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Today we’ll cover:

Introductions

The research on teacher diversity

The history of Trailblazer Coalition

The Coalition’s priorities research project

Current project

Lessons learned

Time for questions
What does the research say?

IN TENNESSEE:

Teacher populations not keeping pace with growth of population of students of color

The pipeline looks similar to the current teacher population (in 2016 only 11% of pre-service teachers self-identified as TOC)

In 2014:

- 84% of districts state-wide do not have a single Latinx teacher
- 18% of districts state-wide do not have a single black teacher

WHY TEACHER DIVERSITY?

1) TOC are role models for students; they form strong relationships and have high expectations; they are also more likely to work in high-need schools

2) As teacher diversity increases, so does student retention & college-going rates, and discipline rates decline; identification for G/T increases
History of Trailblazer Coalition

May 2016
LU, BU, & NTR convene & receive grant funding from Conexión Américas

December 2016
First group convenes to define the common challenges in teacher diversity work

July 2017
Press release and event to dialogue with community stakeholders

February 2018
Advisory Council forms

May 2018
Trailblazer chose to prioritize internal learning among member EPPs rather than external advocacy work
Trailblazer Coalition Members
Our priorities

To build upon the knowledge and resources of our individual programs to strengthen all member programs’ ability to recruit and retain teachers of color.

- Identify member programs’ existing resources and needs
- Share knowledge related to evidence-based practices to recruit and retain teachers of color
- “Problem share” challenges at our individual institutions
- Work collectively to increase interest among prospective teachers of color and provide information related to potential pathways to licensure
We must fix the broken pipeline of teacher diversity: candidates and teachers of color leave the pipeline to professional success at various points along the line, and therefore solutions must be multi-dimensional.

- **Teacher preparation programs** recruit too few candidates of color.
- **Colleges** inadequately support their candidates of color through graduation.
- **Districts** too infrequently retain candidates of color once hired.
- **Licensure exams** inadequately assess the preparation candidates of color.
- **Schools** recruit too few teachers of color.
Lessons learned on Coalition building

● It takes time to build relationships & trust - do not rush.
● Coalitions require transparency in decision-making and shared leadership.
● Who is in leadership should be considered - is there equal gender and racial representation? Among different kinds of work?
● Spend time building a solid foundation and having hard conversations about capacity and priorities - it can take an entire year to create an advocacy agenda.
● If people are new to coalitions, spend time talking about the nature and power of the work and people’s fears - there will be much on which you do not agree, you must instead focus on where you do agree.
● There are many styles of advocacy - not everyone needs to be on the Hill! Your group should discuss the different avenues and pick an option that feels within your abilities and most effective for your work.
2016 Research Project

PART ONE: survey project with 420 area students
- #1 message about teaching is LOW PAY; from their own teachers
- Misconception of a need for a vocation
- Perception that patience is a key requisite
- In interest in the profession, no gender gap among students of color (male and female students equally interested)

Key findings:
- Current classroom teachers are frontline recruiters
- Teachers mental health matters

PART TWO: focus groups reaching 78 stakeholders
- Saying “low salary” is all relative; pre-service teachers did not know starting salary
- Recruitment: need recruiters from target communities, to help address information gap
- Current TOC and Admins of color are key role models to leverage
- Overcoming discrimination - need mentoring and support through EPP and into classroom
- Solutions are multi-dimensional!

Report Release Event 2017

Printing & distribution of physical report

Press release & interviews

Community discussion following

Fixing the Broken Pipeline: Teacher Diversity and the Classroom
July 2017
Advocacy: Meetings & Advisory Council creation

Meetings with influencers:

Meeting with MNPS re: Principal training
Meeting with State Board re: Teacher Prep Report Card
Discussion with TERA re: research implications brought forth by our questions around principal training and interventions
Presentations to other prep programs at TACTE
Meetings with funders

Advisory Council members:

Metro Nashville Public Schools & Williamson County Schools
NPEF & Scarlett Family Foundation
TN Educators of Color Alliance & Conexión Américas
MNEA & TEA
TN Dept of Education & State Board of Education
Mayor’s Office
Enriched Schools
Praxis Prep project

Recognized the Praxis test as a barrier for teachers of color, compounded by socioeconomic status (NBI No. 16, 2017), esp. for programs with higher % of TOC

Hired a Dir. of TBC Praxis Prep to identify specifics of needs and develop a proposal for what it would look like to move forward with a program

- Elementary Ed/CORE, Secondary Math (Middle & High School)
- Edmentum License at bulk + Genius Bar tutoring

Currently seeking a new director to secure funding and start up the program
Lessons learned: advocacy

- Have “good” data to drive your issue.
- Pick your focus area and stay in your lane - start narrow!
- Keep your work within your capacity to prevent burnout. Use money to add capacity.
- Keep your eye on the big picture - stay patient. Advocacy is hard and it is slow. It will feel like you are not accomplishing anything.
- Take advantage of policy windows - be smart about your focus areas.
- Do power-mapping. Pick who you talk to carefully. Prepare to take “no” for an answer. Anticipate pushback and evolve your talking points.
- Control media and discussions on your work - think carefully about how you want to be perceived and have a media strategy that aligns with that.
- Decide on your theory of change and let that guide your work - do not feel obligated to do work that does not suit that.
Our info:

Website: [http://tnedequity.org/trailblazer-coalition/](http://tnedequity.org/trailblazer-coalition/)

Twitter: @trailblazer_tn