

**TEACH
+PLUS**

ANNUAL

REPORT

2021

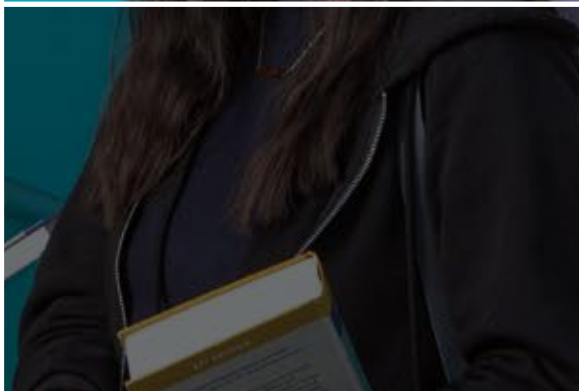


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DEAR FRIENDS,

One of the most inspiring moments of 2021 for me was when Juliana Urtubey, Teach Plus Nevada Policy Fellow and 2021 National Teacher of the Year, shared her vision for a “joyous and just” education system with a national audience from the cover of *People* magazine. *People*'s recognition of teachers as people of the year could not have come at a more important time, when educators are working more and with less support to address the academic needs of students and the mental health crisis created by the pandemic and ongoing racial oppression. I feel proud that teachers are turning to Teach Plus as an outlet to learn from the challenges of the pandemic and ensure the system emerges more equitable and better than ever before.



As decision makers at every level of the system look for actionable solutions during this time of uncertainty, they are also turning to Teach Plus and Teach Plus teacher leaders for their expertise and ability to problem-solve and innovate. Our teacher leaders have been true agents of change, garnering 23 policy wins in multiple states, from securing \$100 million for the most underfunded school districts in Pennsylvania and \$1.5 billion for new Educator Effectiveness Funds in California to helping to author and successfully pass the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards in Illinois.

This year, we also launched new policy programming in Arkansas and Michigan. We recruited outstanding teacher leaders in Illinois, Indiana, New Mexico, California, and Texas to lead change in their schools in response to the academic and social and emotional challenges of the pandemic. Finally, through our National Policy and Advocacy Network, we are advising and advocating for federal policy change in Congress and at the U.S. Department of Education. Teach Plus teacher leaders are shaping policy and practice at the school, district, state, and national level, demonstrating the power of teacher leadership and driving educational change and opportunity for students.

As Teach Plus's footprint and impact grow, we have seen an increase in our teachers' ability to serve as thought leaders—even beyond the states and districts where we run programs. In addition to the wide reach of our national reports, Teach Plus is leading within the One Million Teachers of Color Campaign, the Coalition to Improve the Teaching Profession, and other coalitions that seek to influence the national conversation.

Teach Plus's next chapter promises to be a powerful one. In the coming year, Teach Plus will welcome its next CEO, Kira Orange Jones. Kira's vision and extraordinary leadership experience at Teach for America and as an elected member of the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will provide new opportunities for Teach Plus teacher leaders to turn this moment of tragedy and injustice into a crucible for change.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Sobel
Interim CEO



Mission and Student Opportunity Mandate

The mission of Teach Plus is to empower excellent, experienced, and diverse teachers to take leadership over key policy and practice issues that advance equity, opportunity, and student success. In our work, Teach Plus is guided by our Student Opportunity Mandate: All students should have the opportunity to achieve their potential in an education system defined by its commitment to equity, its responsiveness to individual needs, and its ability to prepare students for postsecondary success.

Great
Teachers.

Deep
Knowledge.

Empowered
to Lead.

RECRUIT AND SELECT Excellent teachers committed to equity and opportunity for students and to advancing policy and practice solutions.

WE DEVELOP AND COACH Teacher leaders to shape education policy in their districts and states and to shape professional learning in their schools to improve outcomes for students.

WE CONNECT AND EMPOWER Teacher leaders as change agents, from shaping professional learning in their schools to advocating with policymakers from the classroom to the Capitol.



"Teach Plus created the space for teachers from across my district and state to collaborate in order to inform policy and provide solutions to challenges we saw on a daily basis. Our consistent dialogue and problem-solving gave me the confidence to raise my voice. As a Policy Fellow, our cohort had many moments of celebration. A consistent trend in those celebrations was that our wins were teacher-informed and student-centered."

—Juliana Urtubey, Teach Plus Nevada Policy Fellow, 2021 National Teacher of the Year

OUR REACH AND ENGAGEMENT

36

policy papers
and reports

166

op-eds by
Teach Plus
teacher
leaders

328

stories in the
media

14,500

subscribers to our
blog, *What's the
Plus*, and Teach
Plus newsblast

55,852

social media
followers

OUR INFLUENCE IN THE FIELD

TEACH PLUS TEACHER LEADERS



438

Leading instructional
change in their
schools and districts

15,000

Active participants
in the Teach Plus
Network

263

Leading policy and systems change in their
district and state

PROGRAMS

Through our Policy Fellowship and instructional leadership programs, we develop and support excellent teachers in their leadership and empower them to take action to improve equity, opportunities, and outcomes for students.

The **TEACH PLUS POLICY FELLOWSHIP** is a highly selective, rigorous program for excellent teachers who want to deepen their knowledge, expand their influence, and lead in shaping education policy. Teach Plus Policy Fellows work to improve laws and policies at the district and state levels.

The **TEACH PLUS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS** grow excellent teachers' skills to use and analyze data, make evidence-based decisions about teaching and learning, and shape professional development for their peers. Teach Plus teacher leaders create change needed in schools to advance equity and improve outcomes for students.

Teach Plus amplifies teacher voice and shapes the public narrative around teacher-led solutions through research and communications work by sharing stories of Teach Plus teacher leaders, and publishing reports, policy briefs, and op-eds in the commentary pages of regional and national media.

OUR EQUITY FOCUS AREAS

Teach Plus teacher leaders lead in the following Equity Focus Areas across our policy and instructional leadership programs.

Equitable funding—High-quality early childhood education—Recruitment and retention of a diverse teaching force—Rigorous curricula, high standards, and meaningful accountability—Teacher preparation, development, and leadership—Whole child, student-centered learning.

Reimagining Teaching and Learning Beyond the Pandemic

When the American education system faced its largest crisis in memory during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers across the country rose to the challenge. They identified what works for their students, families, and communities and, in the process, began to create a new vision for the profession. Our report, *"The Phoenix Project: Building An Equitable Educational System Beyond the Pandemic,"* zeroes in on what it would take to enact this vision in four interconnected areas: **Thriving Students, Thriving Teachers, Engaged Families and Communities, and Teaching and Learning for the 2020s.**



The teachers who participated in the Teach Plus Phoenix Project imagine an education ecosystem where what students learn is relevant to them, their experiences, and their communities; where teachers are fully trusted and recognized for who they are while reflecting the diversity of their students; where relationships with families and communities are turned into effective partnerships; and where the system empowers students and educators to become thought partners and co-designers of learning environments.

The Phoenix Project is our blueprint for change. Teach Plus and Teach Plus teacher leaders are seizing the moment and advocating for the specific recommendations for state, district, and national policymakers on how to make the Phoenix Project vision a reality.



"We teach because we want to build a strong society of healthy, successful people. Trust us educators to know what our students need and how we can lead them to academic and personal greatness."

Kristen Rhodes Beland, Teach Plus Policy Fellow and co-author of the Phoenix Project Report, Riverside, Rhode Island

THRIVING STUDENTS

Teachers imagine a system where students bring their full selves to school; see their identities, cultures, interests, and neighborhoods reflected in their instruction; and learn critical thinking and social and emotional skills through meaningful, relevant projects.

ILLINOIS: Teach Plus teacher leaders and staff were among the group of educators who developed and successfully advocated for the new Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards, which the state approved in February 2021. The State Board of Education will use the standards to prepare future educators to teach diverse students. The standards encourage self reflection, getting to know students and their families, connecting curriculum to students' lives and identities, and developing student leadership to prepare future educators. State Superintendent Dr. Carmen Ayala wrote, "The standards succeeded thanks to the voices of educators," and then quoted three Teach Plus teacher leaders.



"When their identities are celebrated, my students have the space to develop a range of viewpoints and perspectives that encompass everyone. Schools then become both the mirrors that reflect students' own lived experience and identities, and the windows that provide my students with the understanding of the many diverse life experiences and identities in our society."

Teach Plus Policy Fellow Briana Morales, East St. Louis, Illinois, in *The State Journal-Register*

THRIVING TEACHERS

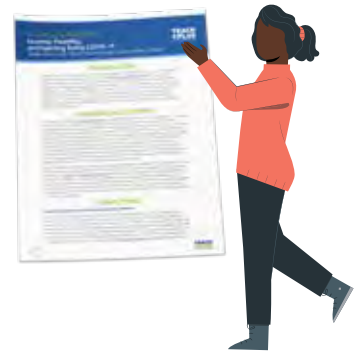
Teachers imagine a system that attracts, supports, retains, and grows excellent, resilient educators who reflect the diversity and brilliance of their student bodies, and who have differentiated opportunities to lead and learn throughout their careers.

CALIFORNIA: Teach Plus teacher leaders successfully advocated for legislation, which the state passed in July 2021, that provides significant support and incentives for teachers seeking National Board Certification as well as teachers who are already National Board Certified Teachers. The legislation appropriates \$250 million from the General Fund to the Education Department for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification Incentive Program.

ENGAGED FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Teachers imagine a system in which we turn relationships into partnerships, where families and communities are honored partners in schools and student learning and see their ideas, cultures, and vision for their children reflected in their schools.

NEVADA: Teach Plus teacher leaders, in partnership with the Nevada PTA and other organizations, held a series of community panels to discuss the impact of remote learning. Students, families, and educators shared their challenges and successes in the virtual environment as well as what they would like to see in the future of education. Teachers presented reflections from these community panels in memos to policymakers to inform and impact education decisions in Nevada.



NEW MEXICO: While teaching preschoolers and kindergarteners virtually, Teach Plus teacher leaders Mary Ellen Dannenberg (Turquoise Trail Charter School, Santa Fe) and Renee Hethcox (My Little School, Deming) recognized the need for innovative approaches. They built support systems for their students' families, equipping them with strategies and skills to support their small children in their learning. They shared these strategies through virtual collaboration, make-and-take sessions, and community engagements where parents, students, and teachers could learn side by side.



"Teachers have many obstacles facing them in the world of education today. Let's make strides...to help teachers stay inspired and invested in the work of our futures."

**Teach Plus Policy Fellow Lauren Moore,
West Goshen, Indiana,
in ACT**

TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR THE 2020s

Teachers imagine a system that is both nurturing and joyful, and celebrates the individuality of every student by demonstrating its belief that they can achieve great things.

CALIFORNIA: In 2021, after two years of advocacy, writing memos and op-eds, meeting with policymakers, and testifying in the Legislature, Teach Plus teacher leaders succeeded in ensuring that the state closed a funding formula loophole that allowed for the redirection of unspent funds for high-need students to general use funds. Closing this loophole ensures that more than \$500 million for high-need students will not be redirected for other purposes and instead used to empower students that need it most.



"I teach at a middle school in South Los Angeles that is 99.7% nonwhite and the median annual household income is less than \$40,000. My school needs more money to support the diverse needs of our students. And when we get that money, it makes a difference. Low-income English language learners diagnosed with a learning disability are exactly the kind of student that California's Local Control Funding Formula was passed to help."

**Teach Plus Policy Fellow Sarah Novicoff,
Los Angeles, California, in CalMatters**



COLORADO: In August 2020, a group of Teach Plus teacher leaders embarked on a journey to gather the stories of highly qualified educators from across their state through a series of interviews. From rural Colorado to Denver, Teach Plus teacher leaders heard from teachers that access to families and students is more important than ever. Providing equitable access to technology; fostering relationships with students and families and creating a safe environment for students; and rethinking assessment structures stood out as some of the lessons of teaching during the pandemic and levers of change to reimagine the system. The teachers highlighted these themes in their 2021 brief, *"Accelerating structural and systemic change in K-12 education: Insights from Colorado Educators."*

"We are not only working with kids now, we are coaching parents."

—Rural educator in Colorado



Speaking Up for Culturally Responsive and Inclusive Classrooms



"It is our obligation as educators to celebrate and respect the differences surrounding us. Every student in my classroom deserves this."

Teach Plus Policy Fellow Brianna Amoscato, Indiana Township, Pennsylvania, in TribLive

In dozens of op-eds published across the nation, Teach Plus teacher leaders are raising their voices to underscore the importance of culturally responsive teaching and to focus efforts and resources on creating culturally inclusive classrooms where all students, including students of color and refugee students, feel seen, safe, and respected.



"One of the main components of this work for me is building positive relationships. Celebrating culture is one way to build trust and learn about the differences that make us who we are. Establishing and abiding by classroom norms that include respect for oneself and others is essential."

—Teach Plus Senior Policy Fellow Marissa Castañón-Hernandez, Austin, Texas, in Austin American-Statesman



"We cannot assume that every student arriving from Afghanistan has the same linguistic, academic, cultural, and social-emotional needs. If we do, we will miss the opportunity to deliver on the promise of public education to build self-reliant and contributing citizens who play an informed and active role in our society. When students from Afghanistan arrive, it is vital that we get to know them as the unique individuals they are."

—Teach Plus Teacher Leadership Coach Lindsey Bird, Modesto, California, in LA School Report



"In some schools, if students are out of compliance with the dress code, they are likely to be sent home for the remainder of the day or given more punitive consequences ... The message our students receive is that their culture is not valued in their school, further disengaging them from learning. This injustice by design is particularly damaging to Black male students, who are being blatantly targeted by law enforcement in their community and teachers in their classrooms."

—Teach Plus Policy Fellow Iesha Green, Little Rock, Arkansas, in Education Post



"The need for culturally inclusive curriculum and teaching, particularly in relation to history, is urgent as the majority of K-12 public school pupils in the U.S. are students of color. In Pennsylvania, where I teach, students of color make up 36% of the public school population."

—Teach Plus Policy Fellow Ross T. Hamilton Jr., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in The Philadelphia Inquirer

Shining a Light on Mental Health

The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated the social and emotional well-being and mental health of millions of students and teachers. As this crisis now extends into a third school year, Teach Plus teacher leaders have made clear that one key strategy is to strengthen the mental health and social and emotional supports available in schools. A Teach Plus report “*Prioritizing People: Purposeful Investments to better support student and teacher mental health*,” co-authored with FuelEd, outlines the priorities identified by teachers for addressing student and teacher mental health. These include authentically engaging, including, and listening to teachers when considering how to serve the mental health needs of educators and students, and normalizing mental health supports and resources by promoting them, subsidizing them, and embedding them in schools and school systems. With the nation focused on the mental health crisis among children, Teach Plus teacher leaders remain on the frontlines helping to nurture and sustain their students, families, and communities.

The strain of the pandemic has also made it even more necessary for students to master Executive Functioning (EF) skills, as they are asked to self-manage large portions of their learning in both in-person and virtual settings. When Chicago teacher leader Jason Fereind noticed that incoming sixth grade students lacked the ability to manage time and materials, prioritize assignments, or take effective notes, he stepped into leadership via the Teach Plus Change Agent program. His peers were frustrated at responding to the same student learning challenges day after day, but while 100% of his peers agreed that teaching students EF skills would help, only 35% actually taught these skills.

In his leadership role, Jason identified key EF skills, research, and effective teaching strategies and led a team to create materials designed to improve student engagement, attendance, and learning. Jason provided support and frequent check-ins as the team balanced the competing demands of remote instruction and prepared a new set of instructional materials for teachers at all grade levels. While the team had initially intended to support five teachers, by the end of 2020, 40 teachers (81% of the school) were participating and delivering effective EF instruction—a 46 percentage point increase—resulting in 84% of students demonstrating improved EF skills. Jason and his principal are further expanding EF skill instruction in a whole-school rollout for the 2021-2022 school year.



“Not only do we need to create learning opportunities for teachers like me to explore how to create supportive, caring classroom communities, but we must create sustainable systems for maintaining whole-child-centered school cultures, where our students’ academic, social-emotional, and physical well-being are all at the center of school planning.”

**Teach Plus Policy Fellow
Louise Williamson, Chula Vista,
California, in Voice of San Diego**



“I saw Jason grow exponentially as a teacher leader, and he led teachers I didn’t expect to jump in and participate. I saw teachers become more thoughtful in their interactions with students, and that was an incredible feat with everyone in survival mode.”

Jean Papagianis, Principal



Supporting Students, Families, and Communities

Teach Plus instructional leadership programs place teachers and their communities at the center of building and leading local solutions. As students, teachers, and their families continue to feel the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, teacher leadership has been an essential tool for empowering schools and teachers to flexibly respond to rapidly changing situations, and continue to focus on the wellness and success of their students.

[Teach Plus Change Agent Ashley Lanfair, 4th Grade ELA/Math Interventionist, LEARN Hunter Perkins, Chicago, Illinois](#)

Ashley Lanfair saw a need for her school to build a schoolwide structure for progress monitoring and using data to make instructional decisions. Her school had seen consistently low growth on benchmark assessments, with too many referrals for special education services. While teachers were frustrated that the core curriculum didn't address students' needs, they weren't sure how to bridge those gaps in the classroom.

As a teacher leader in the Change Agent program, Ashley led a team of her peers to build their progress-monitoring skills and use evidence of their students' learning to plan for small group interventions that they could lead in their classrooms—rather than having all targeted student support delivered by interventionists. Empowered and more deeply understanding their students, teachers began to think differently about students who struggled. Teacher meetings to solve challenges became more frequent and more focused as her team identified and addressed concerns earlier. As Ashley says, *"I knew we'd made a difference when one special education teacher told me she'd stopped getting emails referring students for special education who just needed a little extra help. It is clear to me that teachers know how to use data to identify and address student learning needs."* The students thrived: By the end of the year, Ashley and her team grew the number of students performing on grade level by 58 percentage points.



"We've always been a collaborative bunch, but with Ashley leading from the classroom, it shows teachers they have a voice. Now progress monitoring and using benchmark data to plan is something everyone is owning. It's refreshing."

— Latrice Franklin,
Principal

Looking forward, Ashley plans to expand the work to the whole school, supporting teachers who learned this year to become mentors in the fall. She has gotten buy-in across the building to make efforts more systematic, establishing a monthly progress monitoring day for the whole school and sharing data from one grade level to the next to ensure every student gets the targeted, high-quality instruction they need to succeed.

[Teach Plus Change Agent Martha Alba-González, Kindergarten-Dual Immersion teacher, Cesar Chavez Elementary, Long Beach, California](#)

Having long succeeded in her own classrooms with her own students, Martha Alba-González knew she needed to look beyond its walls to broaden her impact. Joining Chavez Elementary as a kindergarten dual-immersion teacher, Martha saw challenge and opportunity: While 22% of the students at her school were Emergent Bilinguals, the school had struggled to meet these students' needs—almost none were meeting standards in English Language Arts as evidenced by state and district assessments. When surveyed, her colleagues did not have the depth of understanding of the state's English Learner Roadmap and the Language Acquisition Stages necessary to understand their students' strengths and assets, and the strategies that would help them to grow.

Motivated to lead, Martha connected to vivid memories of her personal history as an immigrant, recalling being a 6-year-old student trying to understand what was happening in classrooms and struggling for years to feel like she belonged. It wasn't until high school, when an exceptional ESL teacher made the effort to understand her as a person, that Martha had the opportunity to reclassify her own proficiency status and join regular English classrooms, opening up the possibility of attending college.

Martha set a team goal of a 10 percentage point increase in students' ELA foundational skills and unit assessment results, achieved by supporting her peers to collectively build a student assets-oriented and needs-responsive school. While the pandemic has impacted data collection on student performance, her peers have all shown evidence of growth in their approach and instruction. Through teacher leadership, Martha herself is thriving, moving into a role that allows her to move in and out of teachers' classrooms, providing coaching and model lessons and instruction that better supports English Learners.



“Working in different capacities as a teacher leader and a [Policy] Fellow with Teach Plus has given me the voice and the opportunity to see myself as a Change Agent. I know I'm making a difference on my campus and within my district, and allowing students [...] and me to see ourselves in the leaders shaping the future. I believe that through this work we will be better equipped to close the achievement gap and make sure that Emergent Bilingual students are valued, become proficient, and have all the tools they need to be successful.”

Martha Alba-González, Teach Plus Emerging Bilingual Change Agent



Aligning Resources to Needs

As the education system reeled from the impact of the pandemic, Teach Plus teacher leaders committed themselves to ensuring that federal, state, and district resources were aligned to the ever-growing list of student needs. Teach Plus teacher leaders and staff provided input to the Biden-Harris Transition Team and, as Congress debated the American Rescue Plan, they met with members of Congress and other federal decision makers to ensure that the plan was designed with an emphasis on the students who need the most support, and advocate for its passage. The \$123 billion in K-12 education investments in the American Rescue Plan, the Maintenance of Equity provision in the bill, and the allowable uses of the bill's Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund all align with Teach Plus teacher leaders' recommendations.

Teachers then turned their attention to ensuring that the funds were spent well by states and districts—and that teachers and other key stakeholders had a voice in the decision making. They gathered teacher input, wrote op-eds, led social media campaigns, and met with policymakers. Ultimately, states invested more than \$14 billion in state and federal dollars in Teach Plus teachers' equity-centered priorities, including \$3.5 billion targeted toward recruiting and retaining teachers of color. These included expenditures on early literacy, diverse teacher pipelines, student mental health, high poverty schools, emergent bilingual and special education, and teacher leadership.



"Inadequate pay is why it is so difficult to attract educators to teach in critical shortage areas like mine, where vacant positions often go unfilled. And it is one of the main reasons why fewer people are completing teacher preparation programs, and why fewer young people are willing to say, 'I want to be a teacher when I grow up.'"

—Teach Plus Policy Fellow **Tiffany Davis, Greenville, Mississippi, in *The Greenwood Commonwealth***



CALIFORNIA: Teach Plus teacher leaders advocated for investments in the teacher workforce which resulted in \$2.8 billion for programs to attract, retain, and train educators, including \$1.5 billion for new Educator Effectiveness Funds and additional targeted resources for professional development in reading instruction as well as social-emotional learning and trauma-informed practices.

INDIANA: Following years of advocacy by Teach Plus teacher leaders, the new 2021 Indiana state budget includes a historic \$1.9 billion increase in education funding over the next two years. This includes a \$196 million increase in special education funding, a \$5 million increase for emergent bilingual students, and an increase in the per-student funding to schools educating students in poverty. The new budget also requires schools to spend at least 45% of their regular state funding on teacher salaries and encourages each school to set its starting teacher pay at no less than \$40,000.

MISSISSIPPI: Teach Plus teacher leaders successfully advocated for a \$1,000 pay raise for each educator, which amounted to roughly \$51 million for teachers in the state. The teachers continued to speak up in order to shed light on the issue and help to secure an additional pay raise in 2022. They launched the #RaiseMSTeacherPay social media campaign which highlighted the need of many Mississippi teachers to take on second and third jobs just to make ends meet, wrote op-eds, and spoke numerous times with the press.

PENNSYLVANIA: With the leadership of Teach Plus and Teach Plus teacher leaders as a part of a new funding coalition, the General Assembly agreed to target a \$100 million equity supplement to the state's 100 lowest-wealth school districts in 2021-22, explicitly recognizing the needs of the most underfunded districts for the first time. This investment, titled Level Up, will accelerate the path to adequacy and equity for the bottom 20% of districts, and the funding they receive will become a part of their base funding for future years.



"As a teacher and a Teach Plus Nevada Senior Policy Fellow, I recently participated in focus groups with my teaching colleagues from across the state to provide recommendations to our state and district leaders on how best to prioritize the spending of the America Rescue Plan (ARP) Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds. Understanding these one-time funds could be utilized to make measurable strides toward an excellent and equitable education for our students is a weighted responsibility we do not take lightly."

—Teach Plus Policy Fellow Jen Loescher, Las Vegas, Nevada, in *The Nevada Independent*

Creating Greater Diversity in the Teaching Profession

A growing body of research underscores the importance of teacher diversity for student outcomes. Yet at a time when our student population is increasingly more diverse and schools need more educators of color, the representation gap between teachers and students of color remains wide.

A new Teach Plus report, *"To Be Who We Are: Black Teachers on Creating Affirming School Cultures,"* co-authored with the Center for Black Educator Development, looks directly at what Black teachers need to thrive in schools. Rooted in the voices and lived experiences of Black educators, the report lays out the conditions that Black teachers say are critical towards creating school cultures that affirm their identities. *"To Be Who We Are"* includes tangible recommendations for teachers, school leaders, and district and state policymakers as they work to support and retain Black faculty.

Influencing the field:

In the media:
19 STORIES AND
OP-EDS THAT
FEATURE
THE REPORT

On the web:
1,066 REPORT
DOWNLOADS
AND 3,765 PAGE
VIEWS



"My hope is that school leaders and policymakers will heed the conditions and recommendations in To Be Who We Are. A Black teacher, or any other teacher of color, should not feel the need to segregate themselves in schools, teach in isolation, or be disconnected from the professional learning community because it stifles the opportunity to truly achieve diversity, equity, and inclusion in America's schools. It is our collective obligation to repair an academic system that has historically been unfair and unjust to Black teachers and students."

**Teach Plus Policy Fellow Angela Burley,
Dallas, Texas, in *What's the Plus***



"School leaders must listen to the Black teachers who work on their campuses and willingly make the changes that are being requested, if they are truly committed to developing and maintaining culturally affirming milieus."

Shareefah Mason, Teach Plus Policy Fellow and co-author of the *"To Be Who We Are"* report, Dallas, Texas



Using the report's findings and recommendations, Teach Plus and Teach Plus teacher leaders across the nation are amping up their call for a paradigm shift in how we recruit, retain, and affirm teachers of color—urging states, districts, and schools to follow their lead.

ILLINOIS: A rubric created by Teach Plus teacher leaders to aid districts in evaluating and identifying high-quality diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training that is aligned to the Standards for Professional Learning was included in the DEI Provider Evaluation Tool released by the Illinois State Board of Education. Districts across the state can opt in to participate in a pilot for the coming year in preparation for a 2022-23 statewide rollout.

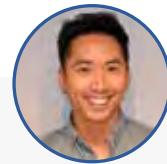
As part of an effort to improve the recruitment and retention of educators of color, Teach Plus teacher leaders worked to improve the data available on the state's online report card. In November, Illinois released its new report card which highlights, for the first time, [retention data for each district, disaggregated by race and gender](#). This data can be used to identify districts with strong retention and those that need help, as well as to focus statewide strategies, such as affinity groups, to improve retention. Teachers also successfully advocated for investments during 2021 budget hearings, resulting in a \$2 million allocation by the State Board of Education to support affinity groups across the state.

PENNSYLVANIA: Teach Plus teacher leaders and their partners in the Pennsylvania Educator Diversity Consortium produced a toolkit for districts on leveraging federal ESSER funds to diversify the workforce. The Pennsylvania Department of Education is sharing the toolkit across the state.



"We need to educate our people so they can come back and be part of the change and be a role model for students. If they see educators that look like them, students will be more engaged with learning. Recognizing that need in our system has really guided me."

**Teach Plus Policy Fellow
Andrea Thomas, Shiprock, New Mexico
(in the Navajo Nation)**



"Every educator of color can tell you about a student from their race or identity who went to them for support, who went to them as an emotional confidant, or who found someone with whom they felt safe and comfortable. They don't feel like they have to explain or justify themselves."

**Teach Plus Policy Fellow Takeru
(TK) Nagayoshi, New Bedford,
Massachusetts**



Ready to Lead: Affinity Groups for Teachers of Color

Through its Ready to Lead program, Teach Plus is training and coaching eight teacher leaders to found affinity groups of educators of color across Texas. Teachers in the program incubate affinity groups that work to recruit students of color to pursue teaching credentials through high-quality preparation routes. Aletha Williams, a Ready to Lead Fellow, founded the Change Agents of Katy organization, which has organized 50-plus educators and parents to demand that the local school board prioritize racial equity.



"A major characteristic of an affinity group is the ability to provide a safe space. We have been able to open a space where teachers can share their opinions about what we need and how we can get there. We talk about issues of equity and community building. This is especially important for those educators who don't generally speak up."

Teach Plus Senior Policy Fellow and Ready to Lead Fellow Hjamil A. Martínez-Vázquez, Crowley, Texas

Recruitment of More Educators of Color into Teacher Preparation Programs

From Colorado to Illinois to Indiana to Pennsylvania, Teach Plus teacher leaders are putting forth smart, actionable recommendations on creating clear pathways for candidates of color to become teachers and retaining these promising young professionals in the teacher preparation programs. The teachers call on the institutions of higher education to commit to hiring practices, supportive cultures, and financial incentives that prioritize faculty diversity; to provide cultural competence training for faculty and staff in order to ensure affirming spaces for people of color; and to establish mentoring programs that connect students of color with peers, faculty, working educators, and faculty of color.



SMS RISK-TAKERS 46

SMS CARING 46



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Alison Avera
Chief Strategy and
Operations Officer



Andrea de Azevedo
Chief of Staff to the CEO and
Chief Talent Officer



Anya Grottel-Brown
Vice President of
Communications and Media



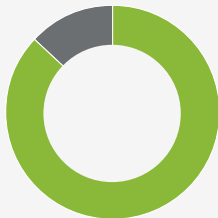
Michael Savoy, Ph.D.
Vice President
of Programs



Mark Teoh, Ed.D.
Vice President of Learning,
Research & Impact

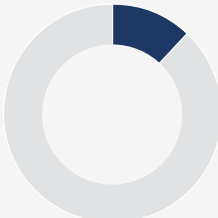
FINANCES

REVENUE



89%

Philanthropic



10%

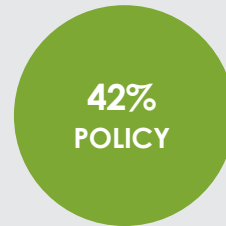
Program Fees



1%

Individual

EXPENSES



42%
POLICY



35%
INSTRUCTIONAL
PRACTICE



15%
G&A



7%
FUNDRAISING

Thank You

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