



Recruitment and Retention of Black Educators: Promising Strategies at Eight U.S. Teacher Residencies

A summary of research conducted by the Center for Public Research and Leadership to determine the impact of the National Center for Teacher Residencies' Black Educators Initiative

Launched in 2019, the National Center for Teacher Residencies' (NCTR) [Black Educators Initiative](#) (BEI) is designed to recruit, prepare, and retain 750 new Black teachers through our national Network of teacher residency programs with support from a five-year grant from [Ballmer Group](#). NCTR's BEI aims to improve outcomes for Black students in particular, and for all students generally, by increasing access to effective Black teachers. Funding from BEI allows NCTR to invest in teacher residency programs within its Network that are redesigning teacher preparation practices to serve Black teacher residents by:

- Investing in “home grown” recruitment pipelines that reflect the communities of color predominantly served in Title I schools;
- Reducing barriers for aspiring Black educators to enter and remain in the profession through scholarships, stipends, emergency funds, and licensure testing support;
- Increasing teacher effectiveness through rigorous clinical preparation and coaching from an expert mentor teacher;
- Adopting culturally and linguistically sustaining practices as well as trauma-informed practices that affirm, engage, and challenge students of color attending high-need schools; and
- Improving the retention of effective Black educators through affinity groups that reduce isolation, build community, and empower them to collectively lead transformation in their schools and districts.

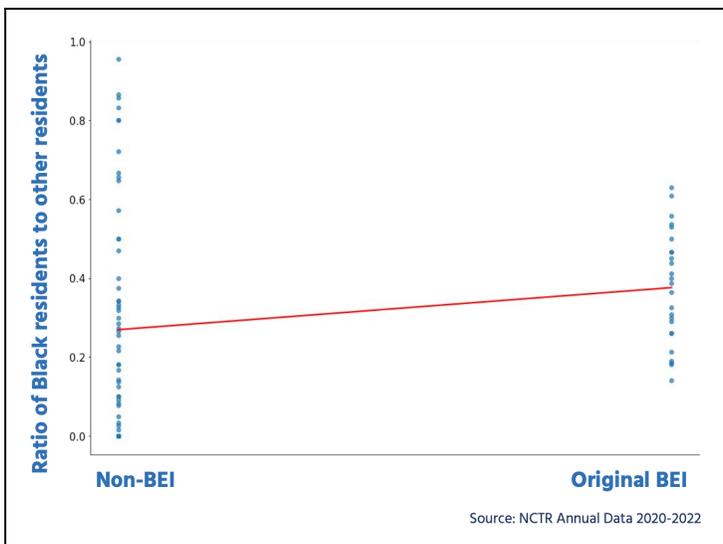
[The Center for Public Research and Leadership \(CPRL\)](#) at Columbia University conducted research on the early impact of NCTR's Black Educators Initiative. To conduct its evaluation, CPRL examined data from NCTR's BEI-supported teacher residency programs, such as enrollment and demographics, as well as data from 16 focus groups of Black teacher residents receiving direct support from NCTR's BEI and conducted 23 interviews with program staff and





stakeholders at BEI programs to identify leading indicators of effectiveness. CPRL found that thus far, BEI has positively impacted the recruitment and hiring of Black teacher residents. Additionally, the report identified promising practices for diversifying the teacher workforce.

Below are some key findings from the CPRL report. The full CPRL report is available online at www.nctresidencies.org/black-educators-initiative.



First, funding from NCTR’s BEI positively impacted the recruitment of Black teacher residents. **Being an original BEI grantee since its launch in 2019 is associated with a 16% higher share of Black teacher residents, compared with non-BEI teacher residency programs, to a statistically significant degree. CPRL concluded that “BEI teacher residency programs are consistently successful at attracting both larger numbers and proportions of Black teacher residents,” indicating that this initiative is effectively**

recruiting Black teachers into the workforce. Hiring professional staff dedicated to recruitment was found to be positively associated with a larger number of Black applicants, showing the importance of outreach efforts to potential Black candidates.

Second, CPRL found three promising strategies that accounted for the increase in recruitment of Black candidates:

- 1) Partnering with organizations, such as local community schools and HBCUs, with high-potential, diverse membership;
- 2) Emphasizing the financial benefits, such as stipends; and
- 3) Using high-touch, culturally responsive recruitment practices.





Residency directors were able to expand their recruitment efforts to attract Black candidates and explicitly mentioned recruiting at HBCUs, in the partner schools, and in the local community as key to their recruitment strategies. **Next, residents themselves cited the financial benefits as critical to attracting them into the residency and said that more Black candidates would**

apply if they knew the financial benefits. Furthermore, directors attributed the recruitment bump to individualized support and culturally responsive recruitment efforts, by developing one-on-one relationships with candidates and providing consistent support throughout the application process.

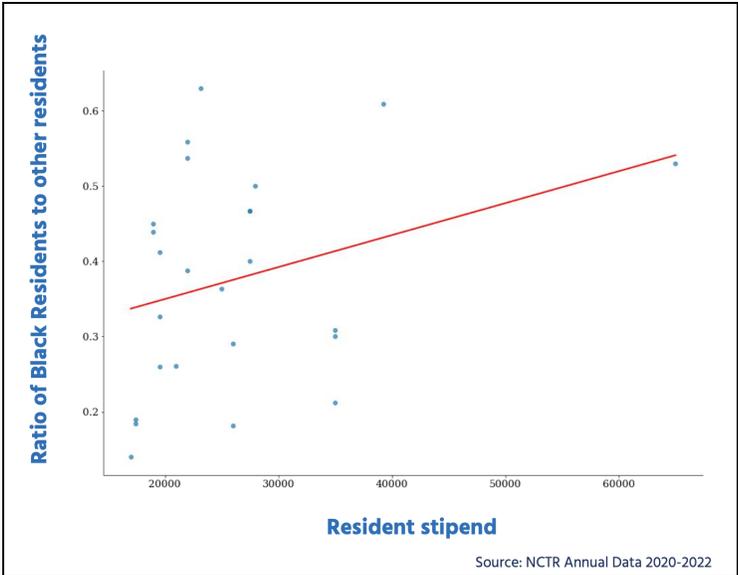
"We talk a lot in the inner circles about it being high touch. We want great applicants, not tons of applicants. We really shepherd our candidates. The relationships are very recruiter-to-resident, one-on-one. Our recruiters stay with them from their first hello to when they are admitted."

- Program Director of a BEI-Supported Teacher Residency

Third, when asked about what attracted them to the program, Black teacher residents and graduates cited four main motivating factors:

- 1) Shared demographics with recruiters;
- 2) Social justice or antiracist orientations of programs;
- 3) Commitment to the community being served; and
- 4) Financial support.

Of these, financial support was viewed to be one of the most critical motivations. In fact, for every \$10,000 increase in resident stipends, programs achieve a 4 percentage point increase in the share of Black residents, which is a large effect. In addition, the financial incentives, such as





emergency funds, were found to retain Black residents in the program, and these funds helped residents pay for rent, child care, or car repairs that program administrators reported to be crucial to preventing Black candidates from quitting. Thus, the investment in Black residents is paying off.

Fourth, Black graduates and teacher residents of BEI programs also noted what was effective in terms of their preparation to be a teacher. They reported they learned culturally inclusive practices and had opportunities to reflect on race and identity. In particular, these practices were deeply embedded into their preparation experiences, rather than an “add-on.” Residents and graduates also reported that they were motivated to work with, and in a particular community, and teach Black children. Supportive mentors were crucial, as well, and while not all residents reported having beneficial mentors, having supportive, responsive mentors was viewed as a key factor in the effectiveness of residents’ preparation. **Residents also reported that the inclusive and affirming residency climate was extremely valuable to their preparation, especially as Black teachers.**

“The only way that I’ve been able to show up as a Black teacher is just by being a Black teacher and being honest about being a Black teacher. So, that’s not necessarily something that you can be taught, it’s not in a textbook. But I do feel like the level of support I’ve had allows me to get to that mindset where I’m not going to hide being Black because I realize how important it is to my students to be Black.”

-BEI-Supported Teacher Resident

Finally, perhaps most significantly, not only do programs participating in BEI promote recruitment for Black educators, but they are also improving graduation and hiring rates to a significant degree, validating the impact of this initiative. **BEI has increased the number of Black graduates per residency to an average of about 21 Black teachers per program. BEI also has a large and significant impact on the hiring rates of Black residents. About 14 additional BEI graduates, on average, were hired in Title I schools and about 24 additional**





graduates were hired in partner districts after BEI was implemented. Black graduates at BEI programs, thus, are more likely to be hired in partner districts and Title I schools than before BEI, demonstrating their commitment to their community and the effectiveness of this initiative for placing Black teachers in high-need schools. Residents and graduates attributed their success to affinity groups; the diversity of program staff, leadership, and other residents; and the financial support, especially for tests.

"It came back to financial support. I am a first generation, only child in my family that's educated. If I didn't have financial support, I'd still be a teacher assistant. Now, I will start on my doctorate."

- BEI-Supported Teacher Residency Graduate

In summary, these data indicate that NCTR's BEI is making a statistically significant difference for Black teacher residents and ultimately placing Black teachers in schools where they are needed most. Teacher preparation programs should consider how to apply these findings to support Black teacher candidates to diversify the teaching profession. Moreover, these data provide evidence that NCTR's BEI is working and

achieving its intended goals. While these represent early conclusions, NCTR intends to continue to examine and research BEI and share our findings with practices to the field, as well as policymakers, as these findings have implications for recruiting, preparing, and retaining Black educators, particularly as we continue to develop efforts to diversify the profession and dismantle barriers to the profession.

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NCTR's BEI is funded by [Ballmer Group](#).

