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A Descriptive Analysis of Employed Black Teachers in  
Texas from 2011-12 through 2017-18*

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## **Towards Congruency? A Descriptive Analysis of Full-Time Employed Black Teachers in Texas from 2011-12 through 2017-18**

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### **Abstract**

There was a period in U.S. history when Black teachers were heavily employed within the educational workforce and were leading examples of excellence (Anderson, 1988). Black teachers, teaching within their communities, were able to directly impact their students' achievement and behavior while also reinforcing shared family values.

As a result of the ramifications of implementing *Brown v. Board of Education* and strategies aimed at pushing Black teachers out, there has been a decrease in the presence of Black educators in the United States. This decline caused a ripple effect that is being felt throughout today's classrooms nationwide. Still, this topic requires more recent investigations of the data to determine if Black teacher attrition is current or a phenomenon of the past. This study examined Texas' teacher workforce data from the Texas Education Agency, highlighting the teacher demographics and identifying if there was an increase or decrease in Black teachers between 2011 and 2017. From the descriptive analysis, the researchers found that for most campuses based on urbanicity types, there was an increase in the average number of Black female and male teachers on campuses. Although racial congruency between the number of Black students and teachers appears to still be in the distant future, notably, campuses across Texas have implemented measures to draw Black teachers to their campuses.

*Keywords:* Black teachers, attrition, racial congruency

In the United States, approximately 79% of the teacher workforce is comprised of White females, while Hispanic teachers represent 9% and Black teachers account for 7% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). The national teacher population parallels with the state of Texas as they both employ a heavy concentration of White female educators. During the 2021-2022 school year, there were 376,086 teachers in Texas, with 57% identifying as White and 11% identifying as Black (Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System, 2022). Yet, the proportion of Black teachers has not consistently remained at such marginal levels. Several historical factors have influenced the lack of Black teachers in classroom spaces. The eventual expulsion of Black educators from the teaching profession, spurred by integration initiatives, initiated a prolonged pattern leading to a diminished Black teacher population (Oakley et al., 2009).

Despite the decrease in the presence of Black teachers in schools, there was a time when they represented the majority of the teacher workforce, predominantly teaching in their local communities (Anderson, 1988; Fairclough, 2000). Before integration efforts in the 1950s and 1960s, Black schools were staffed exclusively with Black teachers (Milner & Howard, 2004; Thompson, 2022). Black teachers aimed to contribute to their neighborhood schools by going away to college and returning to their communities to teach Black learners in hopes of helping students to advance in society (Walker, 2000). The effort to establish and maintain supportive learning environments for Black students by Black teachers persisted despite the imposition of Jim Crow policies in the United

States. Legal rulings allowed schools across the nation to segregate students based on race, provided that these institutions received equitable resources and opportunities. However, it's important to acknowledge that in the South, Black educators had been founding schools in Freedmen's towns and freedom colonies since emancipation, and segregation between white and Black students existed prior to being legally validated. Therefore, Jim Crow policies and the Plessy decision formalized existing segregation practices. Despite chronic under-resourcing, the very nature of schooling for Black students became a protected space where they could interact with educators who valued them as human beings and not potential threats. Under the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling, schools were mandated to desegregate and develop organizational plans to integrate their classrooms with children from all races in the community. Although this court ruling was intended to move towards equal access to school resources for all schools, the reorganization of public education in the South offered little if any protection to the one resource Black children needed: Black teachers (Thompson, 2022). This mandate created conditions that resulted in the decline of Black teachers even with years of teaching experience. W.E.B. DuBois foreshadowed this decline, the plight of Black educators, and the resources needed by stating Black teachers would eventually be removed from education (DuBois, 1935). DuBois predicted that when Black and White students integrate, there would be several consequences such as the disappearance of Black universities, the erasure of curriculum that focus on Black history and content, and the eventual removal of Black teachers from the teacher workforce (DuBois, 1935).

The criticality of having a Black teacher as a resource has surfaced in recent years due to national attention on the lack of diversity in the teacher workforce. Black teachers have much to contribute and significantly influence all students, not just Black learners. Gershenson (2022) conducted a longitudinal study on academic outcomes for North Carolina students and stated that students that had at least one Black teacher during their kindergarten through twelfth-grade schooling experienced academic success in specific content areas. Students who encountered a Black teacher graduated high school and enrolled in courses for college at higher rates than students who did not have access to a Black teacher (Gershenson, 2022). As more schools and school districts experience a shift in demographics, the importance of having highly qualified teachers who can associate with the lived experiences of culturally, socially, and economically diverse students is important. Research suggests that highly qualified and effective Black teachers offer a level of protection, support, and social and emotional development that contribute to positive learning outcomes for students (Bristol & Martin-Fernandez, 2019). James-Gallaway & Harris (2021) contend that Black educators have long exhibited culturally relevant pedagogical practices in classes before the coining of culturally relevant pedagogy, but are often forgotten about due to revisionist offerings of history about the teacher workforce before desegregation. Black educators prior to and during desegregation offered culturally relevant practices which propelled many Black students to strive to become educators in the community (James-Gallaway & Harris, 2021).

The shortage of Black teachers in the workforce is well-known. However, further examinations are needed at different levels (campus, district, and state) to understand if the shortage of Black teachers is universal or if it varies by location or local context. Utilizing state-wide data from Texas across a span of several years (2011 – 2018), this study aims to determine if there has been an increase or decrease in Black teachers. In the following section, we present a literature review focusing on Black teachers over several decades and highlighting factors that contributed to their decline. Afterwards, the researchers discuss racial congruency as a lens to view teacher and student demographic data in Texas.

## Literature Review

### Black Teachers in the U.S. and Texas

How students are educated within classrooms and the factors that influence school operations have evolved over the last several decades. These changes have a direct correlation with various student outcomes (i.e., test scores, grades, discipline, teacher demographics, and more complex issues) and how legal opinions (law and policy) are enforced (Lewis, 2012). The 1954 decision in the landmark case *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka* made it legally possible for all learners to attend the same school, yet Black students and teachers bore the collateral damage from the decision through a stratification of their learning communities. Prior to and even after the 1954 landmark decision, many Black teachers felt a strong impetus to offer high quality education to any student that would enter their classroom. The schools had a positive climate, sustained by support from their communities, and the educators were strong advocates for their students and emphasized both institutional and interpersonal caring (Heller, 2019).

Black teachers were revered by their communities as they were seen as caring adults who kept the needs of Black children as their central focus when instructing (Gordon, 2000; Madkins, 2011; Siddle Walker, 2001). The Black teachers managed to create and foster an environment infused with high expectations, discipline, and meaningful instruction during the pre and post Brown period and were not debilitated by inequitable circumstances (Dingus, 2006; Siddle Walker, 2001). Those who encountered these Black schools with Black teachers could visualize the conception of an educational infrastructure that was reinforced with hope, confidence, and integrity (Fairclough, 2001). Beyond the role of instructor, Black teachers supported the development of students in other roles as well. For example, research denotes that Black teachers were instrumental in developing the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and organized strikes against businesses during the Civil Rights Movement (Cunningham, 2021; Heller, 2019). Although their goal was to advance Black students' socio-mobility through learning and the acquisition of equal rights, the Red Scare propaganda stigmatized Black teachers in activist roles. Throughout the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S., Black teachers who taught in the southern portion of the U.S. were fired due to their affiliation with the NAACP or their refusal to comply with the anti-NAACP oath put forth by certain districts (Cunningham, 2021). As Black citizens fought for civil rights, their access to Black teachers declined drastically (Hudson & Holmes, 1994). The number of Black teachers drastically declined in just ten years (1954 to 1965), from 82,000 to 38,000. A significant portion of Black teachers lost their teaching jobs and could not easily get hired to teach in predominately White schools as there was little integration of faculty (Tillman, 2004).

In Texas, Black teachers lost their jobs or were forced to participate in cross-over programs (Tillman, 2004). For example, in Austin and various districts across Texas, Black teachers remained unemployed despite their education and experience due to Texas' reluctance to comply with court-ordered desegregation (Tillman, 2004). According to James-Gallaway (2022), school systems acted in a dual manner aligning with the refusal to follow the ruling resulting in calculated evictions. Texas districts also did not acquiesce to the *Brown v Board of Education* verdict (James-Gallaway, 2022). Through much resistance and efforts to support Black teachers during and after the Civil Rights Movement, a sizeable portion of Black teachers left the profession and potential Black teacher candidates in Texas stopped seeing teaching as a viable career option (Jones & Chappell, 2022). This repelling of Black teachers resulted in a lack of Black teachers that students and communities are

forced to contend with today. This is of critical importance in certain states such as Texas, which house some of the largest racially diverse school districts in the U.S.

As the second largest state in the U.S., which houses the fourth largest school district in the U.S. (Houston Independent School District), historically there has been a large concentration of Black teachers in large metropolitan areas. For example, Houston has a population of roughly three million people and educates nearly 200,000 students (Texas Education Agency [TEA], 2022). Extant research denotes that Black teachers are typically employed in schools with a high concentration of students in poverty or in urban areas (Ingersoll & May, 2011). This finding corresponds with recent data in Texas. For example, 34.3% of the teachers in Houston Independent School District (HISD) are Black, which situates them as the largest racial/ethnic group in the teacher workforce (31.1% are Hispanic teachers and 26.5% are White; Texas Education Agency, 2022). According to the 2022 Snapshot of HISD, the student demographics of Black students was 22.1% aligning or showing similarity between Black teachers. However, the recent takeover of HISD and its potential influence on Black students and educators is a matter of major concern, carrying implications for educational equity and representation. The takeover raises questions about the preservation of culturally responsive teaching practices, the retention of Black educators who play pivotal roles, and the protection of programs tailored to address the needs of Black students. Prior to the takeover, this percentage was below the state average of White teachers of 57%, but above the average of Black teachers, by far, considering that the state average of Black teachers is 11% (TEA Public Education Information Management System PEIMS, 2022). As conversations regarding the state of Black teachers continues throughout the U.S. and in Texas, policymakers, school administrators, and teacher preparation programs are still left questioning if there will ever be a period where the percentage of Black teachers in schools accurately reflects the percentage of Black students in those classrooms (racial congruency). In an attempt to understand if such congruency exists between Black teachers and Black students, the guiding research questions sought to ascertain if there has been an increase or decrease in the number of Black teachers, by gender identity and urbanicity in Texas.

## Conceptual Framework

### Racial Congruence Framework

*The framework of Racial congruence* contends that when students – particularly historically minoritized students – are instructed by teachers whose cultural upbringing is similar to theirs, they will experience higher academic success in the classroom (Irvine, 1990; Milner, 2006). Numerous Black students find themselves enrolled in educational environments characterized by various disparities, including gaps in opportunities, experiences, expectations, and teacher quality (Ford & Moore, 2013). These gaps have always existed through the U.S. educational system, yet they have become more exacerbated as evidenced by various academic outcomes (i.e., graduation rates, school discipline disparities, a lack of access to post-secondary education, etc.). Regularly, these outcomes are due to deficit-based perceptions of Black students which contributes to their underperformance. Often many Black teachers set high expectations for Black student achievement while simultaneously offering the necessary supports to surpass those academic expectations (Irvine, 1990). Research suggests that White teachers have a greater tendency to devalue Black students or teach Black students from a deficit view, yielding to implicit and explicit biases (Grissom & Redding, 2015). Due to these biased dispositions and the lack of racial congruence, non-Black teachers may be more likely to use stereotypes about Black students causing relationship conflict, increased discipline, and affecting student outcomes (Kunesh & Noltemeyer, 2019).

Shared identities (i.e., race and gender) have proven to have a significant impact on students and their classroom achievement, helping to curtail some of the existing educational gaps and disparities. Children benefit from a similar teacher-student match for various reasons. Previous research has indicated that teacher-student match is beneficial as the teacher may use different teaching methods, allow more participation chances, and provide praise to similar student groups (Eble & Hu, 2020). Studies have shown when the teacher and student match in race, students show increases in content area scores, attain better grades, and experience a more positive student evaluation of academics and motivation (Garner et al., 2021). Racial congruence has been identified as having a positive influence on curtailing school discipline and improving performance measures in subjects such as math and reading among students of color (Scott et al., 2022). In utilizing racial congruency as a framework to analyze the data, the research questions are as follows; How has the Texas Black teacher workforce increased or decreased based on urbanicity and gender between 2011 and 2017; and, is the Texas Black teacher workforce and the Black student population becoming more congruent during the same time span?

### Method

The aim of this study was to descriptively analyze Black teachers in the state of Texas from 2011 to 2017, and through a racial congruency framework, ascertain if their growth (or lack thereof) mirrors Black students across Texas. Due to the differences in which Black teachers are recruited and remain in the profession based on gender, the researchers sought to understand the growth or decline in the number of Black women and Black men teachers in Texas. The initial dataset was retrieved from the Texas Education Agency (TEA), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), which stores all student and school personnel data in Texas. Personnel data such as demographics, responsibility, tenure, experience, content instructed were provided in one file. This file was screened for any missing data and all personnel in the dataset who were not teachers (substitutes, assistant principals, and principals) were removed from the dataset. All data included in this file was masked with unique identifiers at the individual, campus, and district level to protect individuals' identity but allow for the merging of data over years. Secondly, student-level data was provided and analyzed to produce campus totals. Based on the district unique identifier and the campus unique identifier, student enrollment by campus was merged into the teacher demographic dataset. The initial sample was 5.9 million teacher employees, across multiple content areas and job responsibilities. All data were screened and analyzed in STATA 17.0 (StataCorp, 2021).

Next, the researchers created a unique id variable which accounted for duplicate entries per of individuals in the dataset. In creating this unique id variable, the researchers able to reduce the sample size. Following this step, the researchers removed all non-Black teachers from the sample, to arrive at a  $N = 68,366$ . The sample was screened again to ensure that a teacher was only represented once per year. Finally, campus means were created to understand the dispersion of Black teachers by gender, urbanicity, and year. This separation is critically important to assess as research underscores that certain hard-to-staff locales (urban and rural) typically struggle with recruiting teachers due to a myriad of work conditions in and around their campuses (Bottani et al., 2019; Jacob, 2007). In regard to locale, TEA utilizes the National Center of Educational Statistics to define the locale of schools. The overarching classifications are city, suburban, town, and rural. Within each of the classification are subclassifications that provide clearer definition based on the population size, location within or distance from a urban cluster (see Table 1). These classifications were used to disaggregate the data and offer a clearer image of where Black teachers are preferring to instruct at.

Furthermore, Black student demographic data was analyzed according to the classifications to assess if descriptively, the change or lack thereof, in school demographics is reflected in the retention or attrition of Black female and male teachers. In screening the data, it was determined that there were no outliers for each of the variables.

**Table 1***Urban-Centric Locale Codes and Classifications*

Term	NCES Classification	Dataset Code	Definition
City	Large	11	Territory inside an Urbanized Area and inside a Principal City with population of 250,000 or more.
City	Midsized	12	Territory inside an Urbanized Area and inside a Principal City with population less than 250,000 and greater than or equal to 100,000.
City	Small	13	Territory inside an Urbanized Area and inside a Principal City with population less than 100,000.
Suburban	Large	21	Territory outside a Principal City and inside an Urbanized Area with population of 250,000 or more.
Suburban	Midsized	22	Territory outside a Principal City and inside an Urbanized Area with population less than 250,000 and greater than or equal to 100,000.
Suburban	Small	23	Territory outside a Principal City and inside an Urbanized Area with population less than 100,000.
Town	Fringe	31	Territory inside an Urban Cluster that is less than or equal to 10 miles from an Urbanized Area.
Town	Distant	32	Territory inside an Urban Cluster that is more than 10 miles and less than or equal to 35 miles from an Urbanized Area.
Town	Remote	33	Territory inside an Urban Cluster that is more than 35 miles from an Urbanized Area.
Rural	Fringe	41	Census-defined rural territory that is less than or equal to 5 miles from an Urbanized Area, as well as rural territory that is less than or equal to 2.5 miles from an Urban Cluster.
Rural	Distant	42	Census-defined rural territory that is more than 5 miles but less than or equal to 25 miles from an Urbanized Area, as well as rural territory that is more than 2.5 miles but less than or equal to 10 miles from an Urban Cluster.
Rural	Remote	43	Census-defined rural territory that is more than 25 miles from an Urbanized Area and also more than 10 miles from an Urban Cluster.

*Note.* Retrieved from the National Center for Education Statistics (n.d.)  
<https://nces.ed.gov/programs/edge/Geographic/LocaleBoundaries>

## Findings

### Black Student Enrollment Average by Gender and Urbanicity

In Figures 1-4, Black male students appear to be enrolled primarily in city locales at greater averages than all other locales. The average number of Black male students enrolled in schools classified as city increased from 2011 to 2017 across all sub-categories. Between the sub-categories, campuses designated as midsize saw the highest increase, with the average number of Black male students enrolled starting at  $M = 1,506.34$  in 2011 and rising to an average of  $M = 2,622.84$  Black male students per campus in 2017. Campuses designated as midsize educated on average 2,173 Black female students in 2017. However, the highest average number of Black female students educated was recorded in 2012, with approximately 2,500 students per campus in the state of Texas. Comparatively, campuses designated as suburban and large educated the greatest number of Black students across both genders. The highest averages for both Black female (2,972.91) and Black male (3,690.97) students occurred in 2012, and since that time each students' enrollment averages have decreased. Regarding rural campuses, those with a fringe location designation have a sizeable enrollment advantage compared to their distant and remote counterparts. Whereas the highest enrollment average for Black female and male students was well below 500 per school in distant and remote campuses, campuses with the fringe designation witness enrollments grow from around 500 in 2011 for both student groups, to well over 1,000 (1,028 for Black girls and 1,455 for Black boys) in 2017.

**Figure 1**

*Black Student Enrollment by Gender, City Locale and Locale Subtype from 2011 to 2017*

Size and Year by City comparison of Black Female vs Black Male values



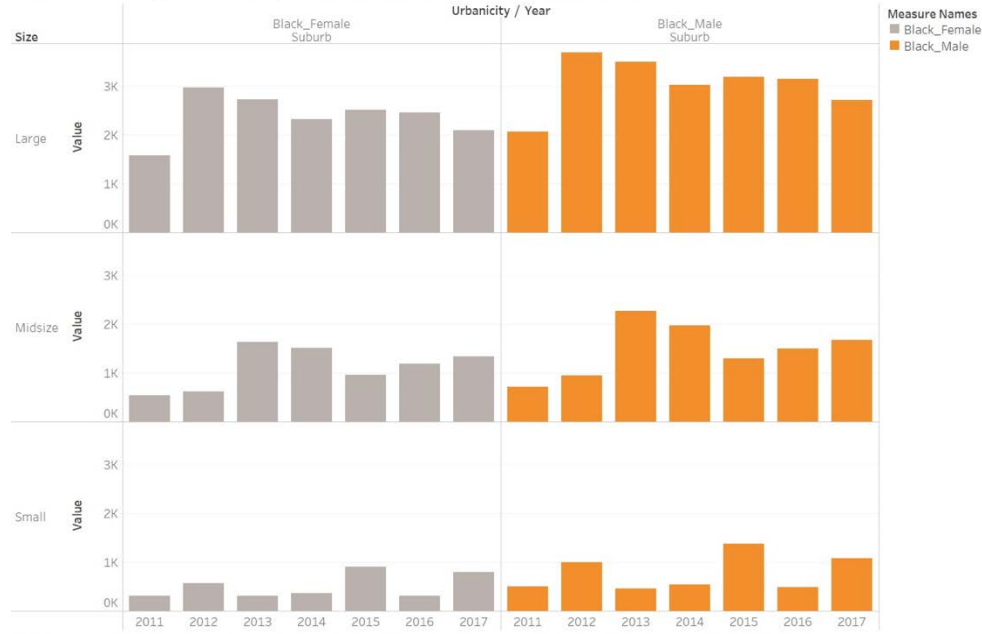
Black\_Female and Black\_Male for each Year broken down by Urbanicity vs. Size. Color shows details about Black\_Female and Black\_Male. The view is filtered on Urbanicity, which keeps City.



**Figure 2**

*Black Student Enrollment by Gender, Suburban Locale and Locale Subtype from 2011 to 2017*

Size and Year by Suburb comparison of Black Female vs Black Male values

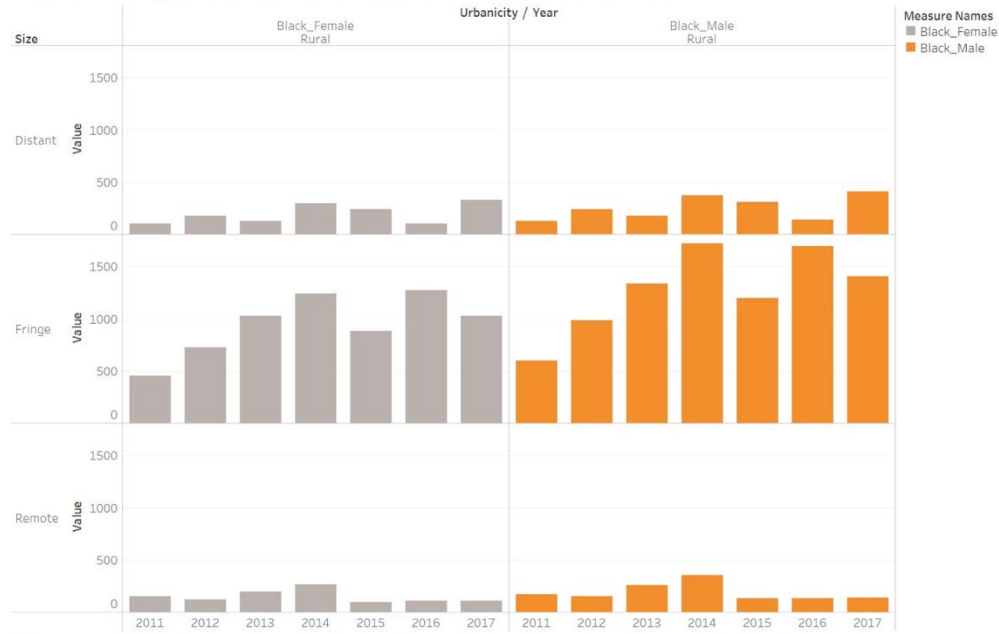


Black\_Female and Black\_Male for each Year broken down by Urbanicity vs. Size. Color shows details about Black\_Female and Black\_Male. The view is filtered on Urbanicity, which keeps Suburb.

**Figure 3**

*Black Student Enrollment by Gender, Rural Locale and Locale Subtype from 2011 to 2017*

Size and Year by Rural comparison of Black Female vs Black Male values



Black\_Female and Black\_Male for each Year broken down by Urbanicity vs. Size. Color shows details about Black\_Female and Black\_Male. The view is filtered on Urbanicity, which keeps Rural.

**Figure 4***Black Student Enrollment by Gender, Town Locale and Locale Subtype from 2011 to 2017*

Size and Year by Town comparison of Black Female vs Black Male values



Black\_Female and Black\_Male for each Year broken down by Urbanicity vs. Size. Color shows details about Black\_Female and Black\_Male. The view is filtered on Urbanicity, which keeps Town.

**Table 2***Black Teacher Frequency, Means and Percent Change from 2011 to 2017*

Year	Women	Men	Total	% Change from 2011 (Women)	% Change from 2011 (Men)	% Change from 2011 Total
2011	22,663	7,586	30,249	N/A	N/A	N/A
2012	23,108	7,943	31,051	2	5	3
2013	24,075	8,367	32,442	6	10	7
2014	25,223	8,988	34,211	11	18	13
2015	25,871	9,393	35,264	14	24	17
2016	26,622	9,872	36,494	17	30	21
2017	27,383	10,153	37,536	21	34	24

**Changes in the Number of Black Teachers by Gender**

Table 2 highlights the total number of Black teachers in Texas from 2011-2017. This data is disaggregated by gender and showcases the percentage from 2011 onward across the state of Texas. Texas employed 30,249 Black teachers in 2011 and that total rose to 37,536 by the 2017 academic year. For Black women teachers, there was a 21% increase in the number of Black women teachers

employed from 2011 to 2017. The number of Black women in the teaching profession in Texas increasing from 22,663 to 27,383 during the reported time span. For Black male teachers, this group also saw an increase over time. Campuses in Texas, overall, employed 24% more Black male teachers in 2017 than they did in 2011. Lastly, campuses designated as a town saw minimum growth of Black female and male students across the time span. Still, some of the highest averages for each subtype (fringe, distant, and remote) occurred in the 2012-2013 academic term which is similar to campus averages in city and suburban locales at that time.

**Table 3***Black Male Teacher Means by School Locale from 2011 to 2017 Academic Year*

Urbanicity	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
City: Large	3.72	3.46	3.82	3.51	4.22	4.11	4.10
City: Midsize	1.02	1.42	1.72	2.50	1.52	1.63	1.41
City: Small	3.02	2.78	1.48	1.43	1.51	3.73	1.60
Rural: Distant	0.45	0.32	0.56	0.43	0.78	1.04	0.31
Rural: Fringe	1.44	1.18	1.58	1.33	2.11	1.79	1.37
Rural: Remote	0.54	0.50	0.64	0.28	0.83	0.79	1.51
Suburb: Large	2.61	3.20	4.00	3.37	4.38	3.46	4.91
Suburb: Midsize	1.00	0.94	0.83	2.05	1.09	2.27	1.39
Suburb: Small	0.30	1.38	1.73	0.26	1.19	2.47	0.50
Town: Distant	0.92	0.71	0.96	0.71	1.26	1.11	1.68
Town: Fringe	1.07	2.41	0.38	0.94	0.66	1.02	1.68
Town: Remote	1.20	0.43	1.06	0.83	0.73	1.37	1.30
Overall Mean	2.47	2.65	2.83	2.62	3.24	2.96	3.33

*Black Female Teacher Means by School Locale from 2011 to 2017 Academic Year*

Urbanicity	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
City: Large	9.22	9.01	9.47	9.18	10.09	9.27	10.12
City: Midsize	3.53	4.10	4.64	6.68	4.81	5.18	5.55
City: Small	7.13	6.91	4.42	4.72	3.60	9.28	3.71
Rural: Distant	1.75	1.23	1.27	1.22	0.90	1.57	1.08
Rural: Fringe	2.25	2.58	2.46	1.77	2.51	2.78	3.85
Rural: Remote	0.64	0.68	1.66	1.24	0.36	0.56	1.12
Suburb: Large	6.80	7.78	8.01	7.43	8.19	8.79	10.09
Suburb: Midsize	0.81	3.22	3.57	3.56	3.20	5.33	4.45
Suburb: Small	1.44	4.27	3.20	1.96	1.02	4.39	1.77
Town: Distant	1.58	2.08	1.99	1.59	2.17	1.56	3.10
Town: Fringe	2.24	4.73	1.69	1.16	2.53	1.82	1.97
Town: Remote	1.83	1.91	1.12	1.55	1.76	2.13	3.82
Overall Mean	6.03	6.75	6.42	6.20	6.66	6.80	7.76

### Average Number of Black Teachers Per Campus

When examining the data through the different urbanicity categories and subcategories, several findings emerge. For example, every category saw an increase in the average number of Black male teachers employed except for campuses classified as City and small ( $M = 3.02$  to  $M = 1.60$ ), Rural and Distant ( $M = 0.45$  to  $M = 0.31$ ), and Rural and Fringe ( $M = 1.44$  to  $M = 1.37$ ), between 2011 and 2017. Notably, campuses labeled as Suburban and Large had the highest growth in the number of Black male teachers employed; employing 2.61 Black male teachers in 2011 and 4.91 Black male teachers in 2017. While small, campuses in rural areas tripled the number of Black male teachers employed from 0.54 in 2011 to 1.51 in 2017. In 2011, campuses labeled as City and Large on average employed more Black men than another campus type. However, since that time, Black male teachers were on average employed in Suburban and Large more in 2013 ( $M = 3.20$ ), 2015 ( $M = 4.00$ ), and 2017 ( $M = 4.91$ ) than in campuses designated as City and Large. Although most campuses saw an increase in the number of Black male teachers over time, the average number of Black male teachers in campus across Texas grew marginally, from  $M = 2.47$  in the classroom in 2011 to  $M = 3.33$  by the end of the 2017-2019 academic year.

Campuses designated as City and Large maintained the highest employment mean for Black female teachers through each year in the dataset. In 2011, there were an average of  $M = 9.22$  Black female teachers in campuses labeled as City and Large, and by the end of the 2017-2018 academic year that average increased to 10.12. Campuses designated as Suburban and Midsize employed the second lowest number of Black female teachers ( $M = 0.81$ ) in 2011. However, by 2017 the average number of Black female teachers in this campus type increased five times ( $M = 4.45$ ). The second highest growth can be seen in Suburban and Large campuses, which employed an average of 6.80 Black female teachers in 2011 and 10.09 Black female teachers in 2017. Three campus types saw a decrease in the average number of Black female teachers employed from 2011 to 2017, City and Small ( $M = 7.13$  to  $M = 3.71$ ), Rural and Distant ( $M = 1.75$  to  $M = 1.08$ ), and Town and Fringe ( $M = 2.24$  to  $M = 1.97$ ). The average number of Black female teachers employed across Texas during this time span grew from 6.03 to 7.76. Analyzing the data across gender and urbanicity, it appears that both male and female Black teachers are exiting campuses labeled as City and Small, and Rural and Distant. In contrast, Black female and male teachers are choosing to apply, based on the data, to work in campuses defined as Town and Distant. Collectively, the average number of Black teachers in Texas has grown since 2011.

### Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine the employment trend of Black teachers in the state of Texas between the academic years of 2011 through 2017. This research provides insight into the gradual progression of employing Black teachers at the elementary and secondary levels. We inquired about the increase or decrease of Black Texas teachers as it aligns to trends in student population. Although Texas has increased its percentage of Black teachers during the studied time span, the current school personnel is not racially congruent with the Black student population.

While the lack of congruency with the Black student population in Texas and across school types by urbanicity parallels current and extant research (D'Amico et al., 2017; Ingersoll, 2011), the growth in the number of Black teachers highlights national efforts to recruit and retain Black teachers, and Black teacher willingness to teach in certain favorable conditions (Sun, 2018). The recent increases in

Black teachers give some indication that Texas is in some ways responding to calls towards diversifying teaching to reflect the diversity of students (Goldhaber et al., 2019). What is not visible through the data is the number of Black teachers that obtained their teaching licensure through traditional or alternative certification routes. Texas is home to a large number of alternative certification route programs, which has resulted in 50% of all teachers in Texas being alternatively certified. Research underscores the reality that for many Black teachers, this route proved to be more effective to get them their licensure than going the traditional route (Guthery & Bailey, 2023). Potentially, the availability of these alternative programs in Texas could be contributing to the growth of Black teachers unexpectedly.

The findings also indicated that certain campuses saw larger increases in the number of Black teachers being retained on their campuses over time. Research on teacher shortages and urbanicity has illuminated that certain campuses, based on location, are harder to staff overall and struggle mightily to diversify their teacher workforce (Ingersoll & May, 2011). Campuses in urban and rural areas are presented with a myriad of challenging factors that impact teachers' ability to instruct. Still, studies of Black teachers by gender offer various reasons for why they work in these environments and why they choose to remain despite the challenges they face (Bristol, 2018; Farinde-Wu et al., 2016). Attempts to maintain and grow the number of Black male and female teachers must critically examine what support factors these groups need to stay in the classroom. Simply treating Black teachers as a monolithic group is detrimental to the efforts to produce highly qualified and effective Black teacher candidates and teachers. Additionally, establishing which factors are considered important to Black teachers (student demographics, salary, supportive administration, etc.) can aid school administrators in developing effective recruitment programs and supportive resources to keep them from leaving the school or the profession overall.

### **Limitations**

This study contained a few limitations. For example, the data did not explain why Black teachers were choosing to enter and remain in specific schools or school districts. Additionally, the analysis does not include data immediately before, during, or immediately the COVID-19 pandemic. Potentially, the trend of Black teachers choosing to enter and remain in Texas schools could be different due the exodus of teachers overall during the pandemic. Furthermore, the data did not offer the opportunity to ascertain individual-level patterns; if Black teachers were remaining in the profession or if the rate of them leaving the profession was overshadowed by a higher number of Black teachers entering the profession.

### **Recommendations**

Cultivating a scenario where Black teacher candidates are valued and recruited effectively requires a myriad of strategies both at the teacher preparation level and at the district level in Texas. School districts and teacher preparation programs need to recruit where there are a host of Black teacher candidates: Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Texas is home to nine HBCUs, the 4<sup>th</sup> most in the U.S. Working with HBUCs to establish pathways for new teachers and paraprofessionals can be an effective and collaborative effort between community partners and institutions of higher education (Williams & Lewis, 2020). Programs should be designed to exemplify relevant pedagogy and best practice frameworks that teacher candidates can immediately begin implementing in their field experiences. Districts geographically close to HBCUs such as Prairie View A&M and Texas Southern will benefit from a diverse pool of teacher candidates and

can host student teachers to prepare them to enter harder-to-reach campuses. This will allow college students to have first-hand experiences applying coursework, and may offer job opportunities upon completion of teacher preparation programs. Offering hands-on educator preparation in districts where these candidates may end up teaching would be doubly beneficial: novice teachers are supported in their professional development and may have more of a buy-in with their place of employment, and districts are supported in their goal of hiring more Black teachers for racial match.

Secondly, districts need to provide all teachers with incentives for obtaining a degree in education or furthering their education beyond their initial licensure. Substitute teachers are paid less than teachers and are not readily exposed to professional development or ways in which their education can be enhanced. The development of a program that will guarantee employment with the district for five years and pay for educational fees will allow substitutes the ability to advance their knowledge and obtain teaching degrees and training. In recent years, Texas state officials have pushed to reduce if not eliminate hiring practices that seek to ameliorate the historical barriers that discriminated against Black teachers and partially contributed to the current shortage of teachers overall. Still, districts should look to identify effective pipelines for teacher recruitment and promotion throughout the district – which would help in the hiring of more teachers overall and Black teachers. Finally, as districts identify Black teachers who are effective at instruction, they should develop scaffolded opportunities for these teachers to be mentors, teacher leaders, and regional representatives. Districts can utilize organizations like the Texas Alliance of Black School Educators (TABSE) and multicultural collegiate programs to identify teachers across school locales that can help recruit and support novice and veteran teachers. This creates subject matter experts and solicits their input on how to further develop the students in their program. It also sets the standard for high-quality Black teachers, where teacher candidates and future Black teachers can see people that look like them in the profession and strengthen their willingness to become a Black teacher. Future research should identify individual level patterns of Black teachers either remaining at their school, transferring within or outside of their district, or leaving the profession completely to get a more accurate picture of teacher retention. Using qualitative methodologies, future studies must explore the experiences of Black teachers and understand what factors are contributing to them choosing to be employed in certain types of schools and school districts. Another manner to understand how years of experience differ between Black men and women is through a mixed effects model, when the interaction between gender and race can be analyzed. This model should also examine the interaction effect of race and gender of the assistant principals and principals that supervise these teachers to understand if difference or relationships exist.

## **Conclusion**

The recommendations offer a select number of salient approaches to be applied in conjunction with each other. It is possible that an increase in Black teachers may not lead to a reduction in disproportionate school discipline outcomes, an increase in the number of Black students in rigorous mathematics and science courses, or an increase in their academic performance in Texas, however, the findings give a clear indication that this option has not been fully explored due to the limited increase in Black teachers in Texas from 2015-16 to 2021-22. Black teachers are role models, cultural translators, and positive representations that counteract negative spaces that students experience. Black students deserve the opportunity to be afforded an adequate education reflective of their identity. Texas is making strides to increase Black teachers and it is vital to continue this approach to diversify the teacher workforce to help Black students in an effort to eliminate racial stereotypes, negative beliefs, and distrust.

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