TO CONSIDER

**Factual Scenario**

Reporting on teacher shortages often ignores potential positive benefits of some types of teacher attrition. Research from North Carolina, New York, Washington, and Texas shows that teachers with higher effectiveness ratings are more likely to stay in their current classrooms than are teachers with lower effectiveness ratings. If the teachers who are leaving the classroom are less effective, then the average effectiveness among remaining teachers should improve. This is true especially given some evidence that the academic qualifications of incoming teachers are improving. Overall, consideration of the pay, pension and licensure policies that are shown to impact selection into teaching, and in-career teacher attrition and mobility, in continued research will provide improved evidence upon which policymakers can design effective policies to ensure that children in all classrooms have access to a high-quality education.

- Given that information, what are your thoughts as it relates to recruiting and retaining minority teachers?
- Is this an argument for or against targeting teacher recruitment based on race?


### THINK TANK – TABLE DISCUSSION

*Share your thoughts...*



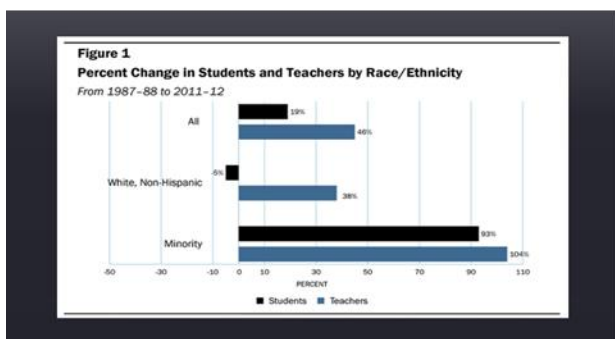
## BREAK

15 Minutes



### GAP BETWEEN THE PERCENTAGE OF MINORITY STUDENTS AND MINORITY TEACHERS

- Since the late 1980s, the number of elementary and secondary teachers has dramatically increased. This is especially true for minority teachers, whose numbers more than doubled from about 325,000 to 666,000 by 2012.
- Growth in the number of minority teachers outpaced growth in the number of minority students and was over twice the growth rate of non-minority teachers (Figure 1 on next slide). Even as the size of the teaching force has grown, the proportion of the teaching force that is minority has increased steadily—from 12% to over 17%.
- The growth of teachers outpaced that of students for Hispanics, Blacks, and Asians. While there is still not parity between the proportions of minority students and minority teachers in schools, the teaching force has grown more diverse.



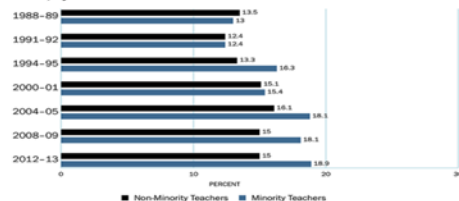
### MINORITY TEACHERS EMPLOYMENT

- Minority teachers are overwhelmingly employed in public schools serving high-poverty, high-minority, and urban communities. Minority teachers are two to three times more likely than non-minority teachers to work in such hard-to-staff schools.
- The data show that in spite of competition from other occupations for minority college graduates—and in spite of apparent barriers to entry—efforts over recent decades to recruit more minority teachers and place them in schools serving disadvantaged and minority student populations appear to have been successful.
- Commentators and researchers have tended to discuss the minority teacher shortage in pessimistic terms—often accompanied by calls for more funding and support—the data suggest that such efforts and expenditures have worked.

## MINORITY TEACHERS EMPLOYMENT

- Minorities have entered teaching at higher rates than non-minorities over the past two-and-a-half decades, minority teachers also have left schools at higher rates.
- The data show that minority teachers' careers have been less stable than those of non-minority teachers, and included more job transitioning (Figure 2, next slide).
- Minority teachers were more likely to migrate from one school to another or to leave teaching altogether.
- Some turnover or teacher career changes, such as moving from one school to another or leaving classroom teaching for other education-related jobs, do not represent a net loss of human capital to the educational system.
- These types of departures have some type effect:
  - They reduce the number of minority teachers in the classroom.
  - One consequence of such turnover, our analysis reveals, is that it undermines efforts to address the minority teacher shortage.
- The data show that at the beginning of the 2003–04 school year, about 47,600 minority teachers entered teaching; however, by the following year, 20% more—about 56,000—had left teaching.

**Figure 2**  
Percent Annual Public School Teacher Turnover, by Race/Ethnicity of Teachers, by Year



## MINORITY

- About 80% of all teachers in America are White
- 20% of all teachers in United States of America are minorities
- 2% of teachers are African American male teachers

## STATISTICAL DATA ON THE STATE OF TEACHERS

- About 80% of all teachers in America are White
- 20% of all teachers in United States of America are minorities
- 2% of teachers are African American male teachers

## IERC Report (2013)

- Considerably lower proportions of non-White high school students aspired to major or work in education.
- Regardless of achievement level, racial/ethnic minorities with bachelor's degrees completed teacher licensure at lower rates than Whites with bachelor's degrees.
- Racial/ethnic gaps are evident at both the licensure and teaching stages.

## THINK TANK – TABLE DISCUSSION

*What are your thoughts?*



### THINK TANK ISSUES TO CONSIDER

- What on your thoughts on hiring minority teachers versus hiring teachers? Base your comments on the research.
- How has your position changed on targeting teacher recruitment based on race?

### THINK TANK – TABLE DISCUSSION

Share your thoughts...



### LUNCH One Hour



### African American Males

Are they needed in the classroom?



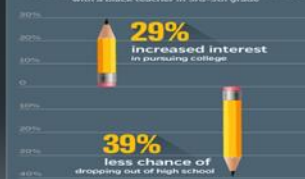
### Black Teachers Make a Difference Study published by The Institute of Labor Economics

The study found:

- if a low-income Black male student in third, fourth, or fifth grade has a Black teacher, he is 39% less likely to drop out of high school.
- if a low-income Black male or female student of the same age has a Black teacher (especially of the same gender), they are more likely to plan to attend a four-year college. Females were 19% more likely to express this intent, while males were 29% more likely. The benefit came from having just one black teacher; having two or more black teachers did not alter the results.

### BLACK TEACHERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Persistently low-income black boys  
with a black teacher in 3rd-5th grade



## Race Match Effect

- The researchers replicated their findings by looking at Black students in Tennessee who entered kindergarten in the late 1980s and participated in the Project STAR class-size reduction experiment. There, they found that students who had at least one Black teacher in kindergarten through grade three were 15% less likely to drop out.
- Having at least one Black teacher in those grades also increased a student's chances of taking a college entrance exam by 10%.
- This "race match effect" is sometimes called "the role model effect," a term that gets at why the researchers think a class with a Black teacher can be so lastingly beneficial for Black students.

## POWER OF EXPECTATIONS JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY STUDY

The study found:

- when evaluating the same Black student, White teachers expect significantly less academic success than Black teachers.
- the White teacher is about 30% less likely to predict the student will complete a four-year college degree.
- the White teachers are also almost 40% less likely to expect their Black students will graduate high school.
- The White teachers and Black teachers systematically disagree about the exact same student.

## EDUCATIONAL LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF 2002

The study found:

- White and other non-Black teachers were 12 percentage points more likely than Black teachers to predict Black students wouldn't finish high school.
- Non-Black teachers were 5% more likely to predict their Black boy students wouldn't graduate high school than their Black girls.
- Black female teachers are significantly more optimistic about the ability of Black boys to complete high school than teachers of any other demographic group. They were 20% less likely than White teachers to predict their student wouldn't graduate high school, and 30% less likely to say that than Black male teachers.
- White male teachers are 10 to 20% more likely to have low expectations for Black female students.
- Math teachers were significantly more likely to have low expectations for female students.
- For Black students, particularly Black boys, having a non-Black teacher in a 10<sup>th</sup> grade subject made them much less likely to pursue that subject by enrolling in similar classes. This suggests biased expectations by teachers have long-term effects on student outcomes.

## THINK TANK – TABLE DISCUSSION

*What are your thoughts?*



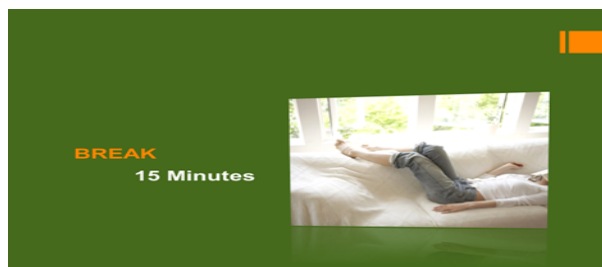
## THINK TANK ISSUES TO CONSIDER

- What on your thoughts on hiring African American male teachers at your school? Base your comments on the research or prior practice.
- How would hiring an African American male teacher be beneficial to your school? Be specific.

## THINK TANK – TABLE DISCUSSION

*Share your thoughts...*





**UNDERSTANDING WHY  
AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES BECOME TEACHERS**


- Experience with good teachers
- Desire to make difference in people's life especially in the lives of minority students
- Demonstrate positive experiments in helping or teaching others
- Hold high interest or passion for the subject they teach

**AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE TEACHERS**

- Why are African American male avoiding the teaching profession?
- What drew the African American teachers to the classroom?
- Why are African American male teachers vacating classrooms?
- Many African American male teachers remain in the profession. Why do they stay?

**UNDERSTANDING WHY  
AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES BECOME TEACHERS**

*Four African American Male Teachers*




**WHAT IS YOUR STORY?**

**QUESTIONS AND THOUGHTS**

Participants  
Ask questions, Share comments, Discuss thoughts  
with  
*Four African American Male Teachers*

**SUMMARY OF SESSION 1**

*Share your thoughts...*




**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
PARTICIPATION**





**EVALUATION**  
**Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms Workshop**  
**Session 1: Crisis for Minority Teachers in the Classroom**

Thank you for participating in Session 1 of Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms Workshop. Your feedback will provide valuable information to the trainer, the superintendent, and the school leaders in recruiting, hiring and retaining minority teachers.

Use the following rating scale when marking your response:

5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2= Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree

1. The purpose, goal, and learning outcomes for Session 1 were clearly stated.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
2. The research was helpful in understanding the need for diversity in the classroom to increase student achievement for minority students.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
3. This information and discussions helped me understand the need for African American males in the classroom.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
4. This session helped me better understand supply and demand for minority teachers.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
5. This session helped me better understand supply and demand for African American male teachers.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
6. This session provided engaging activities for groups discussion to better understand the need.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
7. The panel presentation was vital to understanding the perspectives of African American male teachers.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
8. This workshop activity helped me to better understand the crisis for minority teachers in the classroom.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
9. Overall, this workshop activity was a successful experience for me.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1

List on the back any suggestions you have for improving this or future workshop activity.

<b>Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms: Retaining Teachers of Color and African American Male Teachers</b> Session 2 Workshop Agenda	
Time	Activities
08:00 – 08:30	Breakfast; Interactive discussion on <i>Diversity in the Classroom</i>
08:30 – 09:00	<p>The trainer will outline the workshop as presented for three days over a three-week period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Welcome and house rules.</li> <li>▪ Introduction of workshop theme &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> Session - <b>Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms, Session 2: Retaining Teachers of Color and African American Male Teachers</b></li> <li>▪ Purpose: To understand the importance of diversity and how to recruit purposefully.</li> <li>▪ Introduction/Purpose/Goal/Learning Outcomes/Problems [PowerPoint Slides 1-6].</li> </ul>
09:00 – 10:30	<p>The trainer will lead the session: Focus: Changing the Demographic Makeup of the Teaching Workforce PPT Slides 7 – 14</p>
10:30 – 10:45	BREAK – PPT Slide 15
10:45 – 12:00	<p>The trainer will lead the session: Focus: Understanding the Basics of Diversity in the Classroom PPT Slides 16 – 25</p>
12:00 – 01:00	LUNCH – PPT Slide 26
01:00 – 02:00	<p>The trainer will lead the discussion: Focus: Why is diversity important in education? Recruiting Minorities and African American Male Teachers PPT Slides: 27 – 37</p>
02:00 – 02:15	BREAK – PPT Slide 38
02:15 – 04:00	<p>School and district teams will work together to begin developing recruitment plan. Panel: PPT Slides: 39 – 44</p>
04:00 – 04:20	Share Time – PPT (Participant will engage in Q&A with panel)
04:20 – 04:30	<p>The trainer will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ summarize Session 2 with guiding questions</li> <li>▪ discuss evaluation process</li> <li>▪ provide time for participants to complete evaluation forms (Session 1 Evaluation).</li> </ul> <p>PPT Slides 45 – 47</p>
	Note: The trainer from the State Department of Education and a trained presenter on Diversity and Minority Recruitment and Retention

## RECRUITING TEACHERS OF COLOR & AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE TEACHERS

~~ Session 2~~  
Understanding the  
Need for Diversity in the Classrooms

1

### Purpose

To understand the importance of diversity in teaching.  
To understand how to recruit with a purpose.  
To provide participants with tools for purposeful recruitment of minority teachers and African American male teachers.  
To create a recruitment plan designed to increase the number of diverse candidates in the classroom, including African American males.

2

### Goal

To provide the participants with knowledge and skills to recruit diverse teacher candidates  
To provide the participants with the understanding and skills necessary to increase the number of African American males in the district  
To prepare school personnel for targeted recruitment of minority teachers  
To hire more minority teachers, including African American males.

3

### Learning Outcomes

The participants will be able to express ideas, identify behaviors, and actualize practices that support the need for minority teachers.  
The participants will understand the importance of recruiting minority teachers with a focus on recruiting African American males.  
The participants will learn recruitment strategies.  
The participants will be able to demonstrate techniques for recruiting minority teachers.

4

### PROBLEMS

- Although research shows that students of color often see increased academic performance when taught by those of similar backgrounds, there are a lack of teachers of color in the classroom.
- Teachers of color are more likely to incorporate culture-specific references into their instruction, yet their presence is limited in the classroom.

5

### TARGET AUDIENCE

District leaders  
Recruiters  
Interview teams  
Classroom teachers  
School leaders

6

## CHANGING THE DEMOGRAPHIC MAKEUP OF THE TEACHING WORKFORCE

7

### CURRENT SITUATION

44.1% of the nation's K-12 students are culturally and linguistically diverse.  
 82.7% of the K-12 teacher force is White.  
 21% of K-12 students are Hispanic, only 7.5% of teachers are Hispanic. (2011- 2012)

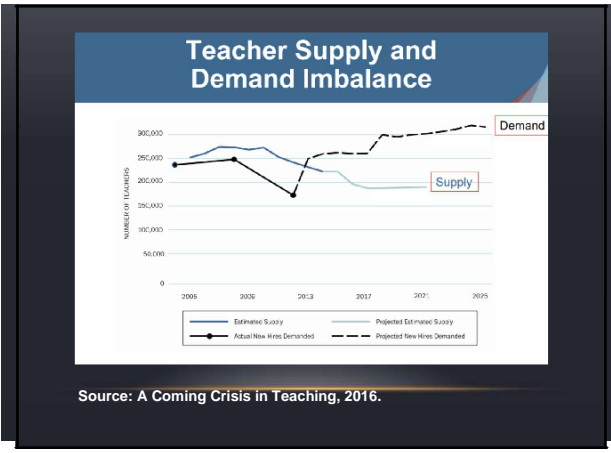
8

### 2014-2015 U.S. TEACHERS, MALE TEACHERS & STUDENTS RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS

	% Latino	% Black	% Asian	% Native American	% White
Teachers	7.6	6.6	1.8	0.6	82.3
Male Teachers	2	1.9	0.5	0.1	13
Students	25.8	15.4	5.2	1.1	49.8

Source: National Center for Education Statistics (2014)

9



10

### MISALIGNMENT OF P-12 TEACHER AND STUDENT POPULATION

About 80% of teachers are White, middle-class women  
 Over 40% of the student population is non-white  
 The low number of African American and Hispanic/Latino male teachers  
 About 2% of teachers are Black males.  
 The numbers are even lower for Hispanic and Latino males.

11



12

### THINK TANK ISSUES TO CONSIDER

How does the data compare to your school? Your district?

What is your thought about the misalignment of teacher to the student population?

Base your comments on the knowledge you gained from Session One, your own research, or prior practice.

13

### THINK TANK – TABLE DISCUSSION

Share your thoughts...



14

BREAK

15 Minutes



15

### UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS of DIVERSITY IN THE CLASSROOMS

16

### BASICS OF TEACHING IN A DIVERSIFIED CLASSROOM

Recognizing uniqueness and the individuality of a student for equal chances for success and equal access to curriculum

17

### State of Teacher Pipeline Diversity

- Considerably lower proportions of non-White high school students aspired to major or work in education.
- Regardless of achievement level, racial/ethnic minorities with bachelor's degrees completed teacher licensure at lower rates than Whites with bachelor's degrees.
- Racial/ethnic gaps are evident at both the licensure and teaching stages.

18

## SCENARIO: A WORLD HISTORY CLASS

Mrs. White, a 35 years male teacher wanted to teach a lesson on slavery as it related to White domination. He showed the class a 5-minutes video depicting examples of slavery in the south.

At the conclusion of the video, Mr. White asked several Black students and White students to roleplay what they had learned from the video. The students were given 5 minutes to share their thought before being asked to share what they had learned in a written assessment.

Mr. White passed out five questions open ended assessment to test the students' understanding of White domination over Black during slavery time. (It should be noted that this lesson was recommended during a prior professional development on diversity).

There were 17 students in this class, of which only 9 students turned in the assignment. One of the 9 students was an African American male student who wrote F...k You. Mr. White wrote up the student for being disrespectful, and the other 8 for not following his instructions. As an administrator, you have received the write-ups with the details of what happened.

19

## DIVERSITY IN THE CLASSROOM

- Diversity is capital while striving for students' excellence.
- The importance of training teachers on diversity.
- Importance of hiring and retaining teachers of colors for better connections in the classrooms.

20

## BASICS OF TEACHING IN A DIVERSIFIED CLASSROOM

Recognizing uniqueness and the individuality of a student for equal chances for success and equal access to curriculum

21

## BASICS OF TEACHING IN A DIVERSIFIED CLASSROOM

Recognizing and acknowledging difference in the classroom for fairness and equal treatment  
Connected classroom yields to better result: a focus on the richness of diversity

22

## THINK TANK 1 ISSUES TO CONSIDER

What do you think has truly happened in the classroom?

What decision should the administrator take in regard to Mr. White conduct?

What will the administrator or school leader do to the students?

Instructions:

In a group of three, discuss what you perceive being the issue in this scenario. Each group will present their findings.

Total time allowed: 15 minutes

23

## THINK TANK 2 ISSUES TO CONSIDER

- Does teacher sex matter? Why or why not?
- Does teacher color of the teachers' skin matter? Should we be color blind or color conscious? Why or why not?
- Did you assume Mr. White was a White male? Would the recommended outcomes have been different if he was a Black teacher?

Instructions:

In a group of three, discuss what you perceive being the issue in this scenario. Each group will present their findings.

Total time allowed: 15 minutes

24

## THINK TANK – TABLE DISCUSSION

Share your thoughts...



25

## LUNCH One Hour



26

## WHY IS DIVERSITY IMPORTANT IN EDUCATION?

27

## PROMISING PRACTICES TO BUILD SUPPORTIVE PATHWAYS INTO TEACHING

28

### PROMISING RECRUITMENT PRACTICES FOR HIRING MINORITY

States can support candidates of color by underwriting the cost of teacher preparation.

States can provide funding for teacher residencies, which are partnerships between districts and universities that subsidize and improve teachers' training to teach in high need schools and in high-demand subject areas.

Districts can develop Grow Your Own programs that recruit teacher candidates from nontraditional populations (e.g., high school students, paraprofessionals, and after-school program staff) who are more likely to reflect local diversity and more likely to continue to teach in their communities.

29

### PROMISING RECRUITMENT PRACTICES CONTINUED...

- States can also support candidates of color by funding intensive teacher preparation support programs that offer ongoing mentorship, tutoring, exam stipends, job placement services, and other supports that ensure their successful completion of preparation programs.
- States can design data systems that monitor the racial diversity of enrollees in TPPs, as well as those who complete the programs.

30

## PROACTIVE HIRING AND INDUCTION STRATEGIES

31

## CREATE PROACTIVE HIRING AND INDUCTION STRATEGIES

Districts can shift hiring timelines earlier. Research suggests in-demand candidates of color may be more likely to be available for hire earlier in the year.

Districts can partner with local TPPs to coordinate student teaching placements and vet candidates for hire before they graduate.

32

## CREATE PROACTIVE HIRING CONTINUES...

Districts can include teachers of color in the hiring process in meaningful and collaborative ways, such as by creating diverse hiring committees in which teachers of color can shape recruitment and hiring strategies.

Districts can offer comprehensive induction to support beginning teachers of color in their first years of teaching.

33

## EXAMINING DATA

- District Data
- School Data

34

## THINK TANK – TABLE DISCUSSION

What are your thoughts?



35

## THINK TANK ISSUES TO CONSIDER

What do we need to know in order to recruit minority teacher who mirror your student population?

With the limited supply of African American male teachers in the hiring pool, what do we need to know and do to ensure we meet the demands of our school and district?


Should recruitment for minority teachers be different from the recruitment of African American male teachers?

36



THINK TANK – TABLE DISCUSSION


Share your thoughts...



37

BREAK

15 Minutes



38

**RECRUITING MINORITY AND AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE TEACHERS**

- Understand the needs
- Understanding the cause
  - Why are minority teachers and African American male teachers avoiding the teaching profession?
  - Why are minority teachers and African American male teachers vacating classrooms?

39

**THE UNDERREPRESENTATION OF MINORITY TEACHERS TODAY**

- Inadequate academic preparation
- The attraction of other careers
- Unsupportive working conditions
- Lack of cultural and social support groups
- Increased standards and competency testing
- Financial considerations

40


**STRATEGIES FOR RECRUITING AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE TEACHERS**

- Encouraging in service teachers to inspire students into the teaching profession field
- Expressing the needs of African American male teachers (media, referrals, events...)
- Sharing good experiences about teacher professions
- Sharing and advertising an inspiring retention benefit package for African American male teachers

41

THINK TANK – TABLE DISCUSSION

What are your thoughts?



42

**THINK TANK**  
**CREATING A DISTRICT/SCHOOL**  
**RECRUITMENT PLAN**

Understand the needs

Understanding the cause

Why are minority teachers and African American male teachers avoiding the teaching profession?

Why are minority teachers and African American male teachers vacating classrooms?

43

**CREATING A DISTRICT/SCHOOL**  
**RECRUITMENT PLAN**

Consider all that you now know in creating your recruitment plan.

Examine the data to determine your needs.

Determine what can be done at the district level versus the school level.

Who are the partners you need to consider?

What are the target dates, funding sources, key figures, needs? What research is pertinent to your plan.

Time: One hour

Team: Predetermined team

Task: Create a DRAFT Recruitment Plan

44

**THINK TANK – TABLE DISCUSSION**

Share your recruitment plan...



45



46

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION**



47

## EVALUATION

### Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms Workshop Session 2: Recruiting Teachers of Color and African American Male Teachers

Thank you for participating in Session 2 of Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms Workshop. Your feedback will provide valuable information to the trainer, the superintendent, and the school leaders in recruiting, hiring and retaining minority teachers.

Use the following rating scale when marking your response:

5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2= Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree

1. The purpose, goal, and learning outcomes for Session 2 were clearly stated.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
2. The research was helpful in understanding the need for diversity in the classroom to increase student achievement for minority students.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
3. This information and discussions helped me understand the changing demographics in the teaching workforce.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
4. This session helped me better understand basics of teaching in a diversified classroom.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
5. This session helped me better understand why diversity is important in education.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
6. This session provided engaging activities for groups discussion to better understand the need.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
7. The session provided strategies and information for recruiting minority and African American male teachers.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
8. This workshop activities helped me to better understand the need for a purposeful recruitment plan.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
9. Overall, this workshop activity was a successful experience for me.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1

List on the back any suggestions you have for improving this or future workshop activity.

<b>Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms: Retaining Teachers of Color and African American Male Teachers</b> Session 3 Workshop Agenda	
Time	Activities
08:00 – 08:30	Breakfast; Interactive discussion on <i>Diversity in the Classroom</i>
08:30 – 09:00	<p>The trainer will outline the workshop as presented for three days over a three-week period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Welcome and house rules.</li> <li>▪ Introduction of first session - <b>Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms, Session 3: Retaining Teachers of Color and African American Male Teachers</b></li> <li>▪ Purpose: To ensure participants gain knowledge on the crisis of minority teachers in the classroom.</li> <li>▪ Introduction/Purpose/Goal/Learning Outcomes/Problems/PowerPoint Slides 1-6].</li> </ul>
09:00 – 10:30	<p>The trainer will lead the session: Focus: <b>Changing the demographic Makeup of the teaching workforce</b> PPT Slides 9 – 11</p>
10:30 – 10:45	BREAK – PPT Slide 12
10:45 – 12:00	<p>The trainer will lead the session: Focus: South Carolinas program for the recruitment and retention of minority teachers PPT Slides 13 – 22</p>
12:00 – 01:00	LUNCH – PPT Slide 23
01:00 – 03:00	<p>The trainer will lead the discussion: Focus: <b>Creating a Recruitment and Retention Plan</b> PPT Slides: 24 – 35</p>
	BREAK – PPT Slide 35 – Take break as needed
03:00 – 04:15	<p>Presentation of Recruitment and Retention Plan PPT Slides: 36</p>
04:15 – 04:20	Share Time – PPT 37 (Participant will engage in Q&A with panel)
04:20 – 04:30	<p>The trainer will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ summarize Session 2 with guiding questions</li> <li>▪ discuss evaluation process</li> <li>▪ provide time for participants to complete evaluation forms (Session 2 Evaluation)</li> </ul>
	Note: The trainer from the State Department of Education and a trained presented on Diversity and Minority Recruitment and Retention

# RETAINING OF TEACHERS OF COLOR & AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE TEACHERS

~~ Session 3~~

Understanding the  
Need for Diversity in the Classrooms

1

## Purpose

To keep diversity at the forefront when teaching children of color.

To understand and the importance of retaining minority and African American male teachers.

To provide participants with tools for purposeful retention of minority teachers and African American male teachers.

To maintain the diverse teacher workforce in the classroom, including African American males.

2

## Goal

To provide the participants with knowledge and skills to retain diverse teacher candidates

To prepare school personnel for targeted recruitment of minority teachers

To add a retention component to the recruitment plan designed to maintain the diverse minority teacher workforce in the classroom, including African American males.

3

## Learning Outcomes

The participants will be able to express ideas, identify behaviors, and actualize practices that support the need for minority teachers.

The participants will understand the importance of recruitment and retention of minority teachers with a focus on retention.

The participants will learn retention strategies.

The participants will be able to demonstrate techniques for retaining minority teachers.

4

## PROBLEMS

- Although research shows that students of color often see increased academic performance when taught by those of similar backgrounds, there are a lack of teachers of color in the classroom.
- Teachers of color are more likely to incorporate culture-specific references into their instruction, yet their presence is limited in the classroom.

5

## TARGET AUDIENCE

District leaders

Recruiters

Interview teams

Classroom teachers

School leaders

6

### CURRENT SITUATION

- 61% of School A's students are African American
- Only 3% of the teachers in School A are African American male and 4% African American female while 12% are white male and 81% white female
- 22% of the students in School A are Hispanic, but no teachers represent that demographic

7

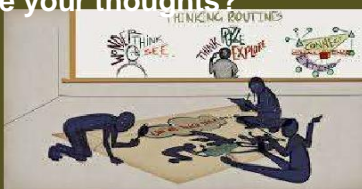
### 2017/2018 DISTRICT TEACHERS, MALE TEACHERS & STUDENTS RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS

	% Black	% White	% Two Races	% Asian	% Hispanic	Total
Teachers	7%(21)	93%(288)				309
Male Teachers	3%(10)	12%(38)				
Female Teachers	4%(11)	81%(250)				
School A Students	61%(299)	13%(64)	5%(23)		22%(104)	490

8

### THINK TANK – TABLE DISCUSSION

What are your thoughts?



9

### THINK TANK ISSUES TO CONSIDER

Examine your district and school data. How does the national data compare to your school? Your district?

What is your thought about the misalignment of teacher to the student population?

Base your comments on the knowledge you gained from Session One, your own research, or prior practice.

10

### THINK TANK – TABLE DISCUSSION

Share your thoughts...



11

BREAK  
15 Minutes



12

## SOUTH CAROLINA PROGRAM FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF MINORITY TEACHERS

Successful in achieving its objectives for  
2003-2004.

Accomplishments include:

13

Program graduates/forgivable loan recipients are currently teaching in 57 schools, 26 districts, and in 18 counties of South Carolina.

SC-PRRMT has graduated 84 teacher aides and technical college transfer students. Ninety-nine percent (83) of these graduates have acquired teaching positions in South Carolina's public schools.

Seventy-six (925) of the placed graduates are currently teaching in South Carolina's public schools.

Sixty-nine graduates (83%) of the placed graduates remain in South Carolina's public classrooms with a range of one to six years beyond the teaching debt requirement.

2004 marked the 10th anniversary of teaching for the program's first graduates. Slightly over 50% of the program's graduates have gained five to ten years teaching experience.

During 2003-2004, 38 students – representing 13 cities, 14 school districts, and six technical colleges - participated in the Program.

14

Twelve (32%) SC-PRRMT Program participants majored in state-declared subject areas of critical need: Art Education 1, English Education 1, Industrial Technology Education 1, Music Education 1, and Special Education 8.

A total of 31 courses and 37 classes were availed to Program participants for FY2003-2004, including five distance education courses.

Thirty-three (87%) of the Program's 38 participants received forgivable loans this past year.

During FY 2003-2004, 31 (82%) of the 38 participants attained cumulative GPAs of 3.0 and above on a 4.0 scale - 30 forgivable loan participants and 1 nonforgivable loan program site participant.

During the summer of 2004, the Program sponsored a SC-PRRMT Academic Enhancement Institute for Pre-service Teachers. Program participants enrolled in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education and Special Education courses. Participants lived on campus and also participated in a variety of workshops and seminars.

15

## TARGETS NONTRADITIONAL POPULATIONS

- Recruitment of teacher aides through the Satellite Teacher Education Program sites; and
- Targets African American males and other minorities who have earned a degree or general education credit at one of the State's technical colleges.

16

## TARGETS

Teacher Aides

Technical College Transfer Component (16 technical colleges) – The Satellite Teacher Education Program

Career Path Changers

Academic Intervention

EIA Forgivable Loan Loans

Support of Statewide Teacher Recruitment Efforts

17

## EVALUATION PLAN

- Increase the pool of teachers in the State by targeting teacher aides, career path changers, and technical college transfer students for careers in teaching.
- Ensure the academic progress of students who are presently teacher aides at Satellite Teacher Education Program sites, career path changers, and/or technical college transfer students at SCSU.
- Conduct research for the purpose of determining the Program's impact on participants and to determine overall program effectiveness.
- Provide a recruitment incentive for future teachers through the administration of a forgivable loan program.

18

## BUDGET – PROPOSED BUDGET

SC Program of the Recruitment  
and Retention of Minority  
Teachers

19

## THINK TANK – TABLE DISCUSSION

What components of the state plan  
can be replicated into a district plan?



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20

## THINK TANK ISSUES TO CONSIDER

What components must be a part of a recruitment  
retention plan?

Who should use the plan?

What is the goal of the plan?

Instructions:

In school groups, discuss what components from the state plan  
you can use at the district level. Each group will present their  
findings.

Total time allowed: 15 minutes

21

## THINK TANK – TABLE DISCUSSION

Share your thoughts...



22

## LUNCH One Hour



23

## CREATING A RECRUITMENT & RETENTION PLAN

24



## GOALS

Identify the school's need through research and review;  
 Identify an appropriate recruitment or retention strategy (strategies include recruitment, selection, orientation, career development, supervision, recognition, training, and support);  
 Choose an appropriate intervention within that strategy;  
 and  
 Build a recruitment and retention plan or identify corrective action.

25

## Why Diversity Matters in the Teaching Force

Research has confirmed that:

Teachers of color are valuable role models for all students, especially students of color (Quiocho & Rios, 2000)

Teachers of color are often "cultural brokers" for students of color:

- They tend to bring to teaching an understanding of students' cultural backgrounds and experiences (Irvine, 2003; Achinstein et. al., 2010; see Villegas & Irvine, 2010).
- They also bring to teaching personal experience with and insight into racism and ethnocentrism in society (see Miller & Endo, 2005; Quiocho & Rios, 2000 in Villegas & Lucas, 2012).

Teachers of color have significant impact on learning gains for students of color (see Egalite, Kisida, & Winters, 2015; Fairlie, Hoffman, & Oreopoulous, 2011; Dee, 2004)

Teachers of color have significant impact on other outcomes for students, such as: attendance, AP enrollment, gifted and talented referral, and college-going rates (see Achinstein, et al., 2010; Villegas and Irvine, 2010; Grissom et. al., 2015)

Teachers of color more often choose to work in "hard-to-staff" schools

Minority teachers are two to three times more likely than white teachers to work in hard-to-staff schools

(see Achinstein et. al, 2010; Clewell & Villegas, 1998; Ingersoll et al., 2014).

26

## RETENTION

### A RENEWED FOCUS FOR EDUCATION LEADERS

While some researchers argue that the increase of teachers of color has been eclipsed by the rapid growth of the population of students of color, others suggest that even with the population growth of students of color (73%), it does not eclipse the rate of growth among teachers of color (92%)

(Ingersoll et al., 2017).

27

## SOURCES OF ATTRITION AMONG EDUCATORS OF COLOR

"Non-policy" related sources of attrition include:

Retirement

Competitive job opportunities in other professions

Personal reasons and family-related decisions

28

## SOURCES OF ATTRITION AMONG EDUCATORS OF COLOR

"Policy" related sources of attrition include:

School and Student Characteristics

School Working Conditions shape voluntary departures

Accountability Mandates & Sanctions shape involuntary departures

29

## SAMPLE PLANS & SURVEYS

Recruitment and Retention Teamwork Plan Practice

Opportunity Profile

Recruitment Marketing Plan

Recruitment Budget Work Plan

Interview Questions

Orientation and Onboarding Work Plan

Recruitment and Retention Evaluation Scorecard

Employee Performance Agreement

Satisfaction Survey Exit

Interview

<https://www.ruralcenter.org/sites/default/files/Recruitment%20and%20>

30

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMITTED TO A DIVERSE WORKFORCE

Encourage more States to adopt recruitment legislation, targeting teachers of color and African American males

Encourage existing States to develop more comprehensive plans

Invest significantly more support for retention efforts, including both voluntary and involuntary sources of attrition

Leverage research to support the protection of teachers' civil rights and professional authority

31

## PROMISING RETENTION PRACTICES ONCE MINORITIES ARE HIRED AT SCHOOL/DISTRICT LEVEL

Orientation/Onboarding Career  
Development  
Recognition Training  
Supervision Support

32

## Retention

- Target teachers of color and African American males
- Implement racial and gender awareness training for new and current administrators
- Identify and intervene in schools with low numbers minority teachers and African American male teachers
- Enlarge the scope of the elements of equity in all planning

33

## THINK TANK RECRUITMENT & RETENTION PLAN

### Gather Tools



34

## DISTRICT/SCHOOL RECRUITMENT & RETENTION PLAN

Consider all that you now know in creating your plan. What does the national, state and local data tell us?

Check data to affirm district and school needs. Use available national, state and local resources. Who are the partners you need to consider?

What are the target dates, funding sources, key figures, needs? What research is pertinent to your plan.

Time: Two hours

Team: Predetermined team by school and district

Task: Create a DRAFT Recruitment Plan

Break: Take Break as needed

35

## CHECKLIST

Each team will use the printed checklist to determine:

Requirements  
Goals & Objectives  
Performance Standards Team Identification  
Budget  
Roles & Responsibilities Recruitment  
Sources Retention Sources  
Action Items Deliverables  
Evaluation Component Additional areas

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THINK TANK

Share your plan...



37



38

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION



39

**EVALUATION**  
**Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms Workshop**  
**Session 3: Retaining Teachers of Color and African American Male Teachers**

Thank you for participating in Session 3 of Understanding the Need for Diversity in the Classrooms Workshop. Your feedback will provide valuable information to the trainer, the superintendent, and the school leaders in recruiting, hiring and retaining minority teachers.

Use the following rating scale when marking your response:

5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree

1. The purpose, goal, and learning outcomes for Session 3 were clearly stated.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
2. The research was helpful in understanding the need for diversity in the classroom to increase student achievement for minority students.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
3. This information and discussions helped me understand the current situation for students of color and teacher demographics.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
4. This session helped me better understand basics of teaching in a diversified classroom.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
5. This session provided pertinent information on resources available at the state level for teacher recruitment and retention.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
6. This session provided engaging activities for groups discussion to better understand the need.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
7. The session provided strategies for retaining minority and African American male teachers.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
8. This workshop activity helped me to better understand the need for being purposeful in retaining minority teachers  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1
9. Overall, this workshop activity was a successful experience for me.  

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1

List on the back any suggestions you have for improving this or future workshop activity.

Appendix B: Letter of Request to Conduct Research

Email Request

Subject Line: Reggie Wicker: Request to Perform Research & Access Participants

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is Reggie Wicker, a doctoral student at Walden University. I am currently pursuing a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership, under the direction of Dr. Shelly M. Arneson in the College of Education at Walden University.

I am writing to request permission to conduct case study research in your district. The title of my study is, The Perceptions of African American Males on Teaching in Elementary Schools.

The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of African American male teachers on the challenges and benefits of teaching at a predominately minority elementary school, and to ascertain strategies for recruiting and retaining African American male teachers in the profession. The study is specific to data from some elementary schools in your district.

I am collecting data from African American male teachers at the elementary level in predominately minority schools. If you agree to me conducting the study in your district, I will ask them to participate 30–45 minutes in an interview after school hours.

This study is voluntary. If you agree, I will work with the principal of the identified schools to gain access to the African American male teachers. Further, I would to discuss the results of the study if your time permits.

I thank you in advance for your consideration. If you have questions, please contact me at 803-944-0221.

Sincerely,

Reggie Wicker  
Doctoral Student at Walden University

## Appendix C: Principal Letter of Request to Access Participants in School

Email Request

Subject Line: Reggie Wicker: Request to Access Participants

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is Reggie Wicker, a doctoral student at Walden University. I am currently pursuing a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership, under the direction of Dr. Shelly M. Arneson in the College of Education at Walden University.

I am conducting research entitled, *The Perceptions of African American Males on Teaching in Elementary Schools*. I have received permission from the Director of Elementary Schools to work with African American male teachers in your school. I wanted to make you aware that I will be contacting them via email. Should they agree to participate, I would like to interview the teacher in your building outside of the scheduled school hours. The interviews will last 30–45 minutes.

The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of African American male teachers on the challenges and benefits of teaching at a predominately minority elementary school, and to ascertain strategies for recruiting and retaining African American male teachers in the profession. The study is specific to data from select teachers in identified elementary schools in your district.

I am collecting data from African American male teachers at the elementary level in predominately minority schools.

This study is voluntary. If you agree, I will work with the principal of the identified schools to gain access to the African American male teachers. Further, I would like to discuss the results of the study with you if you desire and your time permits.

I thank you in advance. If you have questions, please contact me at 803-944-0221.

Sincerely,

Reggie Wicker  
Doctoral Student at Walden University

## Appendix D: Letter of Invitation and Statement of Consent

Email Invitation to Participate

Subject Line: Reggie Wicker: Research Study Participation Invitation

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is Reggie Wicker, a doctoral student at Walden University. I am currently pursuing a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership, under the direction of Dr. Shelly M. Arneson in the College of Education at Walden University.

I am writing to invite you to take part in a research study entitled, *The Perceptions of African American Males on Teaching in Elementary Schools*.

### Background Information

The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of African American male teachers on the challenges and benefits of teaching at a predominately minority elementary school, and to ascertain strategies for recruiting and retaining African American male teachers in the profession. The study is specific to data from some elementary schools in your district.

### Criteria & Background

In order to engage in a quality data collection process, you will need to meet certain criteria. Please check one of the boxes: *Yes*, *No*, *Unsure*. If you answer *yes* and/or *unsure* to these four questions, continue reading to learn more about the procedures and information for this study. If you answer *no* to any of the four questions, you do not meet the criteria or demographics for participation, and therefore will not be a candidate for participation in this study.

	Demographic Questions	Select only one response		
		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Unsure</i>
1.	Are you a fulltime classroom teacher?			
2.	Do you consider yourself to be an African American male?			
	Inclusion Information	Select only one response		
		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Unsure</i>
3.	Do you teach at a predominately minority school?			
4.	Is your classroom demographics predominately minority students?			

### Procedures

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to participate in a(n):

- 30–45 minutes audio-recorded interview
- 20 – 30 minutes checking (Member checking allows participants to check interview responses to ensure accuracy of response and not the researcher’s views and beliefs).

**Voluntary Nature of Study**

This study is voluntary. There will be no negative consequence for participating or not. If you agree to participate and later decide later to discontinue, you may do so at any time.

**Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study**

There are no foreseeable risks. Participation in this study may involve some risk, and discomfort. The discomfort should be no different than that encountered in daily life, stress and fatigue. Participation in this study will not affect your general safety and wellbeing. There are no particular direct benefits to the participants. The benefits to the larger community could be a change in thinking about the importance of African American male teachers in minority classrooms.

**Payment**

There is no payment or gifts (monetary or otherwise) for your participation.

**Privacy**

Information shared will be kept confidential; your name or any personal information that can identify you in the study reports will not be included. The researcher will not use this information for any purposes outside of this research project. The names of the participants will be coded as numbers in order to protect the identity of the participants. Additionally, the audio recording will be transcribed and you, the participants, will be allowed to review the interview transcripts before the material is coded and reviewed for themes. Finally, all interview responses, data collection tools, audio recordings and transcripts will be stored in a locked file cabinet and only the researcher will have access to the information. The audio recordings will be destroyed after the completion of the study. It is also important to note the necessity of honesty and integrity of all stakeholders and its' importance to the validity and reliability of the research. All data will be kept securely, in a locked cabinet for at least five years by the researcher Reggie Wicker, or as stated by the university.

**Contact and Questions**

Any and all questions are welcomed. Please contact me at 803-944-0221, or by email at: reggie.wicker@waldenu.edu. Should you wish to talk specifically about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott at Walden University. Her phone number is 1-800-295-3368, extension 3121210. Walden University's approval number for this study is (#####) and it expires on (#####).

**Statement of Consent**

I have read the above information, and I understand the study enough to decide on participating in the study. By **replying to this email with the words "I Consent" and my name in subject line, I am agreeing to participate in this study.** Please print and save a copy of this consent form for your records.

Participant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix E: Interview Protocol Script

### **Beginning Script**

Thank you taking time out of your busy schedule to discuss your experiences as an African American male teacher on the challenges and benefits of teaching at a predominately minority elementary school, and to provide strategies you deem important for recruiting and retaining African American male teachers. In order to participate in the study, you have met the demographic requirements and the criteria for inclusion.

Your participation will involve a face-to-face in-depth interview with open-ended questions. Interviews are expected to last 30 to 45 minutes depending upon your response. Interviews will be digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. Participation in the study is strictly voluntary. The sample will include 5 to 10 participants. Participants will have the opportunity to review and verify the transcriptions using a process called member checking. Your consent to participant in this study was received via email. However, you can still decide to be a part of this study or not. Once you start, you can withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits. To withdraw from the study, you can inform the researcher verbally or in writing before, during, or after the interview process by emailing (EMAIL ADDRESS) or calling (PHONE NUMBER) me. The results of the research study may be published but your identity will remain confidential and your name will not be made known to any outside party. In this research, there are no foreseeable risks to you.

Your responses will help me to gain perspectives on recruiting and retaining African American male teachers' schools with high minority populations. In order to participate in the

study, you must be an African American male teacher at a predominately minority populated school with teaching experiences.

Your participation will involve a face-to-face in-depth interview with semi-structured questions. Interviews are expected to last up to 45 minutes and will be conducted at a convenient location at your school site. Interviews will be digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. This study is voluntary. There will be no negative consequence for participating or not. If you agree to participate and later decide later to discontinue, you may do so at any time. Up to 10 teachers will participate in this study. You will have the opportunity to review and verify the transcriptions. You can decide to be a part of this study or not. Once you start, you can withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits. To withdraw from the study, you can inform the researcher verbally or in writing before, during, or after the interview process at [reggie.wicker@waldenu.edu](mailto:reggie.wicker@waldenu.edu) or 803-944-0221. The results of the research study may be published, but your identity will remain confidential and your name will not be made known to any outside party. In this research, there are no foreseeable risks to you. Should this study involve some risk, and discomfort, the discomfort should be no different than what you that encountered in daily life, stress and fatigue.

Although there may be no direct benefit to you, a possible benefit from your participation in this research study is to share your experiences with elementary school leaders, school boards, superintendents, and instructors and leadership in higher education on the importance of African American male teachers in minority classrooms. The study is needed to gain a better

understanding of recruiting and retaining African American males in the classrooms at predominately minority schools.

Before the interview begins, you will be assigned an alias to preserve confidentiality. Your alias for the research study is \_\_\_\_\_. Please be careful not to mention names during the interview process. If you must use a name, please use only first names in referencing others. Are there any questions before we begin the interview?

### **Interview Script**

I have received your signed, informed consent form. I will ask open-ended questions for you to provide a response. There are no wrong responses. Please be honest in your response based on your experiences. Recording will begin now. [Document time, place, interviewer and interviewee, then proceed to interview questions.]

Time of Interview:    Date:    Place:    Interviewer:    Interviewee:

### **Interview Questions**

RQ 1: How do African American male teachers describe the challenges they face in teaching at a predominately minority school?

1. Describe your experience or explain how you have been educated to understand methods for dealing with difficulties in historically marginalized communities.
2. Describe a situation in which you encountered a conflict with a person from a different cultural background than yours. How did you handle the situation? (Please be specific)
3. Describe your experience in serving or teaching underrepresented communities.

4. What are some specific things you are going to do within the next two years to further your development in cultural competency?

RQ 2: How do African American male teachers describe the benefits of teaching at a predominately minority school?

1. Describe how you, as an elementary teacher in a predominately minority school, function and communicate effectively and respectfully within the context of varying beliefs, behaviors, and backgrounds.
2. How do you seek opportunities to improve the learning environment to better meet the needs of students you serve? Address any different techniques you may use based on race, ethnicity or gender.
3. What is your method of communication with students who are different from the Professor? How do you convey thoughts, ideas, or adverse conclusions?

RQ 3: What strategies do African American male teachers suggest would improve the recruitment African American males in the teaching profession?

1. Do you feel any special responsibilities/obligations to recruit other African American males to work in highly minority schools? If so, what strategies would you recommend for recruiting other African Americans to the profession?

RQ 4: What strategies do African American male teachers suggest would improve the retention of African American males in the teaching profession?

1. How does your own identity impact your work with a diverse staff and student body?
2. Some school districts have found ways to recruit teachers to work in their schools. However, there has been a problem with retaining teachers in the profession. What

are your recommendations for retaining African American teachers at predominately minority schools?

3. What motivates you to continue working at your school?

### **Ending Script**

Thank you for your participation in the study. Please be assured that your responses will be kept confidential. A verbatim transcription of the recorded interview will be sent to you through email for you to review, verify accuracy, and provide feedback.