Black and Hispanic/Latino Male Teacher Networked Improvement Community: Promising Practices to Recruit and Retain Male Teachers of Color

This brief is one in a series of five presenting key insights into promising practices aimed at increasing the number of Black, Hispanic, and Latino male candidates in educator preparation programs (EPP). The insights are based on 10 institutions selected by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) to participate in the Black and Hispanic/Latino Male Teacher Networked Improvement Community (NIC) to investigate the complexities, challenges, and opportunities necessary to increase teacher diversity. To learn more about the NIC, visit aacte.org/programs-and-services/nic/.

CENTRAL THEME: MENTORSHIP

Representation matters in education, whether in a PK-12 classroom or in the leadership of an Educator Preparation Program. Members of the NIC found that in addition to providing mentorship opportunities early and often, representation in mentorship programs is vital for the recruitment and retention of Black and Hispanic/Latino teachers.

How can educator preparation programs incorporate mentoring programs, which can lead to higher rates of retention and success?

KEY FINDINGS

Group and one-on-one mentoring of Black and Hispanic/Latino male students from the perspective of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy leads to better outcomes that include

- Personal and academic success
- Higher rates of retention in the program
Focused mentoring throughout programs: Due to a lack of diversity in the profession and in higher education itself, mentoring for male students of color is a crucial initiative for the entire program to adopt to advance the personal and professional success of its Black/Hispanic/Hispanic students—whether by identifying those educators of color that can serve as mentors or helping all faculty understand the importance of mentoring and providing opportunities for group activities for these teacher candidates.

Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU)

At NEIU, staff and faculty realize that the GPA requirement in many programs can be a barrier for retention of students of color. Often, students either are not aware of, or do not reach out for, assistance in difficult courses for a variety of reasons. To ensure its students were getting the support they needed to maintain the GPA requirements, NEIU practiced intrusive advising and counseling. As a result, this initiative increased the number of students who were able to redo or retake courses to improve grades and raise their GPAs.

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William Paterson University

The College of Education faculty of color created sustainable structures and supports to connect students of color to each other via peer-to-peer networking and faculty mentorship. The formation of the TIE scholars group—Teach, Inspire, Educate—for males of color in education was one of many pivotal moments for the students. Students shared their academic, financial, and emotional needs that faculty and advisors were not aware of and were not addressing. TIE scholars were celebrated and invited to participate as members of college advisory boards. The University’s Board of Trustees invited College of Education students of color to present to its Educational Policy Committee. Students engaged in opportunities to network with other students of color through the AACTE Holmes Program groups and the TIE scholars group and their experiences as participants at AACTE’s Summer Policy Institute in Washington, DC, where they talked with legislators about education.
Faculty at the University of Connecticut have established several mentoring programs aimed at retaining candidates by encouraging confidence and success in their students of color as they pursue careers in the education field. One retention effort was Leadership In Diversity (LID), a program providing minority students with the necessary tools, networks, and information to be competitive, well-rounded future educators. Another program established for pre-teaching and currently enrolled students at the Neag School of Education teacher preparation program was Diverse Educators Making Outstanding Change (DEMO). The DEMO program consists of K-12 Connecticut teachers and administrators, as well as university faculty and staff members of color.

There have been many times that students of color felt pressured to explain the black or Latino experience in the classroom to their white counterparts, where usually the room is dominated by their white counterparts. – UCONN NIC Member

These 10 AACTE member institutions participated in the Black and Hispanic/Latino Male Teacher Networked Improvement Community (NIC):

- Boston University
- California State University Fullerton
- Florida Atlantic University
- Midamerica Nazarene University
- Northeastern Illinois University
- St. Thomas University
- UA Little Rock
- UConn
- William Paterson University
- Western Kentucky University

For more information, please visit aacte.org/programs-and-services/nic/.