



Teacher Truth Fact Sheet

Updated: 2023

WHAT IS TEACHER TRUTH?

Teacher Truth is BlackFemaleProject's first industry-specific story collection. We're building an archive of quantitative and qualitative research by engaging, listening to, documenting, and uplifting the voices of Black educators. BlackFemaleProject has historically curated programming specifically for women. However within Teacher Truth, we learn from and with all Black educators.

Teacher Truth delivers on BlackFemaleProject's mission of uplifting the voices of Black professionals, affirming our experiences, and offering insights for achieving self-defined success in the workplace and beyond.

WHY TEACHER TRUTH?

As teacher shortages grow across the country alongside the recognition that a diverse educator workforce is essential to the success of American schools and schoolchildren, the imperative to create an equitable and high-quality education system becomes more urgent. Adding to the research on this topic, BlackFemaleProject elevates the unique and invaluable experiences, contributions, and insights of Black educators.

Longstanding anecdotal evidence as well as recent studies and data suggest that many Black educators feel undervalued, unheard, and unsupported. As a result, they have shorter-than-average tenures in their positions, ultimately making them less accessible to students—Black students and others alike—who would greatly benefit from having a Black teacher.

In addition to supporting the healing of Black educators, Teacher Truth is unpacking and elevating patterns reported across Black educator experiences. Our hope is that this work will:

1. spread awareness about the experiences and needs of Black educators, and
2. inform policy changes that make workplaces safer and more nurturing for Black people in particular and ultimately for all people.

Research shows that a diverse teaching force better prepares all students to live and work in a multilingual, multiracial, and multicultural society. In 2017, a study showed that Black children who have at least one Black teacher in third, fourth, or fifth grade are 39% less likely to drop out of high school and 19% more likely to aspire to attend four year college.



WHAT TEACHER TRUTH OFFERS

- Research, affirmation, and firsthand accounts of what it's like to be a Black educator in today's schools
- Insights from experts on ideas, policies, and approaches to improve workplace dynamics for Black educators by way of systemic change
- Tools and materials to help administrators engage teachers and teams
- Ongoing story collection and affinity spaces for Black educators
- Events open to all that share out our learnings

RESEARCHERS

E'rika Chambers

E'rika Chambers, Ed.D., is a historian, researcher, educator, and lifelong learner. Originally from San Francisco, E'rika now resides in North Carolina. With over 30 years of experience in education, she has worked with students aged 5 through 24 throughout her career. E'rika is exceptionally gifted at team building and empowering others.

Dr. Chambers holds a doctorate in Educational Leadership for Social Justice from California State University, East Bay. Her life is centered around her faith, family, and community. She enjoys physical activity, hiking, swimming, and bowling and finds peace by visiting the ocean, lakes, and green spaces. She envisions a world where everyone is healed from their traumatic experiences, has uncovered the genius living inside them, and is walking in their purpose, thriving in their own lives.

Britte Cheng

Britte Haugan Cheng, Ph.D., is the Principal and Founder of Menlo Education Research (MenloEDU), where she leads research and development on persistent problems in education.

Over the last 20 years, Dr. Cheng has led multiple projects to advance the science of scaling innovations in education, with a focus on methods that develop the capacity of educational systems and stakeholders. She received her MA and Ph.D. at the University of California, Berkeley.

Tameka L. McGlawn

Dr. Tameka L. McGlawn provides transformational leadership to urban learning communities and brings a deep devotion to increased equity and economic opportunities for all students, families, and communities. Over the last 25 years, she's served at every institutional level (K-20), in a variety of settings and professional roles, offering unique perspectives on student-centered assets and achievement, leadership optimization, and equity-based outcomes.

Dr. McGlawn is currently the executive director of the University of California Berkeley's College and Career Academy Support Network; a board member for the Buck Institute for Education; a Deeper Learning Equity Fellow, and a member of the University of California Office of the President's UC Curriculum Integration Advisory Council.

Micia Mosely

Dr. Micia Mosely is the founder and director of The Black Teacher Project, a program of The National Equity Project committed to developing a Black teaching force in order to transform schools into communities of liberated learning. She began her career as a high school social studies teacher before earning her Ph.D. in education from U.C. Berkeley. Mosely's research and practice focus on equity, race, and urban education. Mosely is also known for her one-woman show, *Where My Girls At?*, a comedy about Black lesbians.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Teacher Truth findings suggest that Black educators feel undervalued, unheard, and unsupported. Black educators:

- Do not feel respected as professionals;
- Are often in the position to prove their "worth" over and over again;
- Have shorter tenures than educators who are not Black;
- Find diversity/DEI training to be inadequate in addressing anti-Blackness and other workplace issues; and
- Often feel unsupported by and misaligned to their school climates.

2022 survey revealed that Black educators:

- feel burdened with expectations to do more at a higher standard and with fewer acknowledgments than their non-Black counterparts.
- report feeling compelled to continually fight against the pervasive racism that they and their Black students experience in school, whether or not Black educators desire to do so.
- are sustained through formally organized affinity groups or informal communities where Black colleagues provide support to one another.
- want recognition through fair and equitable compensation; professional acknowledgment and promotion; and celebration of their work.
- desire access to affinity groups and Black representation in school staff.



RECOMMENDATIONS

We offer the following recommendations for specific stakeholder groups to improve conditions for Black educators:

- Educational leaders and policy makers:
 - Identify and implement crucial and high-leverage policy changes that address systemic barriers faced by Black educators.
 - Advocate for and curate safe spaces for Black teachers to discuss their experiences of racism at work without repercussions.
- Schools and districts:
 - Inform leadership on ways to support strategic changes that lead to investments in local districts and school systems to support Black teachers and administrators.
 - Hire, promote, and equitably compensate Black educators.

ABOUT BLACKFEMALEPROJECT

BlackFemaleProject uplifts the voices of Black women, affirms our experiences, and offers insights for achieving self-defined success in the workplace and beyond. Using virtual and in-person events, we bring Black women together—across generations and industries—to engage in sisterhood, resource and knowledge sharing, inspiration, healing, and growth. Since 2014, we have collected and shared women’s stories in print, digital media, and through numerous programs and events in order to center Black women in local, statewide, and national conversations about organizational culture, communications, and wellness at work.

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