A Civil Rights Agenda for California's Next Quarter Century



# Barriers to Racial Equity

*for Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers in California's Teaching Pipeline and Profession*

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## About the Series

*A Civil Rights Agenda for the Next Quarter Century*

The Civil Rights Project was founded in 1996 at Harvard University, during a period of increasingly conservative courts and political movements that were limiting, and sometimes reversing, major civil rights reforms. In 2007 the Project moved to UCLA. Its goal was – and still is – to bring together researchers, lawyers, civil rights advocates and governmental and educational leaders to create a new generation of civil rights research and communicate what is learned to those who could use it to address the problems of inequality and discrimination. Created a generation after the civil rights revolution of the 1960s, CRP's vision was to produce new understandings of challenges and research-based evidence on solutions. The Project has always maintained a strong, central focus on equal education and racial change.

We are celebrating our first quarter century by taking a serious look forward – not at the history of the issues, not at the debates over older policies, not at celebrating prior victories but at the needs of the next quarter century. Since the work of civil rights advocates and leaders of color in recent decades has often been about defending threatened, existing rights, we need innovative thinking to address the challenges facing our rapidly changing society. Political leaders often see policy in short two- and four-year election cycles but we decided to look at the upcoming generation. Because researchers are uniquely qualified to think systematically, this series is an attempt to harness the skills of several disciplines, to think deeply about how our society has changed since the civil rights revolution and what the implications are for the future of racial justice.

This effort includes two very large sets of newly commissioned work. The first set is on the potential for social change and equity policies in the nation. This paper is the fourth in the second set of studies that focuses on California, a vast state whose astonishing diversity foretells the future of the U.S. and whose profound inequality warns that there is much work to be done. All these

studies will initially be issued as working papers. They will be brought together in statewide conferences and in the U.S. Capitol and, eventually, as two major books, which we hope will help light the way in the coming decades. At each of the major events, scholars will exchange ideas and address questions from each other, from leaders and from the public.

The Civil Rights Project, like the country, is in a period of transition, identifying leadership for its next chapter. We are fortunate to have collaborated with a remarkable network of important scholars across the U.S., who contributed to our work in the last quarter century and continue to do so in this new work. We are also inspired by the nation's many young people who understand that our future depends on overcoming division. They are committed to constructing new paths to racial justice. We hope these studies open avenues for this critical work, stimulate future scholars and lawyers, and inform policymaking in a society with the unlimited potential of diversity, if it can only figure out how to achieve genuine equality.



Gary Orfield



Patricia Gándara

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# Glossary

**High Needs Schools:** schools located in an area that has a significant percentage of students living at or below the poverty line. These schools are also characterized by a high percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch.

**In-Service Teachers:** individuals who have obtained their teaching license and are currently working as K-12 public school teachers in California.

**Latine:** a gender-neutral form of the words Latino/Latina.

**Pre-Service Teachers:** students enrolled in a teacher preparation program or in an education focused pathway who have yet to obtain their teaching license. This includes community college students who are taking education and early childhood education courses. In this paper, pre-service teachers are also referred to as teacher candidates.

**Teacher Education Programs (TEP):** programs designed to provide individuals with basic training to become a licensed teacher. In this paper, teacher education programs are also referred to as teacher preparation programs.

**Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers (TOCIT):** used to refer to Asian American and Pacific Islander, African American and Black, Latine, and Indigenous teachers as a collective who share "legacies of transformative pedagogical and resistant community-based practices as well as sociopolitical histories of marginalization by education institutions, structures, policies, and practices" (Gist & Bristol, 2022).

# Executive Summary

Like the rest of the United States, the diversity of California's teaching force continues to lag behind its student population. While students of Color make up 78% of the state's K-12 population, Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers (TOCIT) comprise just 34% of the teaching workforce[1] (California Department of Education, 2018), a statistic that has dominated the teacher shortage narrative. Although there is promise in the fact that TEP enrollment is more diverse than the state's current educator workforce, it's still 27% less diverse than the state's K-12 students. As demand for greater representation increases, so have the initiatives to recruit and retain more racially diverse teachers. In the past few years, California has spent billions in an effort to diversify its teacher workforce, including Assembly Bill 520, which allocated $15 million to be distributed to school districts to develop and implement programs that diversify teaching staffs, and Assembly Bill 130, which appropriated $350 million over the next five years to create or expand Teacher Residency Programs, a pathway that has been shown to recruit and retain higher numbers of TOCIT (California Legislative Information, 2023). But even with these measures, the realities of higher rates of burnout, turnover, and early retirement among TOCIT force us to explore what other factors might be contributing to their departure, or in some cases, their noticeable absence.

This study sets out to 1) explore how current policies, structures, practices, attitudes, and ideologies across the pipeline and profession impede the recruitment and retention of TOCIT, and 2) better understand the racialized experiences and perspectives of pre-service and in-service Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers. The following paper is based on a mix of qualitative and quantitative data collected from system leaders in teacher preparation, pre-service teachers, in-

[1] Teacher of Color and Indigenous Teacher data from 2018-2019 academic year

service teachers, and former teachers over the course of approximately one year: spring 2021 to summer 2022. What follows is a brief summary of our key findings and recommendations:

**Financial**

Growing tuition fees, unpaid student teaching, mounting student debt, meager salaries, and the relentless rise of inflation and living expenses is undoubtedly felt by teachers at all levels. However, this financial challenge, for historical and social reasons, is disproportionately magnified for the pre-service and in-service TOCIT.

**Recommendations:**

The state must place a high priority on establishing debt-free pathways for pre-service and in-service TOCIT, ensuring that they can start their careers without being burdened by substantial financial obligations. The state should also closely collaborate with school districts to implement stipend programs, addressing cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) while providing improved healthcare coverage and higher initial salaries, especially in costly regions like the Bay Area, to support new teachers as they embark on their teaching careers.

A dedicated "G.I. Bill" tailored for teachers can be introduced, offering comprehensive coverage that includes tuition and support for future professional development, living expenses, housing stipends, tax breaks, and dependent tuition grants. This bill should also prioritize enhanced social benefits and recognition for teachers, acknowledging their invaluable contributions to society.

**Structural Racism**

In our data, structural racism emerged in the form of various practices, policies, and institutional norms that disproportionately impacted people of Color and Indigenous people. Through a process of predatory inclusion and the exploitation of under-resourced and unwaged labor, pre-service and in-service TOCIT are underserved, undercompensated, and devalued throughout the teacher pipeline and profession.

**Recommendations:**

Once acknowledged, the best way to combat racial exploitation is to fairly compensate TOCIT for their labor. This includes paying for their student teaching, providing stipends for their supplemental and support work, such as translation services, discipline duties, and mental health guidance for students.

Teacher preparation programs should implement a reasonable enrollment cap to ensure institutions have the capacity to provide students with appropriate supports, financial or otherwise. In particular, programs that reside within historically White institutions should have their own program-level office of support for historically underrepresented students that is overseen by administrators of Color and Indigenous administrators.

**Culture & Climate**

In this paper, culture and climate refer to the ideologies, customs, norms, policies and practices that govern how people and systems operate and interact with each other. Our findings suggest that through systemic and institutional norms, pre-service and in-service TOCIT experience pervasive microaggressions, discrimination, and dehumanizing situations within largely race-evasive environments.

**Recommendations:**

Districts should maintain a reliable database of incidents and complaints, similar to what the Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Office has for the UC system. Such databases should be monitored regularly for repeat offenders and to track what actions have been taken to address the issues.

Implement a state-mandated annual cultural responsiveness training (similar to Sexual Assault Prevention training conducted by all UC schools) for all public-school teachers, including supervisors, superintendents, and regional representatives, by 2030.

**Curriculum & Pedagogy**

A lack of representation within TEP and K-12 curriculums, along with having to contend with outside political pressure and limited support for their pedagogical style, has left TOCIT struggling to identify with their courses and their work.

**Recommendations:**

TEP programs and K-12 schools and districts should consider establishing mandatory three-to-five-year audits of curriculum to ensure material is culturally relevant, accurate, and inclusive. Have at least one reviewer that works outside of the organization and has a background or expertise in diversity, equity, inclusion, ethnic studies, cultural sustainability, and/or anti-racist practices. The review committee should also be composed of teachers, students, and parents.

K-12 administrators should stand firm on ideals and policies that best support students in cultivating critical awareness and critical consciousness. Schools should be preparing students for life outside of the classroom and assisting them in understanding, negotiating, and navigating their way through concepts and living systems of power, equity, and justice.

**Testing**

The teacher licensure exams have proven to be formidable barriers for entry, imposing stress, time constraints, and financial burdens, particularly on pre-service TOCIT. Likewise within their teaching careers, academic testing for K-12 students has encroached upon teacher pedagogical and curricular autonomy, contributing to the attrition of in-service TOCIT, especially for those working in under-resourced schools and communities.

**Recommendations:**

Alternative methods for in-service teachers to fulfill credential requirements should be made available, such as demonstrating subject-matter and teaching competency through college coursework or program completion. Furthermore, the state should mandate that all scorers receive training that includes diverse examples of teacher/student interaction, lesson study, and pedagogical practice.

For the benefit of students and teachers, the use of standardized tests should be dramatically reduced and supplemented with more authentic and relevant performance assessments. Performance-based assessments allow for more student-centered learning and give teachers more opportunities to employ the use of culturally responsive teaching practices, which may alleviate their frustrations of having to "teach to the test."

# Barriers to Racial Equity for Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers in California's Teaching Pipeline & Profession

Kai Mathews, Hui Huang, Erika Yagi, Cathy Balfe, Christopher Mauerman, Earl J. Edwards

## Introduction

It is said that the simplest and quickest way to fundamentally change an entire society is to change the way it educates its children. As Californians, to understand the truth in this statement, we don't have to look any further in our history than the state-sanctioned removal of Native American (Indigenous) children from their families and their forced placement in government-run boarding schools (Newland, 2022). These efforts were explicit and systematically attacked the ties Indigenous children held to their culture, community, history, and identity. Nationally, more recent events, such as racially motivated book bannings and the censorship of ethnic studies, culturally relevant curriculum, and critical discussions around race, indicates that K-12 education is still being used as a mechanism to structurally and systematically disenfranchise communities of Color and Indigenous communities. As Kevin Kumashiro, founding chair of Education Deans for Justice and Equity, puts it, "Schools are sites of ideological struggle. They are where our society battles to define who we are and who we are to become" (Gist & Bristol, 2022). It is clear that our nation's future is highly dependent upon the academic integrity of our K-12 education system today, and as such, we should remain vigilant about how, what, and by whom our students are taught.

Teachers are on the front lines of this struggle, fostering the next generation's understanding of, and relationship to, the world around them. They are delivering content, shaping interests, and nurturing worldviews and behaviors. The increasing diversity and globalization of our society requires that our students are provided with an education that promotes social justice and equity as a

social good that mutually benefits all. Indispensable to this endeavor are Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers (TOCIT).

Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers play a critical role in creating more inclusive and equitable learning environments. Students of Color, which now make up the majority of the K-12 population, benefit greatly from TOCIT. When TOCIT are present, graduation rates go up and suspension rates go down (Gershenson et al., 2022; Holt & Gershenson, 2019). In addition to being role models and mentors for students of Color, TOCIT bring their own cultural knowledge and experiences into the classroom, which diversify and expand all students' awareness and understanding.

We need more Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers. They are vital to our growth and evolution as a society. Despite decades of research highlighting their importance, efforts to recruit and retain TOCIT have fallen short. Though people of Color represent around 40% of the U.S. population (Frey, 2021) and about 55% of the U.S. K-12 population (National Center for Education Statistics, 2023a), only around 20% of all teachers nationwide are TOCIT (National Center for Education Statistics, 2023b). There are several factors contributing to this disparity, including a general decline in teacher education program enrollment (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 2022; U.S. Dept. of Education, 2015) and education not being a top career choice for minoritized students (Morales & Jacobson, 2020). However, the persistence of this gap also indicates long-standing systemic barriers that have historically impeded, and continue to impede, the advancement toward a teacher workforce that mirrors the diversity of our students.

Using California as a case study, this paper examines five barriers that prevent TOCIT from entering, sustaining, and thriving in the teaching profession. These barriers are structural and systemic in nature and challenge efforts for racial equity throughout the teacher pipeline, impacting both pre-service and in-service Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers.

# The Teacher Pipeline & Profession

## The "Leaky" Pipeline – A National Perspective

In their edited volume, *Handbook of Research on Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers* (2022), Drs. Conra Gist and Travis Bristol define the teacher pipeline as "a continuum of interlocking systems of development that prepare, place, and professionalize" teachers (p.5). These systems include postsecondary institutions, K-12 school districts and school sites, as well as state-governed credentialing bodies. The pipeline includes several stages, commencing with postsecondary enrollment and progressing through formal training in teacher education programs (TEPs), obtaining certification, entering the workforce, and benefiting from ongoing professional development and support throughout their careers. It is a complex network of cooperating organizations, systems, and processes that are bound together by ever-evolving policy, practice, and ideology.

As teachers advance through this continuum, racial diversity declines. This imbalance is particularly conspicuous in the disparities observed in bachelor's degree completion rates for Black and Latine students majoring in education and in the retention rates of Black and Latine teachers compared to their White counterparts (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). These disconcerting patterns exacerbate the lack of racial diversity, given that the already limited pool of potential Black and Latine teachers continues to shrink at multiple points along the educator pipeline (Carver-Thomas, Hyler, & Darling-Hammond, 2022). While there has been an overall increase in the population of Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers in recent decades, it's crucial to note that the share of Black and Native American teachers in the teaching force is dwindling (Carver-Thomas, Hyler, & Darling-Hammond, 2022).

The decline in teacher diversity along the educator pipeline is a complex issue influenced by various factors that shape the recruitment and retention of TOCIT. These factors primarily revolve

around two key areas of concern: teacher education and the professional working conditions within K-12 schools. Upon entering the workforce, TOCIT frequently find themselves beginning their teaching careers in under-resourced and underfunded schools, serving high proportions of students from low-income and racially and culturally minoritized communities (Achinstein et al., 2010; Ushomirsky & Williams, 2015; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). The lack of resources and administrator support, limited compensation, and lack of classroom autonomy and school influence can discourage TOCIT from remaining at the same school and/or remaining in the teaching profession (Ingersoll, Merrill & May, 2016; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Carver-Thomas, Hyler, & Darling-Hammond, 2022).

It is crucial to acknowledge that while many of the factors discussed above have implications for all teachers, a substantial portion of the challenges are imbued with racial dynamics that disproportionately impact TOCIT. In essence, the racialized experiences of TOCIT are often pivotal in understanding how and why they face barriers to entering and remaining in TEPs and K-12 schools.

**Teacher Education in California – A Brief History**

California's first teacher education program, Minns Evening Normal School, was founded in 1857, seven years after California was ratified as a state. The Minns Evening Normal School was part of an educational movement in the United States that created a new educational institution called "normal schools." Normal schools were adopted from the French *école normale* model for training primary school teachers and were established in 1838 (Gowen & Kimball, 2017). The model consisted of a comprehensive overview of primary school content and an emphasis on effective pedagogical techniques. Initially, normal schools sat somewhere between secondary schools and the university system.

California's state-sponsored normal schools were tuition-free and eventually evolved into the California State University (CSU) and the University of California (UC) higher educational systems. Minns Evening Normal School became San Jose State University, California's first CSU, while the southern branch of Minns became the University of California, Los Angeles, the state's second UC (Gowen & Kimball, 2017).

Parallel to the rise of TEPs within universities, California was also establishing more rigorous criteria for credentialing of public teachers. While normal schools took on the role of educating teachers, local municipalities controlled the teacher certification process and often did not require candidates to enroll in TEPs. In 1863, the California Board of Education became fully responsible for the examinations of all teachers at all levels and, by the early 1900s, became the dominant entity for certifying teachers (Brown, 2011). To increase the prestige of the educational field and cultivate higher-quality teachers, in 1906 the state started requiring a full year of graduate studies to become a certified teacher (Brown, 2011).

California's shift from normal schools to teacher colleges and state universities is significant because it pushed teacher training programs from their autonomous school environment into the more comprehensive institutions of higher education. Here, TEPs became one of several programs within schools of education. This coupling of higher education institutions and teacher certifications established a symbiotic relationship that impacts access and equity in teacher education programs to this day.

## Teacher Education in California – The Current Landscape

### *The Institutions*

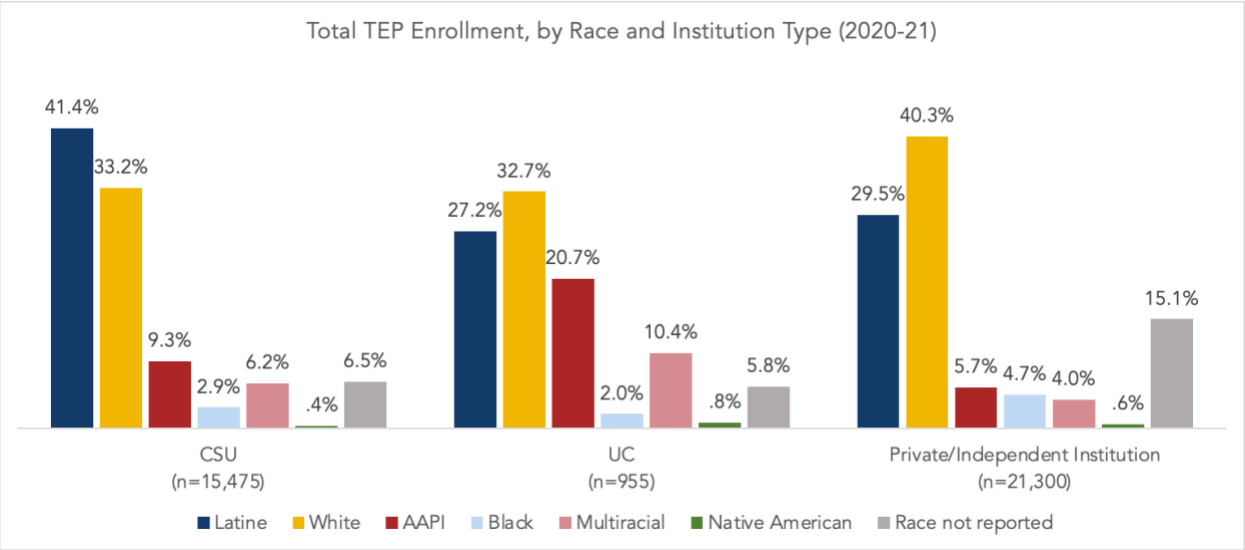
There are over 100 teacher preparation institutions in California granting preliminary teaching credentials: 23 California State University (CSU) programs, nine University of California

(UC) programs, 49 private/independent institutions, and 26 Local Education Agencies (LEAs)[2] (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2023a). In 2020-2021, around 39,000 students were enrolled in a TEP or had just completed their teacher education in California (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2022, p.13). Private/independent institutions enroll the largest proportion of TEP students, accounting for over 50% of California's TEP students. CSUs are the second-largest teacher education system in the state, enrolling around 40% of California's TEP students, while UCs and LEAs enroll around 2% and 5% of the state's teacher candidates, respectively (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2023b, p.17).

**Figure 1** provides the race/ethnicity distribution by institutional type. Overall, more than half of teacher candidates identified themselves as people of Color and Indigenous people in all three types of higher education institutions in the 2020-21 academic year. Latine individuals of any racial background form the predominant racial/ethnic group within the California State University segment and rank as the second-largest group in the other two higher education segments. The University of California system enrolls the most candidates of Asian American and Pacific Islander as well as candidates of Indigenous backgrounds, whereas private and independent institutions lead in enrolling Black/African American candidates.

[2] These numbers only include institutions granting preliminary teaching credentials and exclude institutions that only offer clear credentials or added authorizations. This data is from the 2022-2023 school year.

**Figure 1: Total TEP Enrollment by Race and Institution Type, 2020-21**




Source: California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, *Annual Report Card on California Teacher Preparation Programs for the Academic Year 2020-21* (Table 6b. Gender, Race/Ethnicity of Total Enrollment (Enrolled Candidates plus Program Completers) by Higher Education Segment, 2020-21)

*The Pathways*

Teacher candidates enroll in different "pathways," which describe how pre-service teachers gain student teaching experience in actual classrooms. Below are the most common pathways in California's TEP system (see **Table 1**). Over 55% of new teaching credentials issued are through a traditional preparation pathway, where candidates finish coursework and are required to complete approximately 600 to 690 clinical hours (student teaching) (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2022).

Though all pathways eventually lead to a teaching credential, some are better at retaining teachers, particularly Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers, than others. According to recent data, Grow Your Own (GYO) and residency programs may lead to higher retention rates and higher enrollment of diverse teacher candidates (Carver-Thomas, Burns, Leung, & Ondrasek, 2022; National Center for Teacher Residencies, 2023; Patrick et al., 2023).

**Table 1: Teacher Preparation Pathways in California**

| Pathway | Description | Compensation |
|---|---|---|
| Traditional (IHE Based) | This is the "traditional" post-baccalaureate preparation pathway. This is a graduate-level program that consists of completing coursework up front, before completing student teaching just prior to graduation. | Unpaid |
| Integrated Undergraduate (IHE Based) | This option is available for those who know they want to be teachers prior to graduating. It allows candidates to complete teacher preparation coursework during their undergraduate education. Similar to a traditional program, student teaching begins close to completion of the program. | Unpaid |
| Teacher Residency (IHE Based) | Residency programs are for college graduates. They consist of graduate level teacher preparation coursework; however, they differ from traditional programs because they offer extended mentoring and student teaching through almost the entire length of the program after initial onboarding. This pathway also allows candidates enrolled to earn a stipend for their time in the classroom. | Salary or Stipend |
| Intern | This pathway also requires completion of post-graduate level preparation coursework; but while doing so, candidates can serve as the teacher of record and earn a salary after completing 120 hours of pre-service requirements. Interns can only be hired when the district cannot find a teacher with a preliminary or clear credential. Interns work full-time while earning their credential. | Salary |
| Grow Your Own | Grow Your Own pathways are preparation programs that are housed in Local Education Agencies (LEA) and recruit local community members and classified school employees into the teaching profession. These programs are often partnerships between schools, districts, community organizations, and teacher preparation programs. | Varies; candidates usually work and earn a salary as classified staff at school site |

Source: California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, *Pathways to Credentialing (2023c)*

## The Teaching Profession in California

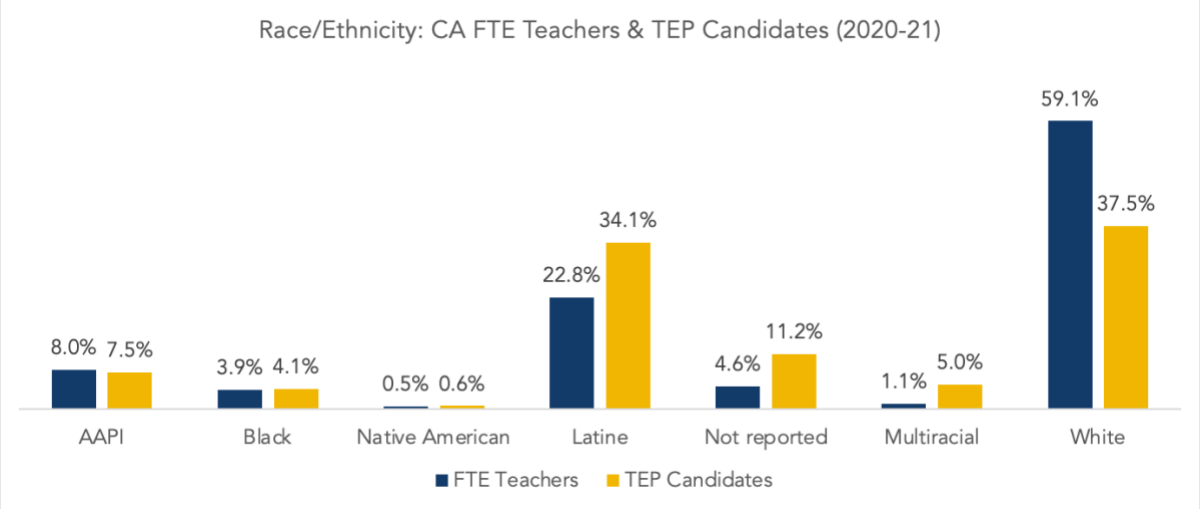
*Race/Ethnicity Composition of the Teacher Workforce*

As of the 2021-22 academic year, there are over 300,000 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) teachers working in California K-12 schools. Of those teachers voluntarily reporting their race/ethnicity, approximately 58% identified as White, while 24% identified as Latine. AAPI teachers comprised 8% of the teaching workforce, while Black/African American teachers accounted for approximately 3%. Indigenous teachers represented less than 1% of the total, and Multiracial teachers constituted another 1% (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2023b). The composition of the teaching workforce has remained relatively stable from 2017-18 to

2021-22 academic years, with Latine teachers experiencing a 2.5 percentage point increase in their representation, while the proportion of White teachers has declined by 3.9 percentage points during the same period (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2023b).

In the 2020-21 academic year, the racial and ethnic composition of newly enrolled teacher candidates in TEPs demonstrated a promising trend, with White candidates accounting for 38%, Latine candidates at 34%, AAPI candidates at 8%, Black candidates at 4%, Indigenous candidates at 0.5%, and multiracial candidates at 5%[3]. Despite the positive trend of increased diversity among newly enrolled teacher candidates (White candidates 38% vs. TOCIT candidates 51%), the teaching workforce remains predominantly White (White 59% v.s. TOCIT 36%), highlighting a substantial diversity gap between the two. **See Figure 2.**

**Figure 2: Racial Distribution of FTE Teachers vs. TEP Candidates, 2020-21**




Source: California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, *Teacher Supply in California 2021c* (Table 13a: Gender and Race/Ethnicity Distribution of New Enrolled Teacher Candidates in the Teacher Preparation Programs, 2016-17 to 2020-21 & 13b: Gender and Race/Ethnicity Distribution of FTE Teachers, 2017-18 to 2021-22)

[3] The TEP enrollment data for 2021-22 academic year was not available. Data from the 2020-21 academic year was used for comparison here.

*Teacher Demand and Shortage*

California is grappling with a significant demand for new K-12 schoolteachers. Following a consistent four-year decline in estimated hires starting in the 2018-19 academic year, there has been a notable upturn for the 2022-23 academic year, with a projection of approximately 4,600 additional teacher hires compared to the preceding year (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2023b, p.32). At the statewide level, estimates indicate that more than 22,000 teachers were expected to be recruited for the 2022-23 academic year. This demand is compounded by several significant factors: 1) California's plan to extend Transitional Kindergarten (TK) education to all 4-year-olds which necessitates the hiring of approximately 11,900 to 15,600 additional lead teachers and 16,000 to 19,700 assistant TK teachers by 2025-26 (Melnick et al., 2022); 2) a substantial surge in teacher retirements since the pandemic (Carver-Thomas, Burns, Leung, & Ondrasek, 2022); and 3) heightened turnover intentions among the current teaching workforce over the next three years (Hart Research Associates, 2022).

The pressing demand for new teachers has been exacerbated by a decline in the issuance of new teaching credentials and the presence of a consistent pool of underprepared teachers, resulting in an enduring and severe teacher shortage across the state. In the 2021-22 academic year, while there was a notable 27% increase in the issuance of new credentials to teachers prepared out-of-state or out-of-country, there was a simultaneous decrease of 25% and 2% in the number of credentials issued to teachers prepared in programs in higher education institutions and district/county intern programs, respectively. This led to a 16% decline in the overall issuance of new teaching credentials between the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2023b, p.5).

To address staffing gaps, California also issues teaching-intern credentials, permits, and waivers (IPW) for uncredentialed individuals to teach in classrooms when fully credentialed teachers

cannot be secured to fill vacant positions in school districts. The issuance of IPW documents has remained consistent, within the range of 12,000 to 14,000, between 2017-18 and 2021-22, indicating that approximately 4% of individuals employed in California public schools are classified as underprepared teachers (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2023b, p.30).

**Retaining California's Teachers of Color & Indigenous Teachers**

Like the rest of the United States, the diversity of California's teaching force continues to lag behind its student population. While students of Color make up 78% of the state's K-12 population, TOCIT comprise just 37% of the teaching workforce (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2023b), a statistic that has dominated the teacher shortage narrative. Although there is promise in the fact that TEP enrollment is more diverse than the state's current educator workforce, it's still 27% less diverse than the state's K-12 student body. As demand for greater representation increases, so have the initiatives to recruit and retain more racially diverse teachers. In the past few years, California has spent billions in an effort to diversify its teacher workforce. For example, Assembly Bill 520 (2021) allocated $15 million to be distributed to school districts to develop and implement programs that diversify teaching staffs, and Assembly Bill 130 (2021) appropriated $350 million over the next five years to create or expand Teacher Residency Programs, a pathway that has been shown to recruit and retain higher numbers of TOCIT (California Legislative Information, 2023). Even with these measures, the realities of higher rates of burnout, turnover, and early retirement among TOCIT force us to explore what other factors might be contributing to their departure, or in some cases, their noticeable absence.

This study sets out to 1) explore how current policies, structures, practices, attitudes, and ideologies across the pipeline and profession impede the recruitment and retention of TOCIT, and 2) better understand the racialized experiences and perspectives of pre-service and in-service Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers.

# Methodology

As this research endeavors to highlight the racialized experiences of often marginalized groups, it was imperative to collect data that would expose the breadth and depth of these experiences, thus a mixed methods approach was implemented. Rossman and Wilson identified three analytical functions of using a mixed methods approach: corroboration, elaboration, and initiation. Using both qualitative and quantitative data provides opportunities for "convergence in our findings" while also allowing for more "richness and detail" into a particular phenomenon (1985). The research question at the center of our analysis was:

- What are the current barriers to racial equity within the teacher pipeline and profession?
- In what ways do these barriers impact people of Color and Indigenous people from entering the pipeline and sustaining in the profession?

## Data Collection

The following paper is based on a mix of qualitative and quantitative data collected from system leaders in teacher preparation, pre-service teachers, in-service teachers, and former teachers over the course of approximately one year, spring 2021 to summer 2022. See **Table 2**.

**Table 2: Timeline of Data Collection**

| Type | Time of Data Collection |
|---|---|
| Pre-Service Teacher Focus Groups | Spring 2021 |
| TEP System Lead Interviews | Spring 2021 |
| CA In-Service Teacher Survey | Spring 2022 |
| Pre-Service Teacher Interviews (Hart) | Spring 2022 |
| Former CA Teacher Interviews (Hart) | Summer 2022 |

*Pre-Service Teachers*

Four one-hour, semi-structured focus groups were conducted with 13 current teacher education and general education students. The students were invited to participate in a one-hour focus group via emails sent out through the Center for the Transformation of Schools listserv. Student focus groups represented the California State University (CSU) system, the University of California (UC) system, the California Community College (CCC) system, and the private/independent California college and university system. See **Table 3**. Focus groups were organized by racial affinity: AAPI, Black, Latine, and Multiracial, to provide a safe space for students to talk candidly about their racial and ethnic identities and their racialized experiences at school. Efforts to facilitate White and Indigenous focus groups were made but did not occur due to lack of registration. Students were asked about their experiences in their teacher education program as well as their attitudes and feelings about their program. See **Appendix A** for the focus group interview protocol. These student interviews were conducted in spring of 2021.

**Table 3: TEP Student Focus Group – Participant Demographics**

| Race/Ethnicity | Gender | Institution Type |
|---|---|---|
| Black: 3<br>AAPI: 4<br>Latine: 4<br>Multiracial: 2 | Female: 10<br>Male: 2<br>No response: 1 | CSU: 2<br>Private: 2<br>UC: 2<br>Community college: 7 |

In-depth interviews were also conducted with 25 respondents from a survey facilitated by Hart Research Associates in partnership with UCLA's Center for the Transformation of Schools and the California Teacher Association (CTA). See **Table 4**. Interviewees were enrolled in or had recently graduated from a California teacher preparation program. Participants were asked about their motivation to become a teacher, their perspective on the TEP experience, and what challenges they expected to encounter in the teaching profession. Potential participants were contacted by

email and invited to participate in a 30-minute phone or video interview. The invitation email disclosed CTA and UCLA Center for Transformation of Schools as the sponsors of the research, the general topics of the interviews, and the inclusion of a $50 Visa gift card honorarium to those who are selected to participate and complete an interview. See **Appendix B** for interview protocol for Aspiring Teachers. Data from these interviews were collected in spring 2022.

**Table 4: Aspiring Teacher Interviews – Participant Demographics**

| Race/Ethnicity | Gender | Enrollment Status (at time of interview) |
|---|---|---|
| AAPI: 5<br>Black: 2<br>Latine: 7<br>White: 11 | Female: 21<br>Male: 4 | Recent Graduate: 15<br>Enrolled (Class of 2022): 6<br>Enrolled (Class of 2023): 4 |

*TEP System Leads*

Six one-hour, semi-structured interviews were conducted with teacher preparation leaders. See **Table 5**. System leaders were asked about the challenges that students of Color face in their TEPs, the challenges that TEPs face in recruiting and retaining students of Color, and the solutions that exist or should exist to address these challenges. Given their high-level position, these interviewees were able to share a wealth of knowledge and insight on the teacher education programs that produce the overwhelming majority of teacher candidates in California. See **Appendix C** for the interview protocol. These interviews were conducted in spring of 2021, with a follow-up interview with Dr. Earnest Black in April 2022.

**Table 5: System Leads Interview Participants**

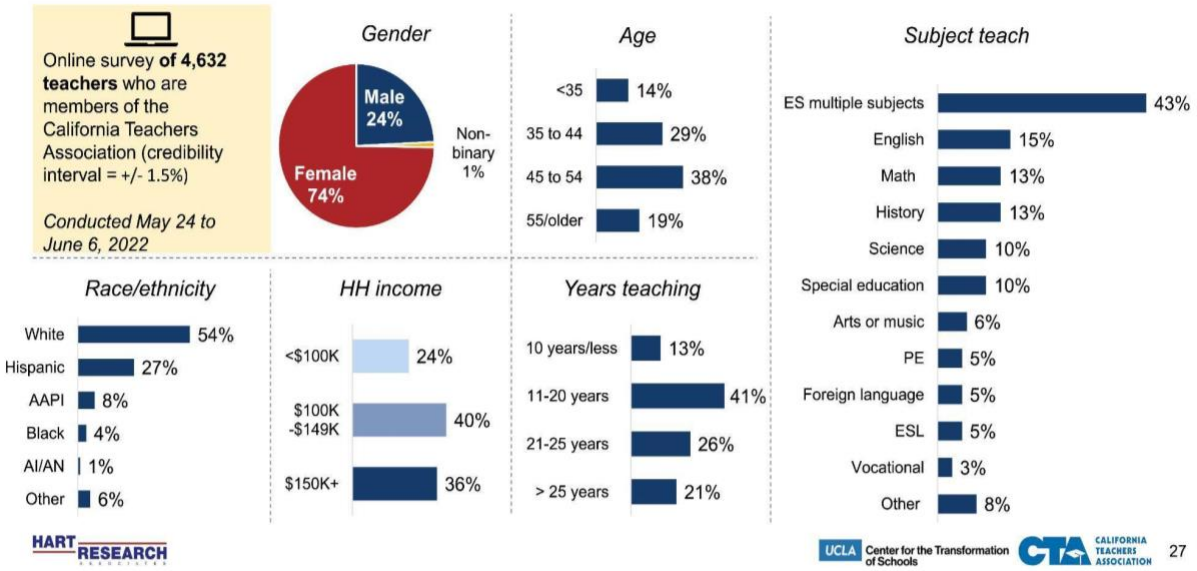
| Name | Position (at time of interview) | Institution |
|---|---|---|
| Dr. Earnest Black | Systemwide Director | CalStateTEACH |
| Dr. Marquita Grenot-Scheyer | Assistant Vice Chancellor | Educator Preparation and Public School Programs, for the California State University (CSU) |
| Dr. Tine Sloan | Director; Associate Teaching Professor; Commission Chair | California Teacher Education Research and Improvement Network (CTERIN); Department of Education, UC Santa Barbara; California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) |
| Dr. Steve Bautista | President | Association of California Community College Teacher Education Programs (ACCCTEP) |
| Dr. Andrew Wall | Former Dean; Representative | University of Redlands; Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) |

*In-Service Teachers*

In partnership with and on behalf of UCLA's Center for the Transformation of Schools (CTS) and the California Teachers Association (CTA), Hart Research Associates surveyed over 4,600 California teachers on issues related to job satisfaction and future outlook; diversity and inclusion within the school environment; practices and policies to improve teacher retention; and perspectives on teacher preparation. The survey was a mix of open-ended, multiple-choice, scale, and rank-order questions. Potential survey respondents were selected from the CTA's membership file by random sampling methods that gave each qualified member an equal chance of being included in the sample. Emails were sent to CTA members who had voluntarily provided their email addresses to the CTA for outbound contacts such as this one. The sample includes 4,632 CTA member TK-12thgrade teachers under age 63. See **Figure 3**. Black, Latine, Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI), and American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) teachers were oversampled. The racial and ethnic oversamples were weighted to their proper proportions, and weights were applied to create a demographically representative sample by geographic region,

gender, age, and political party identification. See **Appendix D** for the survey questionnaire. These data were collected in spring of 2022.

**Figure 3: In-Service Teacher Survey - Participant Demographics**




*Former Teachers*

In-depth interviews were also conducted with 26 respondents from our statewide teacher survey (referenced above). See **Table 6**. Interviewees were teachers who had left the classroom within the past five years. Participants were asked about their motivation to become a teacher, the biggest challenges they faced as a teacher, and why they decided to leave the teaching profession. A list of former CTA members whose membership had lapsed within the past five years was used to recruit former teachers. Potential participants were contacted by email and invited to participate in a 30-minute phone or video interview. See **Appendix E** for interview protocol for former teachers. Data from these interviews were collected in summer of 2022.

**Table 6: Former Teacher Interview - Participant Demographics**

| Race/Ethnicity | Gender | Grades Taught |
|---|---|---|
| AAPI: 4<br>Black: 4<br>Latine: 6<br>White: 9<br>Other: 3 | Female: 13<br>Male: 13 | Pre-Kindergarten: 2<br>Elementary (K-5th): 11<br>Middle School (6th-8th): 9<br>High School (9th-12th): 13 |

## Data Analysis

We utilized the qualitative software Dedoose to analyze interview and focus-group data. The analysis was informed by the literature, as well as our own professional and academic experiences in the classroom. Original codes (organizational and structural, compositional, behavioral, psychological, and historical) were generated using the Kohli et al. (2022) dimensions of a Healthy Racial Climate in Teacher Education as a framework. After deep analysis of the excerpts, data were recoded into five barriers: Financial, Curriculum & Pedagogy, Culture & Climate, Racial Capitalism, and Testing. The research team also coded open-ended responses in Dedoose for questions related to racial identity (See **Appendix D: UCLA-CTA Teachers Online Survey Items,** q27, q29, q31, & q33), reasons for leaving the teaching profession (q42), and steps to improve teacher retention (q44).

It is important to note that though responses from White participants were captured, only responses from Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers were coded, analyzed, and used in the articulation of this paper. Furthermore, in addition to the qualitative data analysis, we also provided descriptive statistics of weighted survey response rates for questions relating to the identified five barriers to racial equity. These statistics were included to corroborate, elaborate upon, and initiate further discussion on our research findings.

### Paper Perspectives & Design

We define racial equity as the "process of eliminating racial disparities and improving outcomes for everyone. It is the intentional and continual practice of changing policies, practices, systems, and structures by prioritizing measurable change in the lives of people of Color" (Race Forward, 2022). This paper identifies barriers that we believe prevent the elimination of racial disparities and the improvement of outcomes for people of Color and Indigenous people to enter and sustain in the teaching pipeline and profession.

In research, an emic perspective focuses on the "insider's view of reality" and "allows an individual to frame the concept, idea, or situation and then elaborate on it" (Given, 2008, p.249). This perspective is often used by anthropologists or ethnographers in an effort to capture in-depth beliefs, practices, or details from a society, culture, or group with as little external influence as possible. Emic perspectives and lenses are used to better understand how system stakeholders view their culture and make sense of their own behaviors. To this end, the following findings in this paper rely heavily on the words and statements of the participants involved in the teacher pipeline and profession. Our goal in doing so is to underscore that the findings presented in this paper are not our own but that of the larger teaching community.

## Barriers to Racial Equity for Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers

### Financial Burden

This section delves into the multifaceted layers of financial hardship that ripple through the landscape of the educator pipeline and teaching profession in California. In this paper, financial burden consists of the economic challenges and stress one either perceives or experiences as a result of the financial obligation and responsibility associated with accessing and attending a teacher education program in California and/or working in the teaching profession. Growing tuition fees,

unpaid student teaching, mounting student debt, meager salaries, and the relentless rise of inflation and living expenses are undoubtedly felt by teachers at all levels. However, this economic impact, for historical and social reasons, is disproportionately magnified for pre-service and in-service TOCIT.

*Tuition & Student Debt*

Pre-service TOCIT are often deterred from entering the profession because of the financial costs linked to teacher preparation. Due to historical and current racial wealth disparities, many teacher candidates of Color and Indigenous candidates may struggle to pay for the high cost of TEPs (Dixon et al., 2019). While some can obtain scholarships or grants, earning both a bachelor's degree and postgraduate credential to become a certified teacher places a monetary strain on most students.

Currently, the annual cost of attendance (tuition, fees, supplies, and other living expenses) for undergraduates ranges from approximately $19,000-$34,000 for California State University (CSU) schools and around $40,000 for University of California (UC) schools. Cost of attendance at private institutions in California can be much higher (e.g., $76,000 at Loyola Marymount University; $82,000 at Stanford University, and $85,000 at University of Southern California). Moreover, earning a teaching credential in California can cost prospective students an additional $10,000 to $20,000 annually (e.g., $18,000 at UCLA and $8,000 at CSU Long Beach annually). While there may be cheaper online options, the total cost for programs such as CalStateTEACH is still over $11,000.

In our research, system leaders and teacher candidates identified financial support, or a lack thereof, as a major structural barrier to entering the teaching profession. It is well known that "teacher candidates are struggling financially," says Dr. Earnest Black, and although providing a stipend would be helpful, questions remain on how TEPs could provide a system-wide stipend for every teacher candidate enrolled (2021). For candidates, balancing both the cost of living and tuition can be untenable, as Dr. Andrew Wall explained:

> We had students who were living in their car, while preparing to be a teacher. We had students, they didn't have technology while they were paying for tuition. So they would spend a tremendous amount of time in the labs. And yes, they also happened to be students who were students of Color. (2021)

For many pre-service teachers, the only option they have is to take on significant debt, which poses its own set of challenges. TOCIT tend to emerge from postsecondary education burdened with higher loans and higher debt compared to their White counterparts (Elengold et al., 2020; Scott-Clayton & Li, 2016). Research shows that Black and Latine teachers are more likely to take out federal student loans and thus have larger loan balances than their White peers (Fiddiman et al., 2019).

The racial disparities prevalent in student loan debt stem from ongoing structural inequities that have hindered Black Americans from amassing wealth (Davis III et al., 2020). Black educators, in particular, owe more in federal student loans on average and may have more difficulty repaying their undergraduate loans. In fact, one in five Black educators owe more than $105,000 in student loan debt (Hershcopf et al., 2021). These statistics indicate that TOCIT are starting their careers under a burden of debt that will take years to alleviate. When asked what changes state and local officials could make to improve teacher retention more broadly, 45% of teachers in our survey rated a state student loan forgiveness program as a "top" or "very high" priority (Hart Research Associates, 2022). This number rose to 57% percent when looking just at TOCIT and to 77% when looking specifically at Black teachers.

The implications of these challenges extend beyond the individual teacher, as college graduates carrying student debt are less likely to pursue lower-paying public-interest professions, including teaching, relative to those without debt (Rothstein & Rouse, 2011). Dr. Tine Sloan acknowledged that the current approach to preparing teachers is problematic, emphasizing that if

"potential teachers from low-income backgrounds can't access the supportive environments [they need] to become teachers, then we're not going to be able to get them into the field" (2021). Dr. Andrew Wall echoed similar concerns, stating, "If you want to recruit a diverse student body, [but] you're not providing significant aid for them and it results in financial hardship, then that's a problem" (2021).

*Unpaid Student Teaching*

Beyond tuition cost, the very structure and nature of how TEPs prepare candidates prevents many individuals from earning a living while in the program (Santos et al., 2021). In California, pre-service teachers are required to complete 600 hours of student teaching in order to receive their credential (Kawasaki, 2021). Unlike teacher residents or teacher interns, student teachers are not paid yet they are typically required to work a schedule similar to a fully employed teacher's for a whole semester or a full academic year. This happens while they are completing coursework and paying tuition. Regarding this structure, Dr. Sloan commented:

> There isn't a very realistic opportunity for our teacher candidates to support themselves while they're in the program. That means that unless we can support the candidates coming in financially, we've just shut off access to a whole lot of people to our programs. (2021)

Approximately, 70% of all teacher candidates[4] in California go through a traditional student teaching pathway, where student teaching is a requirement of the program (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2021d). Pre-service teachers in this pathway have three choices: 1) take

[4] This calculation is for teacher candidates pursuing single, multiple, or education specialist credentials. This does not include teacher candidates earning other types of credentials, such as added authorization credentials or teacher librarian service credentials. We focus on TEP students pursuing single subject, multiple subject, or education specialist credentials because we are particularly interested in teacher candidates receiving their first teaching credential. Our data does not disaggregate by initial or subsequent credential, so we use these credential types as a proxy for the initial teaching credential.

substantial time off from receiving paid employment, 2) work part-time while also trying to complete coursework and student teaching, or 2) rely on loans, external funding, or family/partner assistance. Many historically underrepresented student teachers do not have the financial privilege to take a year or even a semester off from earning an income. Those forced to work part time are faced with increased obligations and demands on their time, leading to work-life imbalance and burnout, as one candidate describes:

> I became less motivated because I realized very quickly that teachers have to take on a lot of work for unsatisfactory and unlivable wages. Many student teachers do not receive any scholarship stipend, so we are doing it without pay and it is hard to provide for yourself while having a full-time job without pay (Pre-Service Black Teacher, 2021).

For community college students enrolled in early education programs, the options are even more limited. As Dr. Steve Bautista details:

> They need to be employed and earn money and becoming a teacher takes a long time [...] sometimes they're dropping out at the point where they're either an instructional assistant or in an afterschool program as a program leader making the $18, $19, $20 an hour, they're kind of just stopping there [...] But sadly we don't compensate preschool teachers nearly enough. (2021)

Student teaching is structured in a way that deprives students of pay and leaves them with few alternative sources of income. Without financial support, student teaching stands as an inequitable policy and practice that places undue financial hardships on candidates of Color and Indigenous candidates.

*Unjust Compensation*

Despite the extensive education required, including a bachelor's degree and postgraduate education, teachers earn considerably less than professionals in other high-skilled fields, like law and

healthcare. With an average annual salary beginning as low as $46,000 (California Department of Education, 2022), California teachers earn only 78.6 cents for every dollar earned by other college graduates (Allegretto & Mishel, 2019). For many, current teaching salaries fall short of acknowledging the comprehensive responsibilities teachers undertake daily: "Teachers not only teach. They administer, coach, counsel, parent, modify, adapt, clean, nurse along with differentiating the actual material to meet the needs of all students. It is a job that requires you to be flexible" (In-Service Black Teacher, 2022).

In our survey, hundreds of teachers expressed frustrations about their salary and how it was an indication of how little educators are valued in society:

- "PAY them like you do a lawyer, doctor, nurse, or other high paying professions. Teachers are the lifeline of our future generation. Pay them like you care deeply for their unconditional care and support of your children. They deserve much more than the average or less than average salary." (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022).
- "We are paid very very poorly. It's very demoralizing to struggle paying your bills and to continue to live paycheck to paycheck while we do the work that builds our nation." (In-Service AAPI Teacher, 2022).
- "There is such a HIGH expectation for the teaching profession and not enough respect or value placed on Teachers. The wages aren't high enough for the amount of degrees and preparation we have. Others with no degrees or a basic degree make more money and live more comfortably. Especially living in California where the cost of living is outrageous and keeps going higher, yet we have to fight for a raise and demand respect at all times. We shouldn't have to fight and picket and demand respect from districts, politicians, etc." (In-Service Indigenous Teacher, 2022)

- "Most of the hardworking teachers, who are dedicated to the profession, feel like they aren't paid for the amount of work that they do. Compared to other professions, teachers often struggle to reach a standard of living they feel they deserve considering how vital we are to society." (In-Service Black Teacher, 2022)

Though a common barrier for all teachers, low teaching salaries disproportionately affect TOCIT, as they are more likely than their White counterparts to enter the workforce in a lower economic bracket, are less likely to receive financial assistance from their family and face higher levels of student loan debt (Bhutta et al., 2020; Weller & Roberts, 2021). For many, having to support their family and pay off loans is a lifelong burden: "The salary is too low for the fact that we go to college, spend thousands of dollars on a degree, and then can't afford to pay back on student loans and provide a decent life for our family and kids." (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022). In our survey, salary consistently ranks as one of the top four reasons for a career change among Black and Latine teachers.

Teaching involves an intricate array of responsibilities that demand a broad spectrum of skills. The long-standing call for an increase in teachers' salaries resonates with the need to recognize their highly skilled expertise and uphold their professional dignity. "We are disrespected as professionals and undercompensated for our educational level," an in-service teacher explains. "Considering the cost of college, why would people go into teaching? They can spend the same money and time in school, and come out ready to get a job in a much higher-paying profession that will actually allow for paying off student loans" (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022). This perspective underscores the pressing need to address wage inequity to retain and support TOCIT in the profession.

*Cost of Living*

The issue of unjust compensation is further compounded by the exorbitant cost of living in California. In our survey, over 60% of TOCIT found it difficult to find affordable housing near the schools where they teach, save for retirement, keep up with basic living expenses, and merely live comfortably. See **Table 7**.

**Table 7: TOCIT Financial Difficulty**

| Q23. Proportion who rate the following to be difficult: | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Latine (weighted n=1,251) | AAPI (weighted n=392) | Black (weighted n=185) | AI/AN (weighted n=32) |
| Find affordable housing near where you teach | 77% | 80% | 80% | 67% |
| Save for long-term goals, like purchasing a home | 78% | 76% | 79% | 93% |
| Keep up with basic expenses and the cost living | 72% | 63% | 65% | 85% |
| Save for retirement | 70% | 66% | 67% | 83% |
| Live comfortably and maintain the lifestyle you want | 65% | 62% | 66% | 83% |
| Provide for your child/children | 54% | 58% | 40% | 60% |
| Commute to work in a reasonable amount of time | 28% | 32% | 19% | 45% |

Source: Hart Research Associates, Voices from the Classroom: Developing a Strategy for Teacher Retention and Recruitment (2022)

The financial strain of coping with California's high cost of living is not new for TOCIT and is felt early before even entering the teaching profession. In addition to the high tuition fee for the TEPs and unpaid student teaching, additional living expenses add another burden for pre-service TOCIT, making it even more arduous for them to pursue their teacher training. A pre-service teacher stated, "[The unpaid student teaching] was very hard for me and caused hardship, because I was commuting an hour and with inflation and rising gas prices, it became very costly" (Pre-Service Black Teacher, 2021). Even when there's financial support for tuition, TOCIT often find themselves forced to "take out living expense loans for [their] rent," putting them "over the edge in debt" (In-Service Black Teacher, 2022).

For TOCIT, especially those residing in regions like Los Angeles County or the Bay Area, securing affordable housing near their place of employment is hard: "Bay Area millennial teachers have struggled to buy homes and find affordable housing with their student loan obligations, healthcare premiums, low wages, and unstable market" (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022). When discussing the most important steps they would take to retain teachers if they were in charge, one teacher stated, "perhaps a housing stipend from the government to help with rent or mortgage. Make sure teachers earn a living wage for this area. Most teachers are single and doing a juggling act to survive in the Bay Area" (In-Service Black Teacher, 2022).

The ever-increasing costs of rent, healthcare, and insurance, along with stagnant pay, have intensified the financial burden on TOCIT, exacerbating their challenges in meeting their families' essential needs and acting as a compelling catalyst for their departure from the teaching profession. A former teacher discussed how his strong passion for teaching was overshadowed by the financial hardships that come with the profession: "I actually liked teaching, a noble profession, but unfortunately the extremely high cost of living in L.A. and slave wages LAUSD paid were just no longer worth the effort." (Former Latine Teacher, 2022). Even for those TOCIT who persist in their teaching careers, the specter of being "forced to leave the profession" looms due to the confluence of high living expenses and unsustainable wages: "I am already barely hanging on financially, working a second job for 8 hours a week and teaching extended school year every summer just to make ends meet. If things get any worse, I won't be able to continue to teach" (In-Service Indigenous Teacher, 2022). This teacher's experience is not isolated; it echoes the sentiments of other TOCIT who expressed the necessity of "having to take up second jobs, having to work summer school, having to do a lot of things that they shouldn't have to [...] to support their families" (In-Service Black Teacher, 2022). Raising teachers' salaries in line with the cost of living is crucial to

significantly reduce financial pressure on TOCIT and to ensure a sustainable and meaningful career path within the field of education.

*Considerations for Financial Burden*

Addressing the financial challenges faced by pre-service and in-service Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers is imperative, considering the significant debt burden they often carry alongside the demanding nature of their profession. While removing the financial burden and offering just compensation may change attitudes and perspectives about the profession, it is crucial for federal and state governments, Teacher Education Programs (TEPs), and school districts to take proactive measures for pre-service teachers. Beginning their careers without significant financial debt would constitute a fundamental step in this direction.

To mitigate the impact of student loan debt on TOCIT, the state should prioritize the creation of debt-free pathways. Currently, there are several promising bills under consideration in California that have the potential to remove barriers to entry into the teaching profession (Lambert, 2023a). For instance, Senate Bill 765 proposes an increase in the maximum stipend for teacher candidates in the Teacher Residency Grant Program to $40,000 per candidate. SB 765 also proposes to annually exempt 1,000 Cal Grant recipients from demonstrating financial need if they commit to enrolling in a teacher preparation program after completing their bachelor's degree (Lambert, 2023a). Additionally, Assembly Bill 238 suggests allocating one-time state funds to districts to compensate student teachers at the same rate as substitute teachers. The state can also implement a California-based Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program to further incentivize and retain motivated TOCIT professionals in schools and areas with teacher shortages.

Drawing inspiration from successful models in other states, California can tailor similar initiatives to help pre-service TOCIT reduce their financial burdens during student teaching. For instance, Maryland awards a $20,000 annual stipend to student teachers attending in-state

institutions with at least 40% Pell Grant eligibility. These students commit to teaching in high-needs school/grade-level/content areas within the state for two years. To enhance the pool of potential candidates and attract qualified teachers from outside the state, California can consider relaxing the residency requirement. For example, Michigan implemented an annual stipend of $9,600 for student teachers, irrespective of their state of residency[5]. This stipend would be accessible to full-time students enrolled in approved educator preparation programs while actively participating in mandatory student teaching experiences.

Furthermore, the state of California can introduce a "G.I. Bill" tailored for teachers, offering comprehensive coverage that includes tuition and support for future professional development, living expenses, housing stipends, tax breaks, and dependent tuition grants. This bill should also prioritize enhanced social benefits and recognition for teachers, acknowledging their invaluable contributions to society. Collaborating with school boards and districts to address the issue of cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) is essential. Districts can offer compensation or stipends, enhanced healthcare coverage (an issue for hundreds of teachers in our survey), and higher starting pay, particularly in costly regions like the Bay Area, to support new teachers as they embark on their teaching careers.

**Structural Racism**

Structural racism is "a system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity" (Aspen Institute, 2004, p. 11). It is the process by which systems and policies, actions, and attitudes create inequitable opportunities and discriminatory outcomes for people based on their racial identity. In our data, structural racism emerged in the form of various practices, policies, and

[5] See MI Future Educator Stipend: https://www.michigan.gov/mistudentaid/programs/new-programs-for-future-educators/mi-future-educator-stipend

institutional norms that disproportionately impacted teachers of Color and Indigenous teachers. Through a process of predatory inclusion and the exploitation of under-resourced and unwaged labor, pre-service and in-service TOCIT are underserved, undercompensated, and devalued throughout the teacher pipeline and profession.

*Predatory Inclusion*

Predatory inclusion refers to "a process whereby members of a marginalized group are provided with access to an opportunity from which they have historically been excluded but under conditions that jeopardize the benefits of access" (Seamster & Charron-Chénier, 2017, pp.199-200). This terminology is typically reserved for describing for-profit, degree-granting institutions. However, we argue that historically White, nonprofit institutions that increase their enrollment of racially diverse and minoritized students without adequately providing culturally responsive social structures and financial supports are also engaging in predatory practices.

Needing to represent the racial diversity of the K-12 student population, teacher preparation programs in California have prioritized recruiting more ethno-racially diverse and historically underrepresented candidates into their programs. In 2020-21, over half of all teacher candidates enrolled in state-approved teacher preparation programs in California identified as non-White (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2023b). Though the increase in numbers is beneficial for diversity initiatives, many TEPs, particularly programs attached to private and independent institutions, have competing obligations, such as increasing revenue, that conflict with their efforts for racial equity. These programs uphold what Dr. Andrew Wall describes as an "ethos of justice [and] an ethos of access" that may not truly exist:

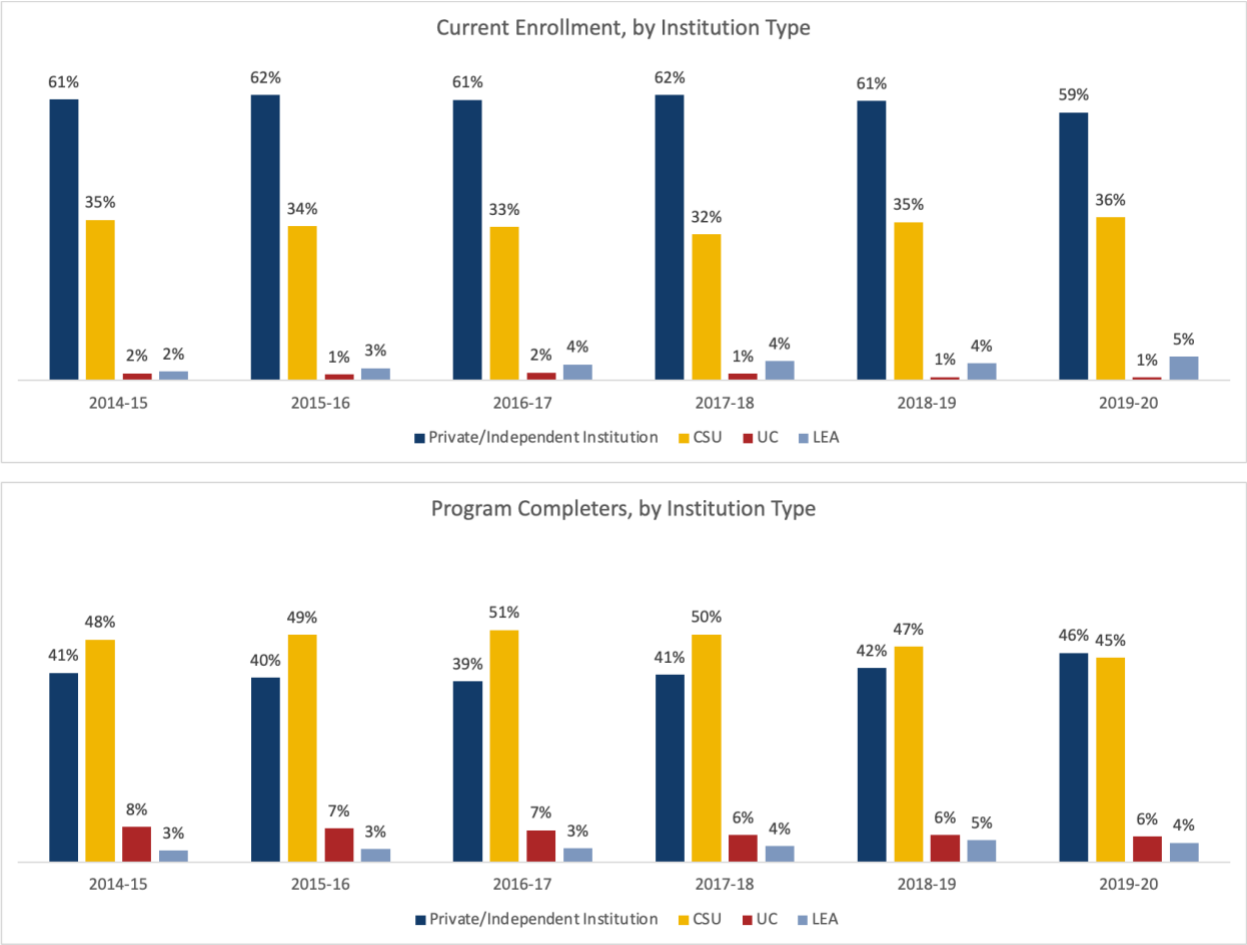
> There [are] some tensions between justice values, equity access, and capitalist values associated with financial survival of institutions in the not-for-profit sector. [It's] not talked about as much, but that is constantly present [...] this is a sector that needs

tuition revenue to survive. And that frames a whole lot of who ends up in programs. (2021)

In an effort to meet financial goals, these programs have a practice of enrolling higher numbers of students than the programs cannot adequately support. According to data from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), private TEPs have a higher proportion of the state's currently enrolled students compared to the state's program completers[6] (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2021e). See **Figure 4**. This pattern has stayed consistent over the past six years.

[6] A program completer is a TEP student "who is recommended for the credential or authorization for which they seek or are eligible for the credential" (California Commission on Teacher Credentials, 2022).

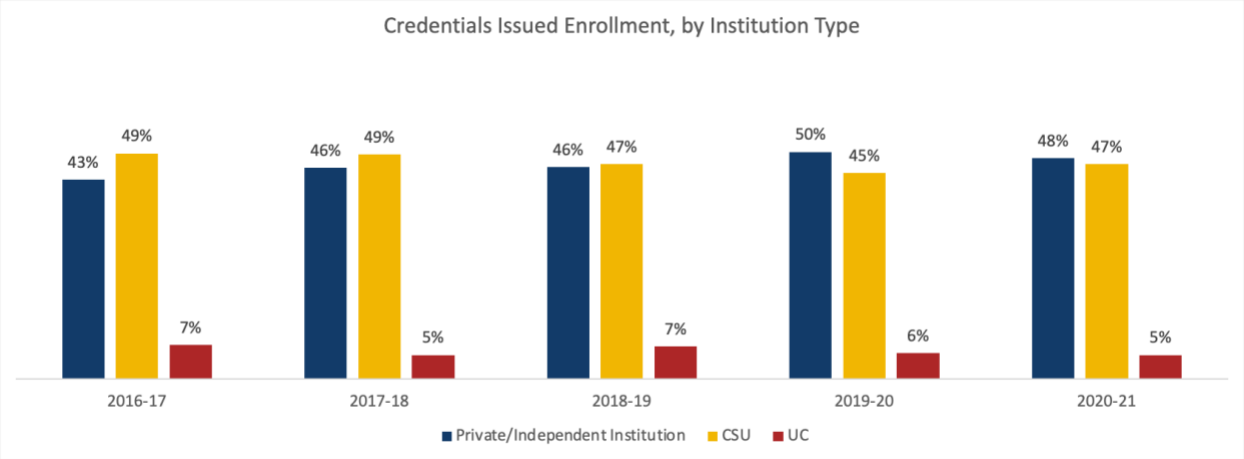
**Figure 4: Current Enrollment and Program Completers, by Institution Type**




**Source:** California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, *CTC State Highlights:* Figure 11: Total Enrollment and Subset of Program Completers by Segment

Additionally, private institutions consistently issued less than half of the state's new teaching credentials over the past six years, even though they enrolled ***over*** half of the state's TEP students (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2021c). **See Figure 5**. The practice of "over enrolling" teachers creates significant revenue for private and independent universities and actually rewards their market-based sensibilities.

**Figure 5: Credentials Issued, by Institution Type**




**Source**: California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, Teacher Supply in California 2020-21 (Table 4b)

Although more research and data are needed to fully understand the impact of these statistics, Dr. Wall suggests that this practice of over-enrolling students is to turn a profit for the institution: "There's some data that non-profit institutions have a higher percentage of enrolled teacher candidates than completed teacher candidates [...] Which tells you something about the fact that we enroll some students that don't finish, or that have a longer time to [get a] degree." He adds that there are "tuition revenue needs at these institutions that help frame and define a lot of the values that actually are in practice" (2021).

With a focus on recruiting more diverse, nontraditional students, the enrollment of people of Color and Indigenous people in private TEPs has increased by almost 17% over a six-year period (~5,500 current students of Color in 2014-15 to ~ 6,400 current students of Color in 2020-21) (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2022). As historically White institutions increase the recruitment of racially diverse students, issues of equitable and culturally responsive financial support also arise. Unfortunately, programs' efforts to increase revenue while simultaneously increasing the diversity of the program can exploit pre-service TOCIT in the process:

> I was asked to increase the revenue, and what I saw happening is that we did that and increased the diversity over six years, [...] I was worried we're increasing revenue on

> the backs of students of Color [...] I was really concerned about it, because we did not have the structural supports in place. (Andrew Wall, 2021)

Without intentionally creating structures that provide historically marginalized students with equitable, accessible, and culturally-relevant support, these teacher preparation programs teeter on the verge of predatory inclusion.

*Poor Working Conditions*

In California, where school funding is supported by property taxes, communities of Color and Indigenous communities have historically been concentrated into schools with unequal and inequitable access to resources. Such schools tend to be understaffed and have higher teacher turnover rates- and larger student-to-teacher ratios (Carver-Thomas, Hyler, & Darling-Hammond, 2022). TOCIT are more likely to be placed or recruited to high-needs schools or schools with fewer resources, and as such are expected to take on additional roles and responsibilities to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for students.

Though more cost effective for school districts, higher class sizes make it harder for teachers to differentiate the curriculum, provide individualized support, and adequately address the needs of all their students. In our survey, hundreds of TOCIT stated that class sizes and the understaffing of key support positions like counselors, aides, and psychologists made their job much more difficult and are the top reasons why they consider leaving the profession. In fact, after raising salaries, teachers voted on reducing class sizes as the second-most important step to retaining teachers (Hart Research Associates, 2022). Research also suggests that a reduction in class sizes lowers teacher attrition (Isenberg, 2010). For TOCIT in these schools, the "little to no resources for students in low socioeconomic areas" and the lack of "support to teachers who work in more difficult schools" is enough to push them out of the profession (In-Service Latine Teachers, 2022).

Three out of four teachers of Color teach in the quarter of schools (25%) serving the most students of Color, which are often underfunded and under-resourced (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). On top of their low salaries, many teachers expressed their frustration with having to provide adequate school supplies to do their job. "Many of us spend a great deal of our own money to buy supplies/rewards for the classroom," says one teacher, "and under the current tax law, [teachers] are unable to deduct those expenses" (In-Service AAPI Teacher, 2022). In many ways the industry has "normalized that teachers spend their funds to create beautiful classroom environments" (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022), further heightening the financial stress that teachers, and particularly TOCIT, face. Providing basic school supplies may seem minor but goes a long way in establishing supportive and positive working conditions for teachers.

*Unwaged Labor*

The aforementioned practice of unpaid student teaching perfectly illustrates how the profession normalizes — and in fact requires — teachers to complete work without compensation. All teachers, White and TOCIT alike, fall subject to working after hours to grade work, communicate with parents and families, provide additional support, and plan their lessons for the next day. Teachers frequently commented on the lack of work-life balance they felt in their careers. When discussing the most challenging and frustrating things about the job, one former teacher explained:

> Once I became a wife and mother, I found that my time was very limited and teaching still required a lot of time and effort [...] to do my job I had to take it home and I had to work on all the things for the next day. [It was] nonstop constantly having to do work after hours, on the weekend, during holiday break. (Former Black Teacher, 2022)

In our survey, 47% of teachers indicated that they were unsatisfied with their work-life balance, while 27% indicated that the "workload" was the thing they liked least about their job (Hart

Research Associates, 2022). "I'm overwhelmed by the sheer amount of work," exclaims an In-Service Latine Teacher: "I am a teacher, but am expected to also be a counselor, nurse, attendance clerk, social/justice confidante, custodian, accountant, decorator, computer tech, etc., all while seeing little to no compensation for the added workload" (2022).

Since the pandemic, student needs have been going up, yet availability of teachers and other human resources are going down. Understaffing is a huge issue at schools across the state, and TOCIT are consistently being asked to cover these positions. The practice of TOCIT being tasked with additional work without additional pay due to their marginalized identity or cultural background is well documented (Dixon et al., 2019; Joseph & Hirshfield, 2011; Kohli, 2018; Souto-Manning, 2022). A teacher in our survey described being "forced" to take on "additional students with behavior problems" because it was assumed "[they] could handle them" (In-Service Black Teacher, 2022). While some may highlight this as celebrating one's strengths, the sentiment from many TOCIT is that they are being given extra work without adequate compensation. Teachers even reported administrators going to the extreme of reclassifying support staffs' job descriptions to include additional responsibilities and duties without extra pay: "regular classroom aides [were] given a new title so they can provide services such as 'one on one'without providing additional/adjusting [their] pay rate" (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022). Considering that over 65% of support staff on California K-12 campuses are people of Color and Indigenous people (California Department of Education, 2023), witnessing practices like this leaves many TOCIT feeling disrespected, undervalued, and discriminated against.

In her paper, *Behind School Doors: The Impact of Hostile Racial Climates on Urban Teachers of Color*, Dr. Rita Kohli (2018) explains:

> Teachers of Color, as typically the only or one of few racial minority teachers, often assume positions of great responsibility and constant advocacy, a burden that White

> teachers do not have to carry. This duty, though, is not just a professional burden. It also can take the form of a personal and ethical responsibility that is overwhelming to teachers of Color at times. (p.322)

However labeled — "cultural taxation" (Joseph & Hirshfield, 2011), "emotional labor" (Ye & Chen, 2015), or "the invisible tax" (Givens, 2016) — this practice saddles TOCIT with additional uncompensated work that is emotionally draining, mentally demanding, and physically time consuming.

With this in mind, it is not surprising that TOCIT report higher levels of burnout (Doan et al., 2023) and are leaving the teaching profession at a higher rate than their White counterparts (Dixon et al., 2019). Touching on these challenges, one survey respondent shared: "We need more counselors and parent liaisons and support for students with emotional/mental health needs [...] Teachers are leaving due to the lack of support and the demands that our job now entails" (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022). In their efforts to promote culturally responsive services and environments, schools and school districts are, consciously and unconsciously, complicit in exploiting the unwaged labor of TOCIT. Overall, the cumulative effects of predatory inclusion and the exploitation of under-resourced and unwaged labor creates a racialized, capitalistic state in the K-12 teaching profession that has dire implications for racial equity for Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers.

*Considerations for Structural Racism*

Structural racism in education is a complex and insidious problem that perpetuates racial inequity for pre-service and in-service TOCIT throughout the pipeline. The fact that structural racism is fostered through the use of institutional norms and well-known practices makes it harder for many to acknowledge, let alone identify, the problem. Therefore, a first step in addressing the

issue is recognizing the abusive and exploitative nature of institutional norms that dismiss, devalue, degrade, or exploit the contributions of TOCIT.

One way to combat exploitative practices is to fairly compensate TOCIT for their labor. This includes paying for their student teaching, and providing stipends for their supplemental and support work, such as translation services, discipline duties, and mental health guidance for students. Just as we pay teachers who take on additional supervisory roles like coaching, yearbook, or Associated Student Body (ASB) advisor, teachers who are asked to commit additional time, effort, and talent to tasks outside of their teaching responsibilities should be compensated for that labor. Adequate compensation can take many forms (See *Considerations for Financial Burden*).

Teacher preparation programs should implement a reasonable enrollment cap to ensure institutions have the capacity to provide students with appropriate supports, financial or otherwise. In particular, programs that reside within historically White institutions should have their own program-level office of support for historically under-represented students that is overseen by administrators of Color and Indigenous heritage. Having a program-level office of student support could help foster community, support students' transition into the program, assist in their matriculation through the program, and mitigate issues before students fall behind or fail to graduate.

For K-12, in recent years, the state of California has done a lot to provide additional funding for under-resourced schools. In 2013, in an effort to better address the needs of underserved youth, California implemented the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), which gave school districts and local communities more voice and autonomy on how school funds are spent. In 2022-23, the LCFF funding increased by nearly 13% to account for a cost-of-living adjustment, and to address ongoing staff shortages and fiscal pressures as schools try to acclimate after Covid-19. This increase has ranked California 23rd for per pupil spending (approximately $16,290) (Hanson, 2023). Though the

state's per pupil spending has almost doubled in the last decade, it's important to note that California is poised to become the fourth-largest economy in the world (Winkler, 2022) and could afford a bigger investment in its public education system. In 2023, in response to "criticism that districts have not paid enough attention and money to schools that high-needs students attend," Governor Gavin Newsom proposed an "equity multiplier" that would supply an additional $300 million in permanent funding for approximately 800 of the highest-poverty schools in the state (Fensterwald, 2023). Though yet to be seen, this historic funding could also help improve the working conditions of TOCIT across the state.

**Culture & Climate**

The challenges of redesigning both TEP and workplace environments to adequately include and support historically racially marginalized individuals should not be underestimated. In this paper, culture and climate refer to the ideologies, customs, norms, policies, and practices that govern how people and systems operate and interact with each other. These encompass the overarching attitudes and perspectives that institutions demonstrate concerning the inclusion or exclusion of people of Color and Indigenous people. Our findings suggest that through systemic and institutional norms, pre-service and in-service TOCIT experience pervasive microaggressions, discrimination, and dehumanizing situations within largely race-evasive environments.

*Race-Evasiveness*

Kohli and colleagues (2022) state that, in order to foster a healthy racial climate, TEPs must engage in frequent and meaningful intergroup interactions that promote anti-racist, cross-racial coalition building. However, our interviews with pre-service teachers suggest that cross-racial conversations about race are not consistently occurring and that classroom interactions are actually race-evasive in nature. Race-evasiveness is the neglect and/or silencing of the realities of race and racism and reinforces an idea that race is insignificant (Yosso, 2005; Bonilla-Silva, 2009). The

practice of silencing student discussion about race in educational spaces is not new. Amos (2010) found that teacher candidates of Color and Indigenous candidates are routinely ignored and silenced by their White peers in class, particularly when discussing issues related to race and ethnicity. Castagno (2008) highlights how K-12 teachers have historically silenced students' conversations around race and how that silencing legitimizes Whiteness in K-12 schools: "when teachers silence students' race talk and students learn to avoid such talk in the future, the likelihood of systemic change is greatly reduced" (p.326).

Several pre-service teachers, particularly those from our Black listening sessions, reported a culture of race-evasiveness in their programs, stating: "race conversations aren't really conversations or discussions that we have in the first place" (Pre-Service Black Teacher, 2022). This avoidance of talking about race can lead to very real consequences for pre-service TOCIT, impacting the way they can relate to the environment or authentically show up. Prior research has shown that failure to acknowledge and meaningfully engage with teacher candidates' racial identities negatively affects their sense of belonging and retention (Hurtado & Alvarado, 2015). "I think there's a part of me that's itching for maybe a conversation," says another Black student, "or some sort of acknowledgement that I'm Black" (2022).

Even when programs have included discussions about race and allyship, the AAPI students we interviewed state that those conversations rarely included their experiences.

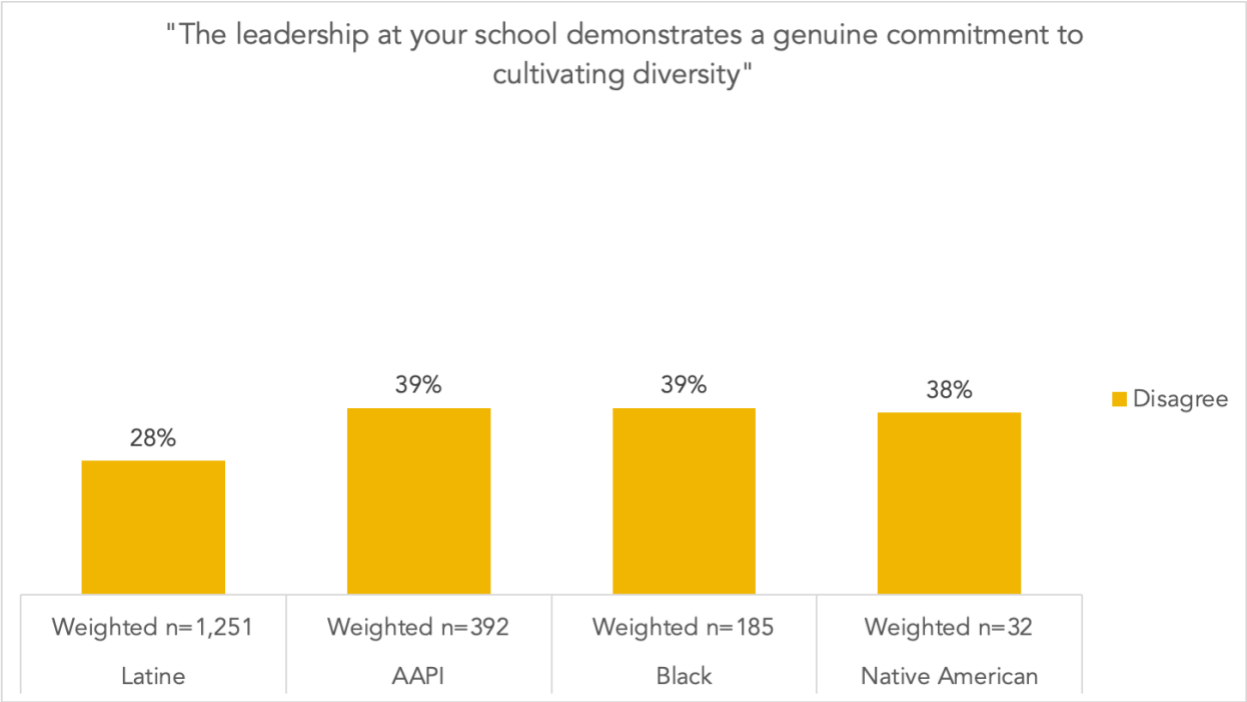
> "A lot of our conversations about ally-ship are [...] not centered around Asian voices. Not that they have to be centered around it, but it's almost like entirely disregarded, and that makes sort of the whole larger question of: How do I be an ally for my Black and Latino students when I don't know who is going to be an ally for me?" (Pre-Service AAPI Teacher, 2021)

The exclusion of AAPI perspectives in conversations about race is fairly common as the "model minority" myth fosters a false narrative that AAPI students are not impacted by racism and race related challenges.

Discussing the impact race and racism have on the lived experiences of teacher candidates of Color and Indigenous candidates can create more open, honest, and welcoming environments for all. Dr. Sloan notes, "A lot of our candidates over the past years have helped our faculty by telling their stories" (2021). While this is promising, for the AAPI candidates we interviewed, commenting and voicing unsolicited opinions can be seen as inappropriate and disrespectful as it goes "against a lot of our cultural expectations to not take up space" (Pre-Service AAPI Teacher, 2021). The onus of creating a safe and inclusive environment falls on faculty to actively facilitate such conversations.

As reflected in higher education settings, K-12 sites also foster race-evasive environments. Hundreds of in-service TOCIT expressed feeling "silenced," "ignored," and "dismissed" by their colleagues, administration, and leadership when trying to discuss issues around race and racism. Many revealed that the current conversations around diversity, equity, and inclusion are largely performative and did not yield tangible policy or action. "Sometimes during our PDs [professional developments] about this topic and other topics that are about the human condition, our principal doesn't give time for us to engage in discussion. It often seems like he is checking it off a list just to say he did it but [does] not really seem interested in staff experiences or opinions" (In-Service Black Teacher, 2022). In fact, our survey reveals that a notable portion of TOCIT do not believe that the leadership at their school demonstrates a genuine commitment to cultivating diversity. See **Figure 6**.

**Figure 6: Leadership Commitment to Cultivating Diversity**




Teachers also shared that leadership often did not support their efforts to utilize anti-racist practices and curriculum: "Personally, I have endured a formal parent complaint [for] teaching about racism and BLM [Black Lives Matter Movement]. Human resources and district officials DID NOT stand up for me and simply tried to deny to the parent that there was evidence that I taught those things in the classroom" (In-Service AAPI Teacher, 2022). Until explicit race-centered discussions about diversity, equity, and inclusion are embedded into the school and workplace, pre-service and in-service TOCIT will continue to feel left out of the conversation, the environment, and the K-12 profession.

*Microaggressions & Cultural Norms*

Microaggressions are verbal and nonverbal assaults regarding one's race and ethnicity. These assaults are layered and carried out over time through subtle, automatic and often subconscious forms (Solórzano & Huber, 2020). In our study, microaggressions largely came in the form of stereotyping and offensive cultural norms that excluded, demeaned, and "othered" both pre-service

and in-service TOCIT. Cast under limiting tropes like "model minority" and "angry black woman," TOCIT throughout the pipeline are often forced to navigate inconsiderate and uncomfortable situations and environments.

One pre-service teacher recounts being in "situations where it was automatically assumed that [they were] smarter or that [they] would contribute more just because [they were] Asian" (Pre-Service AAPI Teacher, 2021). Others have reported feeling as though they have to "walk a tightrope" so they don't "come off as aggressive" (Pre-Service Black Teachers, 2021). In-service TOCIT, escribe similar experiences, such as: consistently being confused with another colleague of the same race, having their ideas being credited to their White coworkers, having coworkers refuse to greet them or shake their hands, and being told that they are "too sensitive" about race-related issues. In our survey, 60% of Black Teachers, 41% of Indigenous Teachers, and 37% of AAPI Teachers report feeling uncomfortable expressing themselves as a person of Color or Indigenous person at their school site (Hart Research Associates, 2022).

For in-service teachers, cultural norms at the school site also play an important role in creating an inclusive environment. School holidays, celebrations, and iconography are ways school sites demonstrate their values, commitments, and perspectives. However, for many TOCIT these events and images are at best tone-deaf and at worst blatantly offensive: "No one understands the American Indian experience, so they continue to portray us in stereotypical ways and celebrate Columbus Day" (In-Service Indigenous Teacher, 2022). TOCIT in our survey were up-front about their frustrations at having to work at schools with offensive namesakes and stereotypical mascots:

> "When I spoke up about my concerns about our school having a Native American mascot and a KKK member's name on a building and said that it was triggering for me as a POC, my Latina principal told me I was 'hypersensitive' about issues of race." (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022)

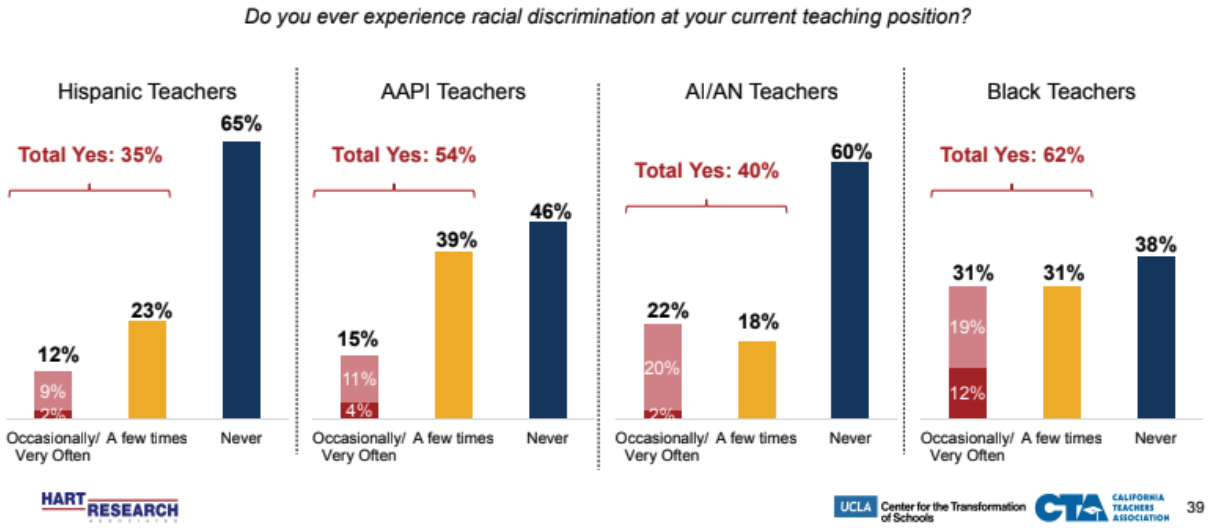
From stories of principals sending memes of a donkey with a sombrero in "celebration" of Cinco de Mayo, to having colleagues protest Día de los Muertos displays, to Indigenous teachers being asked to teach whitewashed stories of Thanksgiving, TOCIT across California public schools are facing unwelcoming and often contentious working conditions.

For many TOCIT, the daily onslaught of microaggressions combined with having to "explain why a thing is offensive" is exhausting (In-Service Black Teacher, 2022). There is a lack of "understating from the dominant White culture" (In-Service APPI Teacher, 2022) that again assigns additional labor onto TOCIT. As one Indigenous teacher explained, "It takes too much work, effort, and energy to try to explain things [...] it is hard because Natives are invisibilized and you have to educate most people — that is A LOT of work and energy" (In-Service Indigenous Teacher, 2022). This exhaustion cannot be discounted when considering increased turnover rates for TOCIT when compared to their White counterparts.

*Discrimination & Dehumanization*

Beyond microaggressions and offensive cultural norms, in-service TOCIT also experience explicit acts of racial discrimination and dehumanization. In our survey, 42% of all TOCIT reported experiencing racial discrimination at their school site. (Hart Research Associates, 2022). **See Figure 7.**

**Figure 7: Frequency of TOCIT Experiencing Discrimination**




Accounts of these acts range from the use of derogatory words by staff and students to unjust practices and policies implemented by administration. One teacher shared that two students received only a "slap on the wrist" after using "derogatory anti-Asian racial slurs" toward them (In-Service Asian Teacher, 2022).

In order for discrimination and racial exploitation in education to operate, the dehumanization of Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers has to occur. The connection between dehumanization and racial exploitation is that both rely on the idea that certain groups of people are less than human. The act of depriving a person or group of positive human qualities is what allows for the exploitation of these groups without moral compunction. The unfair and discriminatory treatment of people of Color and Indigenous people lie at the center of practices like predatory inclusion. When asked to recount times and situations at their job that made them uncomfortable expressing themselves as a person of Color or Indigenous person, many TOCIT provided detailed accounts of unjust treatment. The following quotes are highlighted to uplift the voices of TOCIT and to acknowledge the real and valid concerns they present *in their own words*:

- Several teachers have touched my hair without my permission or asked me at staff meetings if my hair was real. I am constantly asked if I went to college or if I know my dad. White union leaders have stated that they think White people should be allowed to use the N word. I went to the union about these issues and a white union leader told me that racism doesn't exist. (In-Service Black Teacher, 2022)
- I have been told to "speak English, we are in America" by staff. When our school had a bilingual track a lot of staff did not like that we were teaching in Spanish. The school does not do anything that promotes cultural diversity. (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022)
- I have had people joke about finding their spirit animals in a derogatory way in staff meetings, when that is something important to me and I wear my totem regularly. I've been asked what my blood quantum is, if I was raised on a reservation, what my tribal affiliation is, and there's a general stereotyping and bias that exists that I am dirty. The custodians have refused to sweep by my desk. (In-Service Indigenous Teacher, 2022)
- I was told that racist statements against Asians are because of ignorance, therefore are not racist. So my voice was silenced and cast aside. (In-Service AAPI Teacher, 2022)
- When White teachers speak about immigration issues, or assume illegal immigrants steal jobs and collect benefits (welfare and unemployment) or don't have to pay taxes, don't want to learn English, it's frustrating having to educate them on these issues. (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022)
- The principal made a comment that we couldn't have too many Black teachers in one building. We are kept under surveillance and questioned if we gather. Only one Black teacher has been hired in the last 10 years at my site. I feel gaslit at times. The principal [...] would call the police on children of color regularly. (In-Service Black Teacher, 2022)

- The perpetual myth of the "model minority" continues to be used as a prop that systemic issues don't exist. (In-Service AAPI Teacher, 2022)
- Some teachers make fun of my traditional clothing which represents my identity and culture. Some teachers talk negatively about Latin[e] students and their families. (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022)
- The worst time is in November. First, it usually starts with teachers asking me for lessons to teach about a tribe I am not from. It's incredibly frustrating that practically no one knows the truth about US history or refuses to learn. Too many choose to continue dressing their students in feathers while playing pilgrims and Indians eating together in peace. It's so offensive and hurtful to have to deal with that every year. I was bullied horribly in school because I lived on an Indian reservation. Now, I am dealing with microaggressions and prejudice by adult members who refuse to recognize their bias. (In-Service Indigenous Teacher, 2022)

Unaddressed language biases along with cultural incompetence have exposed TOCIT to dehumanizing work environments where their actions are monitored, their home language is policed, their accents mocked, and their cultural traditions questioned. Discrimination and dehumanization is often the first step in creating conditions where racial exploitation can exist. It can show up in the form of stereotyping, labeling, bullying, silencing, and ignoring. TOCIT across the state encounter and experience daily discriminatory and dehumanizing practices and situations, which poses significant challenges to their ability to sustain and progress in the profession.

*Considerations for Culture & Climate*

Whether in TEPs or in K-12 schools, changing the culture and climate of a race-evasive, microaggressive, discriminatory environment is no simple task. It is manifestly the case that many generations of human biases, rooted in colonial, settler, and White supremacy mindsets, have led to

countless historical tragedies (i.e., colonization, war, slavery, or the Holocaust). There are no easy solutions to these issues; but actively educating all children, teachers, and education supervisors with culturally responsible content and anti-racist practices could prove a step in the right direction.

To combat race-evasive environments, it is important for people of Color and Indigenous people to have access to safe spaces. Providing opportunities for mentorship in navigating White-centered institutions has demonstrated positive outcomes (Kimmel et al, 2021; Sinanan, 2016). There are also ample support systems and affinity groups that are active in person and online, like the National Equity Project. Equity-team or affinity groups should not be volunteer based, and all teachers and supervisors should be required to participate. Attendance can be promoted and incentivized through a number of options, including fulfilling service/leadership requirements or loan forgiveness.

If California has a genuine interest in diversity, equity, and inclusion training for TEP and K-12 staff, then professional development for schools should be consistent, embedded, and discussed as an important aspect of teaching and learning. An annual state-mandated cultural responsiveness training for all public school teachers, including supervisors, superintendents, and regional representatives, should be designed and mandated by the state. Sexual Assault Prevention training is already being conducted in most workplaces (it is mandated every year in most institutions of higher education).

Teachers should also have a better and more confidential and trusted way of reporting acts of discrimination or prejudice. Districts should maintain a reliable database of incidents and complaints, similar to what the Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Office has for the UC system. Such databases should be monitored regularly for repeat offenders and to track what actions have been taken to address the issues. Too often in our survey, in-service TOCIT reported that their grievances were ignored or went unaddressed. Finally, it is crucial for TOCIT to have a

voice and a platform where their ideas can be acknowledged and acted upon. Schools and programs need to ensure TOCIT are given opportunities to take up leadership roles.

**Curriculum & Pedagogy**

Both curriculum and pedagogy are an essential part of teaching and learning, and, as such, have a significant impact on how teachers experience and internalize the profession. Curriculum is the content or material that is taught in classrooms, while pedagogy refers to the methods and practices used to teach content. A lack of representation within TEP and K-12 curriculums, along with having to contend with outside political pressure and limited support for their pedagogical style, have left TOCIT struggling to identify with their courses and their work.

*Exclusionary Curriculum*

Throughout our data collection, pre-service and in-service teachers as well as TEP administrators frequently raised the issue of exclusionary curriculum. The exclusion of people of Color and Indigenous people from the learning environment via the curriculum negatively impacts the ways TOCIT can identify and relate to the work, as one teacher wrote: "How can I express myself as an AAPI [teacher] when none of the curriculum celebrates or recognizes who I am? NONE" (In-Service AAPI Teacher, 2022). While efforts have been made in recent years to diversify the K-12 curriculum, teachers pointed out that some identities were still being left out: "History books still do not reflect enough information about contemporary Indigenous and the relationship to American History" (In-Service Indigenous Teacher, 2022). In addition to concerns over the lack of diverse scholars, characters, and figureheads presented in the classroom, teachers also noted that their curriculum failed to 1) include adequate content for their growing population of bilingual learners, and 2) authentically acknowledge non-European cultural events that TOCIT as well as pre-service teachers deem significant (see *Microaggressions & Cultural Norms*). For many, the California

curriculum is "centered around colonization" and excludes historically marginalized groups from the learning environment (In-Service Indigenous Teacher, 2022).

The pre-service TOCIT in our focus groups also identified the curriculum in their TEP as Eurocentric: "I wish that we had talked about how to incorporate more literature from people of Color ... a lot of this is set up by White males, like what we're teaching, what we're learning, the history that we're learning" (Pre-Service Multiracial Teacher, 2021). The lack of diverse curriculum has even raised concerns by White teacher candidates, as Dr. Black shared:

> "I can tell you I remember the day, it was a young lady who happen[ed] to be a blonde-haired, blue eyed, White young lady. And she came into my office [...] and she said [she] expected that there would be more social justice in these courses. And we talked for a long time and I realized that she's right. We live in California, 70% of our students here are students of Color. Why are we training teachers to teach White students in 1950?" (2021)

This issue was particularly relevant to the AAPI pre-service teachers we interviewed, all of whom discussed the lack of representation in their classes, even when diversity, equity, and inclusion was the main topic:

> "A lot of the literature and research in education right now, a lot of the content that you read in your classes, it's not centered around you. But I've read so many articles for class about how we create equitable education for Black students, for Latino students, and a lot about how teachers deal with their White guilt ... but it's also ... there isn't much research out there that will tell you like: Oh, you're an Asian teacher working in a predominantly Black and Latino neighborhood, here's some things that maybe you should keep in mind." (Pre-Service AAPI Teacher, 2021)

The U.S. has a long history of erasing, oversimplifying, and minimizing Asian Americans' experiences (Coloma et al., 2021). Since the pandemic, Asian Americans have dealt with an increase in anti-Asian hate crimes and discrimination, with California alone reporting over 4,000 cases between March 2020 and March 2022 (Stop AAPI Hate, 2022). Given that many TEP and K-12 classrooms do not highlight the contributions nor adequately address the challenges faced by AAPI teachers, "it might be helpful to incorporate [in the curriculum] what's been going on with Asian Americans" (Pre-Service AAPI Teacher, 2021).

*Limiting Pedagogical Autonomy*

Pedagogy – the way teachers deliver content and curriculum – is often considered more of an art than a science. Good pedagogical practice is interpersonal and changes, based on the needs of the students and the learning goals of the lesson. These changes in practice rely heavily on teachers having the latitude to make informed, contextualized decisions, based on their expertise in not only the content area, but also their knowledge of their students. In our research, participants report that their pedagogical autonomy is being restricted in ways that limit how they show up in the profession and their ability to provide culturally responsive teaching for their students.

Though pre-service teachers found it important, many felt that their classes shied away from diverse pedagogies and as such missed opportunities to cover culturally sustaining practices. Teacher candidates particularly expressed a desire for more anti-racist practices, stating, "I wish it would be a topic that is being discussed in our classes and things, but it's not" (Pre-Service Black Teacher, 2021). For some, though options were available, "it wasn't embedded in the program, it was optional" and oftentimes conflicted with their class or life schedule (Pre-Service Multiracial Teacher, 2021).

Reflecting on the curriculum of the TEP program he now directs, Dr. Black echoed similar sentiments: "I also recognize that until we decided to go down this equity road in [our institution],

many of the [teacher] examples we gave were rooted in Whiteness" (2021). After decades of centering the philosophies and pedagogies of people like Horace Mann, John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, and Jerome Bruner, TEPs, without concerted effort, systematically foster culturally White environments. As one teacher candidate pointed out, "Sometimes it's difficult because I think some of the things that are standard pedagogies are written by White males" (Pre-Service Multiracial Teacher, 2021).

The lack of racially diverse and culturally responsive pedagogy in TEPs can have lasting impacts on how teachers engage with their students, their peers, and the profession. As teacher candidates enter their workplaces, those who use culturally relevant practices may be discriminated against and isolated by colleagues who were not exposed to such practices, as this teacher explains:

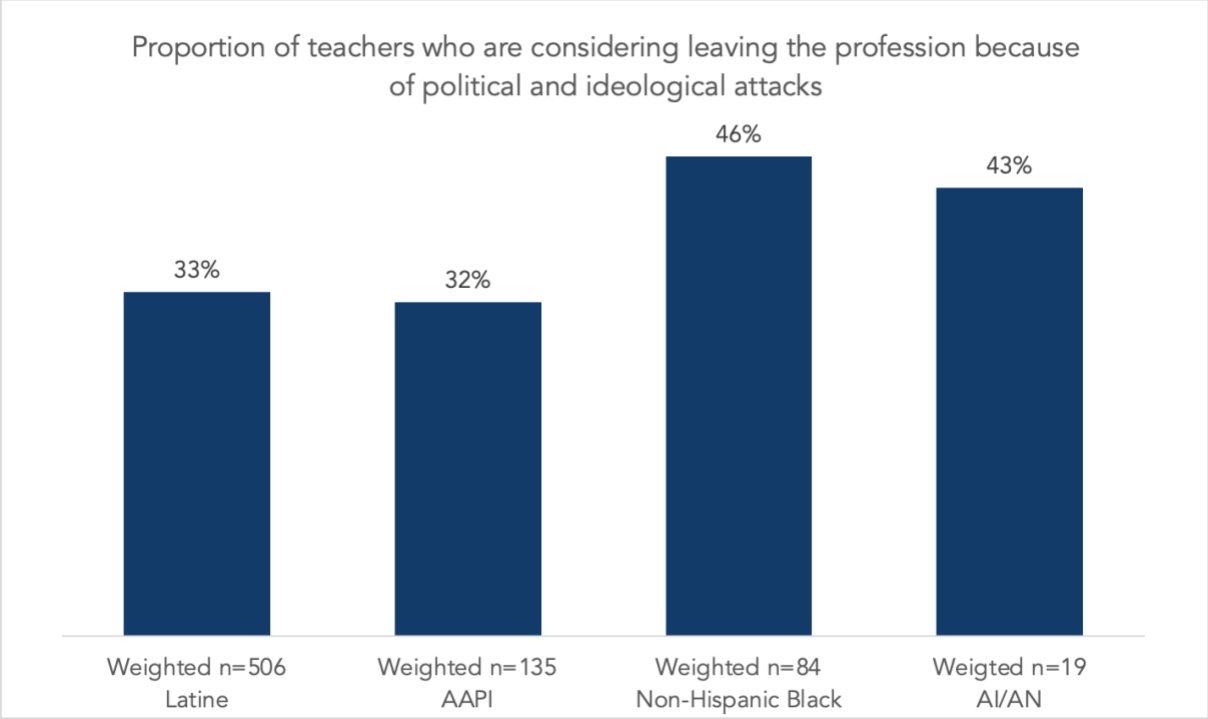
> "I am constantly bullied by the other teachers who try to force me to use their preferred interaction style of authoritarian[ism] with the students when I know that culturally that interaction style is not cohesive to supporting certain student demographics […] they say that I am trying to make them 'look bad' because I use alternative culturally relevant practices" (In-Service Black Teacher, 2022).

TOCIT consistently expressed concern about the limits being placed on their pedagogical autonomy, describing it as "horrible to not be allowed to teach in a style that fits [their] personalities" and feeling "forced to follow a script" (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022). Not surprisingly, for many TOCIT these restrictions are discouraging and reason enough to consider leaving the profession, "I mostly want to leave because of the unrealistic expectations and the lack of freedom to teach in ways that we know can work" (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022).

*Political Influence*

Political influence on curriculum and pedagogy can have a significant impact on racial equity for TOCIT. In our survey, teachers ranked "political and ideological attacks" as one of the top reasons they would consider leaving the teaching profession. **See Figure 8**.

**Figure 8: Teachers Considering Leaving - Political Attacks**




Though political influence is felt by all teachers, TOCIT, in particular, feel personally targeted and silenced by the recent attempts to censor conversation on race, equity, and social justice. In tandem with the broader national conservative movement seeking to curtail the inclusion of discussions on race and racism within educational curricula, certain school districts located in conservative-leaning regions of California have implemented several measures restricting instruction about race (Lambert, 2023b). Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers voiced concern that their perspectives and experiences are excluded from the curriculum and that their ability to engage students in critical pedagogy is restricted. As this in-service teacher accounts, "Due to the new laws concerning 'race theory' I am careful about what I say. There have been historical events and issues

that impact the lives of African Americans today. I feel that I have been told to shut up about my experience as a woman of color" (In-Service Black Teacher, 2022). In this politically and racially charged environment, many TOCIT reported feeling obligated to teach material that does not adequately include, represent, support, or relate to their diverse student body, with one teacher reporting that the "political climate [made] teaching US History feel risky" (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022). Even when trying to advocate on students' behalf, TOCIT felt dismissed, with one teacher commenting, "My ELA colleagues would not consider my request to adopt novels which represented our student population. The novels we used were all White characters and by White authors" (In-Service AAPI Teacher, 2022).

It's important to note that though many TOCIT cited politics as interfering with their ability to provide an inclusive and diverse curriculum, there were also quite a few teachers who criticized politics as pushing a movement of "wokeism [that] is hurting education" (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022). When asked why they would consider leaving the teaching profession, one teacher cited, "The policy changes that are coming from Sacramento regarding critical race theory, homosexuality, equity. The focus of California' public schools is shifting from teaching the students to be successful members of society to indoctrinating them into extreme liberal ideology" (In-Service Black Teacher, 2022). Despite their conflicting reasons, TOCIT on both sides of the political spectrum agree that their "teaching is [being] hindered by politics" (In-Service AAPI Teacher, 2022) and that politicians who are not educators, regardless of affiliation, should have less influence in the classroom.

*Considerations for Curriculum & Pedagogy*

Fostering racial equity in curriculum and pedagogy requires a deliberate effort to create inclusive spaces where all students and teachers feel safe, respected, and valued. Teacher preparation programs and school sites need to ensure that there are diverse curricular materials that represent and uphold the perspectives, theories, practices, and expertise from people of Color and Indigenous

people and that these pedagogies and curriculum are authentically embedded in classrooms and learning environments.

TEPs and K-12 schools and districts should consider establishing mandatory three-to-five-year curriculum audits to ensure material is culturally relevant, accurate, and inclusive. These audits should involve at least one external reviewer with a background or expertise in diversity, equity, and inclusion; ethnic studies, cultural sustainability, and/or anti-racist practices. The review committee should consist of a diverse group, including teachers, students, parents, and an administrator or representative from the district or university ombudsman office; equity, diversity and inclusion office; and/or office for students' civil rights. The main objectives of the audits should be to create a subject matter curriculum that uplifts diverse perspectives and practices while promoting inclusive learning experiences for neurodiverse students. The curriculum audits should also aim to remove any overly restrictive policies or norms that prevent teachers from implementing culturally responsive pedagogies. Transparency should be a fundamental aspect of the audit process, incorporating multiple feedback loops and prioritizing the voices of historically minoritized and marginalized teachers and students (particularly AAPI and Indigenous peoples). In 2019, Denver Public Schools, in an effort to address teachers' complaints about exclusionary teaching materials, undertook a similar process of redesigning their U.S. History curriculum through a lens of liberatory design (Seggelke, 2022). The school district has also established an African American Equity Task Force designed to set recommendations to help close the opportunity gap for Black students (Denver Public Schools, 2023). In 2021, California took a big step in becoming the first state to require high school students to take an ethnic studies course to graduate. Though a win for cultural representation, more still needs to be done in diversifying the K-12 curriculum.

Addressing the influence of politics in education will always be a contentious effort, especially in times of heightened political polarization. However, K-12 administrators should stand

firm on ideals and policies that best support students in cultivating critical awareness and critical consciousness. Schools should be preparing students for life outside of the classroom and assisting them in understanding, negotiating, and navigating their way through concepts and living systems of power, equity, and justice. That means the education our students receive must have depth and breadth and be truthful to the full spectrum of voices, perspectives, and lived experiences that comprise the world around them.

**High-Stakes, Standardized Testing**

Ingrained in the state's educational accountability framework are two forms of high-stakes, standardized testing that teachers in California typically encounter: the suite of California teacher licensure assessments (including CBEST, CSET, RICA, and edTPA) and the K-12 student assessments encompassed within the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) (including Smarter Balance & CAST). The teacher licensure exams have proven to be formidable barriers for entry, imposing stress, time constraints, and financial burdens, particularly on TOCIT. Likewise, within their teaching careers, academic testing for K-12 students has encroached upon teacher pedagogical and curricular autonomy, contributing to the attrition of TOCIT, especially for those working in under-resourced schools and communities.

*Barriers to Entry*

Historically, prospective teachers have had to complete the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST) and the California Subject Examinations for Teachers **(**CSET), often before getting accepted into the teacher preparation program. Only 66% of prospective teachers pass the CBEST on their first attempt (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2021a). These first-time pass rates vary substantially by race: 79% of White teacher candidates passed the CBEST on their first attempt, whereas 52% of Latine and 46% of African American teacher candidates passed

on their first try[7] (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2021a). Dr. Bautista reflected on the barrier these tests create: "... I've had lots of students who've finished [their AA], go to [four-year institutions] and then they get shifted by the test […] they're just stuck."

To receive their preliminary teaching credential, teachers must also pass a teaching performance assessment (TPA) that is aligned with the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. Like the CBEST, research shows that scores of the edTPA, one of the three CTC-approved teaching performance assessment models, vary across demographic groups, with Black candidates being closer to the "cut score" than White candidates, 42.6 compared to 45.2, respectively (Gitomer et al., 2021). Similarly, pass rates for TOCIT on the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) are also lower when compared to White teacher candidates. Sixty-eight percent of White teacher candidates taking the RICA passed on their first attempt, whereas 51% of Latine and 50% of African American test takers pass the RICA on their first try[8] (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2021a).

In 2021, the National Council for Teacher Quality (NCTQ) reported that for pre-service elementary school teachers, "a quarter of test takers who do not pass the test the first time do not retake it within [a] three-year period. That number climbs significantly for test takers of color, with 34% of those who fail on their first try not making another attempt" (Putman & Walsh, 2021, p.19). While the NCTQ report does not provide data specific to the state, its analysis of teacher licensing exam data from over 20 states offers insights that can reasonably be applied to the experiences of pre-service teachers in California. In fact, quite a few teachers in our survey reflected that these exams nearly drove them to leave their teaching program, with one teacher sharing:

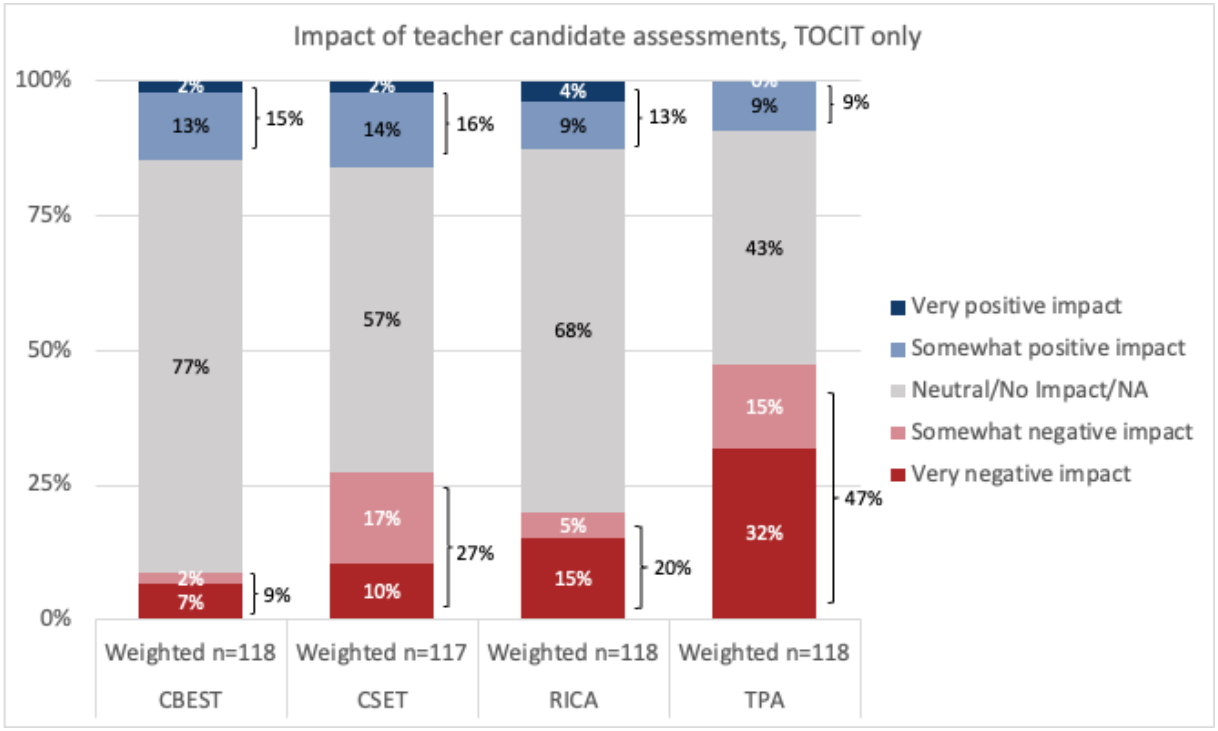
[7] These are first-time pass rates for All Three Sections of CBEST, averaged across 2015–20. See Table 9 in CTC's *Annual Report on Passing Rates of Commission-Approved Examinations from 2015-16 to 2019-20*
[8] These are first-time pass rates for the RICA, averaged across 2015–20. See Table 22 in CTC's *Annual Report on Passing Rates of Commission-Approved Examinations from 2015-16 to 2019-20*

> The edTPA had the worst impact on my preparation because it was an unrealistic measurement of my teaching abilities and it felt like a huge waste of time. I had done very well in my program up until I had to pass that assessment. I almost walked away from my program because of it. (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022)

These national trends highlight the significant challenge that licensure exams pose and how they act as barriers to entry into the teaching profession for people of Color and Indigenous peoples.

While teachers generally acknowledge the positive influence of clinical practice, mentor teacher support, and coursework on their preparation journey, they tend to attribute little positive impact to the standardized licensure assessments. In our survey, we asked new TOCIT (teaching for less than five years) about how the various assessments (CBEST, CSET, RICA, and TPA) impacted their teacher preparation (n=118). For all exams but the CBEST, new TOCIT were more likely to say that these exams had a negative impact than a positive impact. See **Figure 9**. This is especially true of the TPAs, with 47% of new TOCIT saying the TPA negatively impacted their teacher education experience.

**Figure 9: Impact of Teacher Candidate Assessments**




Surveyed TOCIT also provided written comments on their experiences with the licensure exams, highlighting the immense stress, time demands, financial burden, and lack of resources and support associated with these tests. As one teacher recounted, "I hated the CSET and RICA. I am not a good test taker so I had to take each test multiple times. I almost gave up altogether. Not only were [they] difficult, they're also expensive. I truly do not think these tests do much for incoming teachers" (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022). Another teacher expressed similar frustration on the testing requirements, "EdTPA was a waste of time and a financial hardship. It negatively impacted my experience and practice by adding stress and taking my focus away from teaching and complying with my first-year teacher responsibilities" (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022). These assessments are seen as expensive "busy work" that distracts from the essential process of developing into an effective educator. For many, they are considered "a barrier to entry more than anything else" (In-Service Multiracial Teacher, 2022).

*Culturally Biased*

California's licensure exams aim to evaluate teachers' fundamental skills, subject expertise, pedagogical knowledge, and application of this knowledge in real classrooms. However, the growing emphasis on high-stakes standardized testing as a measure of teaching ability also "reduces the significance of that which is not testable, such as racial dispositions, expectations for student learning, or ability to connect academics with culturally diverse students" (Sleeter, 2008, p.1952). Research suggests that teacher licensure and testing processes themselves can harbor cultural and racial biases which pose inequitable obstacles for TOCIT trying to enter the teaching profession (Motamedi et al., 2018). Although "most studies have not found that these exams accurately and consistently predict the effectiveness of teachers" (Buddin & Zamarro, 2008; Carver-Thomas, Hyler, & Darling-Hammond, 2022, p.814), these tests continue to shape what the profession prioritizes and how teachers are educated.

One consequence of prioritizing standardized testing is that they turn teacher education programs "away from defining teacher quality in terms of professional knowledge and toward defining it in terms of testable content knowledge" (Sleeter, 2008, p.1952). Unlike content knowledge, professional knowledge can include understanding cultural identity; examining biases, racism and privilege; addressing system inequities; and developing multicultural curricula and culturally appropriate teaching and assessments (Zeichner, 1996; Sleeter, 2008).

This shift from professional knowledge to content knowledge neglects critical dimensions that are not easily testable but significantly shape the quality and effectiveness of teaching, particularly for Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers. These dimensions include considerations such as "student and family perspective, language, racism, sexism, classism, culturally responsive approaches, and a broadened array of academic achievement"

(Rogers-Ard et al., 2012, p.462). Though studies indicate that "teacher licensure exams have often resulted in far fewer teachers of color earning certification" (Carver-Thomas, Hyler, & Darling-Hammond., 2022) and though "standardized tests have repeatedly been shown to be biased against people of color" (Rogers-Ard et al., 2012), TOCIT are continuously forced to navigate these high-stakes licensure examinations in order to gain access into the teaching profession.

As TOCIT embark on their teaching careers in schools, they continue to grapple with utilizing standardized tests as a measure for student performance. Standardized testing is often perceived as a benchmark of student growth; however, it can prove to be an inaccurate and unreliable measure, especially when applied to culturally and racially diverse students in under-resourced schools. These assessments often overlook racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity present in schools (Rogers-Ard et al., 2012). This concern is highlighted by one teacher who pointedly stated, "The fact [is] that we still give standardized tests even though we know they are racist and classist. Teachers are told to differentiate but then the data collected is from the same tests [that are] not differentiated" (In-Service Latine Teacher, 2022).

As with teacher licensure exams, high-stakes standardized testing in K-12 often results in a "teach to the test" environment, where teachers feel pressured to increase the instructional time dedicated to testable subjects and knowledge, thus reducing the breadth and depth of content in non-tested subjects. This phenomenon is known as *curriculum narrowing*. This process restricts creative and enjoyable teaching and learning activities that both teachers and students can engage in, and limits the development of students' higher-level cognitive thinking skills (Berliner, 2011). For instance, in the context of language education policies driven by high-stakes testing, teachers may find themselves prioritizing basic skills tutorials while diminishing opportunities for problem-solving and other higher-order learning activities within English language classrooms, especially for English

language learners (Acosta et al., 2020). The consequence of curriculum narrowing is primarily felt by TOCIT, students of Color, and Indigenous students as under-resourced schools attempt to boost test scores but often see achievement gaps widen (Berliner, 2011).

TOCIT in our study further raised the question of standardized testing as a reliable measure of student growth and learning. One teacher reflected the frustration many educators felt regarding the limiting impact of these assessments on student learning: "'Testing in schools is worthless. When has it ever provided reliable data or had a positive effect on kids and their learning? Yet no one listens to teachers when we say this. Instead it's just more tests." (In-Service AAPI Teacher, 2022). Another teacher echoed similar concerns, stating, "All that matters is testing and data, but the tools being used are not good measures for students and their growth." (In-Service Indigenous Teacher, 2022). Although initially conceived as a means to ensure accountability for teachers and schools, as exemplified by initiatives like the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB), in practice, pressures from high-stakes accountability policies that lack cultural relevance are likely a factor for high turnover rates among teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers (Carver-Thomas, Hyler, & Darling-Hammond, 2022).

*Discouraging & Disheartening*

Even though diversity is praised, pre-service TOCIT are "expected to excel in Whiteness-centered teacher education programs and in standardized teaching metrics (i.e., teacher certification examinations) to be identified as "a teacher" (Haddix, 2017, p.145). Teachers in our study repeatedly recounted the stress and anxiety these tests had on their preparation experience. Many described feeling overwhelmed by the cost and finding limited support within their programs:

> "For CSETs, you're on your own…What happens if I want to be able to study for it? Well, I have to pay for those workshops, which are not cheap [..] You can be a fabulous teacher and not be able to pass those tests because you don't have the support. You

don't have the finances to be able to pay for all the extra stuff." (Pre-Service Multiracial Teacher, 2021)

Of the aspiring teachers interviewed, standardized licensure exams emerged as a significant factor contributing to a decreased motivation to teach among pre-service TOCIT compared to their White counterparts (Hart Research Associates, 2022).

For in-service TOCIT, the focus on testing and the subsequent narrowing of curriculum has a negative impact on their job outlook and satisfaction. One teacher expressed their frustration, stating, "The political pressure to raise test scores, combined with the utter ignorance about what test scores do and do not tell us, has warped teaching and stripped away the joy" (In-Service Latinx Teacher, 2022). Another teacher echoed this sentiment, saying, "I no longer have the joy or desire to be a part of a broken system that values test scores over children" (In-Service Latinx Teacher, 2022). Curriculum narrowing signifies a noteworthy shift in the pedagogical autonomy of TOCIT, as it increasingly comes under the influence of state and test-making entities.

This transformation raises profound questions about who possesses the authority to define knowledge and determine what should be taught and learned in schools. Under the mandate of state testing, TOCITs are at risk of becoming mere technicians tasked with implementing pre-packaged curriculum materials (Sleeter, 2008). This change may erode their capacity to adapt teaching methods and make context-specific and culturally informed decisions based on their professional expertise and intimate understanding of their diverse student populations. A comment from an educator in our survey illustrates this complex dilemma, stating, "We are testing students and the only people benefiting are the test making companies. I am ready to leave teaching because we are not given the freedom, time, and resources to make lifelong learners and free thinkers" (In-Service Black Teacher, 2022). These narratives emphasize the toll that standardized testing can take on the teaching

profession, as it shifts the focus away from holistic education and stifles the passion and creativity of TOCIT.

Originally conceived as measures of teacher quality and effectiveness, these high-stakes standardized tests have paradoxically erected barriers within the teaching profession, hindering efforts to diversify the educator workforce in California. These narratives underscore the disproportionate impact of high-stakes, standardized testing on the professional well-being of TOCIT and demonstrate how these tests contribute to the burnout of Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers. Additionally, these data serve as important reminders that more holistic and culturally relevant forms of assessment are needed to create more supportive learning environments for teachers and students.

*Considerations for Testing*

California has done a lot in the last few years to address issues raised about assessments for teachers. After California temporarily suspended assessment requirements for teacher credentials during the pandemic, the state passed a new policy (AB 130) in 2021, allowing candidates to waive the CSET and the CBEST and instead prove their proficiency through college coursework. Now students can demonstrate subject-matter competency by: earning a B or better in approved college courses, completing a subject-matter program, or earning a bachelor's degree in the subject of interest (for single subject) or Liberal Studies (for multiple subjects) (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2021b; Lambert, 2023a).

As for the TPA, the public is split. Though more authentic, performance-based assessments like the TPAs better predict teacher readiness and students' academic performance (Carver-Thomas, Hyler, Darling-Hammond, 2022; Peck et al., 2021), several issues reside. Many candidates have concerns over corporate interest in education, the cultural biases of hired assessors, and the amount of stress coupled with the lack of support, leaving the TPA as the lesser of two evils. In 2023,

Governor Newsom signed SB114, exempting certain candidates impacted by Covid-19 from having to complete the TPA. Efforts have also been made to remove the TPA requirements for all candidates in the state (AB 2047), but there has been no success. Given the valid concerns around cultural and racial biases of assessors, the state should require that all scorers receive training that includes diverse examples of teacher/student interaction, lesson study, and pedagogical practice.

Much research has been done on the negative effects of high-stakes standardized tests on K-12 students, but the impact on the teacher workforce is less publicized. For the benefit of students and teachers, the use of standardized tests should be dramatically reduced and supplemented for more authentic and relevant performance assessments (as we have done for teacher assessments). These types of assessments have also been shown to be more equitable, accurate, and engaging for students and teachers (Long, 2023). Performance based assessments allow for more student-centered learning and gives teachers more opportunities to employ the use of culturally responsive teaching practices, which may alleviate their frustrations of having to "teach to the test."

## Conclusion

Pre-service and in-service Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers face a number of barriers to racial equity in the classroom and in their careers. As demonstrated throughout this paper, these intersecting barriers can be both overt and covert, and can have a significant impact on the ability of TOCIT to enter, sustain, and thrive in the teaching profession. These barriers have caused a noticeable lack of diversity across the pipeline, which coincidentally exacerbates the issue. Unsurprisingly, our data showed that TOCIT employed at school sites with lower proportions of racial diversity in the teaching staff reported higher instances of racial discrimination. When asked whether they felt "comfortable" or "uncomfortable" expressing themselves at work, those who worked in less diverse schools reported feeling uncomfortable at higher rates than teachers working

at more diverse schools. This was consistent across each race/ethnicity group (Hart Research Associates, 2022). Data from our pre-service teacher interviews revealed similar findings. Students who felt numerically represented within their TEPs were much less likely to discuss being stereotyped or isolated and spoke about being comfortable and having a sense of belonging. When institutions lack racial diversity, their environments also tend to lack the cultural awareness, policies, practices, ideologies, behaviors, and spaces that make TOCIT feel accepted, respected, included, valued, and supported.

The data shared in this paper is not to further condemn but to present the realities of what is happening every day to Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers and to underscore that these problems are both systemic and structural. If our goal as a state is to enroll and employ a representative and critical mass of TOCIT, then striving for healthy racial climates is non-negotiable. This means taking a firmer stance on requiring that all stakeholders hold some level of critical awareness and cultural competence. It means actively interrogating and removing policies and practices that threaten and erode TOCIT ability to equitably exist in this profession. And it means finally coming to terms with the contributing role we play as individuals in a system that has been and continues to be rooted in Whiteness.

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# Appendix

## Appendix A: Pre-Service Teacher Focus Group Protocol

| **TEP Student Interview Questions** |
|---|
| What would you say is your gender identity?<br>What would you say is your racial or ethnic identity?<br>What strand/track/specialization are you in? |
| What would you say are the core values and principles espoused in this teacher education program?<br>• How do you see these values aligning with your own? |
| What competencies or skills do you expect to have when you leave the teacher education program?<br>• Do you think this program is adequately preparing you to teach in the "real world"? |
| In your opinion, how is diversity, inclusion, and equity reflected in the teacher education program? (i.e., curriculum, staff, pedagogical practice, etc.) |
| Do you think there are diversity issues within this teacher education program?<br>• If so, what do you believe are the underlying factors driving this issue? |
| In what ways does your program address issues of diversity, inclusion, and equity? |
| Given your gender and racial identity, how would you describe your experience in this teacher education program? |
| Are there any challenges you are facing as a student of Color in this program?<br>• If so, what are your most significant challenges?<br>• What support does the program provide to address these challenges? |
| Given the challenges you just mentioned, what changes do you think the teacher education program should make? |

## Appendix B: Aspiring Teachers Interview Protocol

**Students in Educator Preparation Programs Interview Questions**

Introduction and explanation of ground rules. (Explain that we are talking to students in educator preparation programs who are training to become teachers.)

1. First, where you are in your teacher training and education, and what type of teacher are you training to be (i.e., what grade level and what subject will you teach)?

2. Did you have a job or career before enrolling in a teacher preparation program? [IF YES] What did you do before enrolling in a teacher preparation program?

3. Why did you decide to become a teacher? What were the motivating factors that made you decide to train to become a teacher?

4. What do you think will be the most rewarding aspects of being a teacher? What aspects are you most looking forward to when you think about starting your career as a teacher?

5. What do you anticipate will be the most challenging aspects of being a teacher? What are the biggest worries you have when you think about starting your career as a teacher? Would you say you have big concerns or worries about becoming a teacher, or do you feel confident that you will be able to overcome these challenges? Please explain why you feel that way.

6. Has your teacher preparation program made you feel more, or less, motivated and interested in becoming a teacher? What specific aspects of your training program have made you feel that way?

7. What aspects of your teacher preparation program do you feel have been the most helpful? Understanding that you are still in training and have not yet begun teaching, what aspects of your training do you think will be the most useful when you start your career as a teacher?

8. What aspects of your teacher preparation program do you feel have been least helpful? Understanding that you are still in training and have not yet begun teaching, what aspects of training do you think will be the least useful to you when you start your career as a teacher?

9. Do you feel the training you've received has been relevant to what you will experience once you're in the classroom? Do you feel like it is giving you the tools and skills you need to succeed as a teacher?

If yes: In what ways? Why do you feel it has given you the tools you need?

If no: Why not? What do you think is lacking?

(ASK OF BLACK, HISPANIC, AAPI, AND AMERICAN INDIAN/NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENTS)

10. Are there any challenges you are facing as a student of color in this program? If so, what are your most significant challenges? What support does the program provide to address these challenges?

11. Next, I want to ask some questions specifically about any classroom training, including clinical

practice/student teacher position, internship, or teacher residency position. Have you started any of these phases of your training, and if so, which ones?

If yes: Talk me through that experience. How valuable or not valuable has it been? Has it helped you feel more prepared? What aspects have been helpful, and are there things that you think are not that helpful?

12. At this point in your training, have you taken any teacher candidate assessments? If so, which assessments have you taken?

[IF TAKEN ANY ASSESSMENTS:] What impact has/have the assessment(s) you've taken had on how prepared you feel to teach? If you have taken multiple assessments, which has had the biggest impact (either positive or negative) on how prepared you feel to teach? Please elaborate.

13. How much of a factor was the cost of teacher preparation and training in your decision to become a teacher? How satisfied have you been with the cost of tuition for your teacher training program and the cost of assessments? Have either of these costs been a challenge? If so, please explain.

14. Lastly, if you have any other thoughts to share about your experiences with your teacher

training program, or any other hopes or concerns you have about becoming a teacher that we have not already covered, please feel free to share. Thank you.

## Appendix C: TEP System Leads Interview Protocol

| Admin & Faculty Interview Questions |
|---|
| What would you say is your gender identity?<br><br>What would you say is your racial or ethnic identity? |
| How would you describe the core values and principles espoused in the teacher education program? |
| What competencies do you expect students to have when they leave the teacher education program? |
| How is diversity, inclusion, and equity reflected in the teacher education program? (i.e. curriculum, staff, pedagogical practice, etc.) |
| Do you think there are diversity issues within this teacher education program?<br><br>• If so, what do you believe are the underlying factors driving this issue? |
| In what ways does your program address issues of diversity, inclusion, and equity? |
| How would you describe the experiences of Students of Color in the teacher education program? |
| Are there any challenges you think Students of Color may be facing in the teacher education program?<br><br>• If so, in your opinion, what are the most significant challenges?<br>• What supports are available to address these challenges? |
| Given the challenges you just mentioned, what changes would you make to the teacher education program and what would you need to pursue those changes? |
| Admin Only: Would you be willing to share any anonymized data, such as demographics or exit surveys of students who left the program prematurely culture and climate surveys from current or recently graduated students job placement rates by student demographics |

## Appendix D: UCLA-CTA Teachers Online Survey Items

Hart Research Associates, a national public opinion polling firm, is conducting an important survey to hear the views of teachers about their experiences. The survey is being sponsored jointly by the **Center for the Transformation of Schools** and the **California Teachers Association**. This survey is being conducted for research purposes only. You will not be sold anything, and we guarantee that your individual responses will be kept completely confidential. We are extremely grateful for your participation.

FORM **(DO NOT SHOW.)** Which FORM is this?

| | |
|---|---|
| FORM A | 1 |
| FORM B | 2 |

Q2[9] First, are you currently employed as a teacher in a California public school?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes, I am currently employed as a teacher | 1 | |
| No, I am not currently employed as a teacher | 2 | **TERMINATE** |

Q3 In what county do you teach? **[DROP DOWN MENU WITH CA COUNTIES]**

Q4 In what kind of school do you teach?

| | |
|---|---|
| Traditional public school | 1 |
| Public magnet/optional school | 2 |
| Public charter school | 3 |

Q5 Including the current school year, for how many years altogether have you worked as a teacher?

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 year or less | 1 |
| 2 to 3 years | 2 |
| 4 to 5 years | 3 |
| 6 to 10 years | 4 |
| 11 to 15 years | 5 |
| 16 to 20 years | 6 |
| 21 to 25 years | 7 |
| More than 25 years | 8 |

Q6 At what kind of school do you currently teach?

| | |
|---|---|
| Elementary school | 1 |
| Middle or junior high school | 2 |
| High school | 3 |
| TK-8 | 4 |
| TK-12 | 5 |

[9] First question is a consent form

Q7 What grade or grades do you currently teach? *Please select all that apply.*

| | |
|---|---|
| TK | 1 |
| Kindergarten | 2 |
| 1st grade | 3 |
| 2nd grade | 4 |
| 3rd grade | 5 |
| 4th grade | 6 |
| 5th grade | 7 |
| 6th grade | 8 |
| 7th grade | 9 |
| 8th grade | 10 |
| 9th grade | 11 |
| 10th grade | 12 |
| 11th grade | 13 |
| 12th grade | 14 |

Q8 What subjects or fields do you currently teach? *Please select all that apply.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Elementary school multiple subjects | 1 |
| Arts or music | 2 |
| Language arts/English/writing | 3 |
| Foreign language (French, Spanish, other) | 4 |
| English as a second language | 5 |
| Math | 6 |
| Physical education | 7 |
| Science (biology, chemistry, physics) | 8 |
| Social studies/history/government/civics | 9 |
| Special education | 0 |
| Vocational/Career Technical Education | 1 |
| Other (Please specify:_____) **(RESPONSE REQUIRED.)** | 2 |

Q9 How do you describe your gender identity?

| | |
|---|---|
| Male | 1 |
| Female | 2 |
| Non-binary | 3 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Some other way | 4 |

Q10 How do you describe your sexual orientation?

| | |
|---|---|
| Gay, lesbian, or homosexual | 1 |
| Bisexual | 2 |
| Heterosexual or straight | 3 |
| Something else | 4 |
| Not sure | 5 |
| Prefer not to say | 6 |

Q11 Do you consider yourself to be transgender?

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |
| Not sure | 3 |
| Prefer not to say | 4 |

Q12 For statistical purposes only and to ensure that we have a representative sample, in what year were you born?

**(PERMITTED RANGE: 1960-2004. TERMINATE IF BORN BEFORE 1960 OR AFTER 2004.)**

**(AUTOFILL FOR CATEGORIZING YEAR OF BIRTH)**

QSageauto For statistical purposes only and to ensure that we have a representative sample, in what year were you born?

**(PERMITTED RANGE: 1900-2004. TERMINATE IF BORN AFTER 2004.)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Under 18 | 0 | **TERMINATE** |
| 18-24 | 1 | |
| 25-29 | 2 | |
| 30-34 | 3 | |
| 35-39 | 4 | |
| 40-44 | 5 | **CONTINUE** |
| 45-49 | 6 | |
| 50-54 | 7 | |
| 55-59 | 8 | |
| 60-62 | 9 | |
| 63-69 | 10 | |
| 70-74 | 11 | |
| 75 or older | 12 | |

**TERMINATE IF AGE 63 OR OLDER**

Q13 Again, for statistical purposes only, are you of Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish origin?

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes, Hispanic/Latino/Latinx/Spanish origin | 1 |
| No, not Hispanic/Latino/Latinx/Spanish origin | 2 |

Q14 And to ensure that we have a representative sample, please indicate your race.

| | |
|---|---|
| Asian or Asian American | 1 |
| Black or African American | 2 |
| American Indian or Native American | 3 |

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander 4

White 5

Another race not listed here (Please specify:_____) 6

**(AUTOFILL FOR COMBINING QSHISP AND QSRACE)**

QSraceauto Again, for statistical purposes only, are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin? And to ensure that we have a representative sample, what is your race?

Asian or Asian American 1

Black or African American 2

Hispanic/Latino/Spanish origin 3

American Indian or Native American 4

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander 5

White 6

Another race 7

Q15 Are you the parent or guardian of any children under age 18 currently living in your household?

Yes, parent or guardian of child(ren) under 18 1

No, not a parent or guardian of child(ren) under 18 2

Q16 On a scale from 1 (not at all satisfied) to 5 (extremely satisfied), how satisfied are you overall with your current position as a teacher?

| Not at all satisfied | | | | Extremely satisfied |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Q17 What are some of the things you like the most about your current position as a teacher? What aspects of your current teaching job are the most satisfying? *Please be specific and feel free to share anecdotes or personal experiences.* **(REQUIRE RESPONSE TO PROCEED.)**

Q18 What are some of the things you like the least about your current position as a teacher? What aspects of your current teaching job are you most dissatisfied with? *Please be specific and feel free to share anecdotes or personal experiences.* **(REQUIRE RESPONSE TO PROCEED.)**

Q19 Next you will see some words that teachers might use to describe how they feel about their work. Please indicate how well each one describes how you feel about your current position as a teacher. **(RANDOMIZE LIST. PROGRAM ON ONE SCREEN WITH A SEPARATE SCALE UNDER EACH.)**

a. Demoralizing
b. Empowering
c. Enjoyable
d. Exhausting
e. Frustrating
f. Fulfilling
g. Overwhelming
h. Rewarding
i. Stressful

| | |
|---|---|
| Very well | 1 |
| Somewhat well | 2 |
| Not too well | 3 |
| Not at all | 4 |

Q20 Thinking back to before the COVID-19 pandemic started, do you think conditions in the teaching field were changing mainly for the better, mainly for the worse, or were not changing much either way?

| | |
|---|---|
| Were changing mainly for the better | 1 |
| Were changing mainly for the worse | 2 |
| Were not changing much either way | 3 |

Q21 And thinking about the time since the COVID-19 pandemic started, do you think conditions in the teaching field have changed mainly for the better, mainly for the worse, or have not changed much either way?

| | |
|---|---|
| Have changed mainly for the better | 1 |
| Have changed mainly for the worse | 2 |
| Have not changed much either way | 3 |

Q22 On a scale from 1 (not at all satisfied) to 5 (extremely satisfied), please rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following aspects of your current position as a teacher? **(RANDOMIZE LIST. PROGRAM ON ONE SCREEN WITH A SEPARATE SCALE UNDER EACH.)**

a. Your workload
b. Having a work environment that is free of discrimination and prejudice
c. The amount of input teachers have in professional and academic decision-making
d. Your salary
e. Your health insurance coverage and retirement benefits
f. Being accepted for who you are
g. Having enough support and resources to do your job

h. The safety of your working environment

i. Class sizes

j. Your work-life balance

k. Opportunities for professional development and growth at your job

l. District administrators and leadership

m. Your school principal and leadership

| Not at all satisfied | | | | Extremely satisfied |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Q23 Is it easy or difficult for you to do each of the following? **(RANDOMIZE LIST. PROGRAM ON ONE SCREEN WITH A SEPARATE SCALE UNDER EACH.)**

a. Find affordable housing near where you teach

b. Commute to work in a reasonable amount of time

c. Keep up with basic expenses and the cost of living

d. Live comfortably and maintain the lifestyle you want

e. Save for retirement

f. Save for long-term goals, like purchasing a home

**[ASK ONLY OF PARENTS IN Qparent]** Provide for your child/children

| | |
|---|---|
| Very easy | 1 |
| Somewhat easy | 2 |
| Somewhat difficult | 3 |
| Very difficult | 4 |

**(ASK ONLY OF TEACHERS WHO HAVE BEEN TEACHING FOR 5 YEARS OR LESS [P1/2] IN QS3.)**

Q24 Now think back to why you decided to become a teacher. Using the following list, please rank the THREE that best describe why you became a teacher. **(RANDOMIZE. PROGRAM AS A DRAG AND DROP. REQUIRE 3.)**

a. A work schedule that includes summers off

b. The opportunity to collaborate with colleagues

c. Health and retirement benefits

d. Helping students

e. Interesting and engaging work

f. Job security

g. Making a positive difference in our world today

h. Opportunities for growth or leadership

i. Prestige and respect

j. The salary

k. The opportunity to teach a subject you are interested in or care about

l. Having family members who are/were teachers

m. Some other reason (specify: _____) **[PROGRAM AS REQUIRED]**

___ #1 reason

___ #2 reason

___ #3 reason

**(ASK ONLY OF TEACHERS WHO HAVE BEEN TEACHING FOR MORE THAN 5 YEARS [P4-8] IN QS3.)**

Q25 Using the following list, please rank the THREE that best describe why you continue to teach. **(RANDOMIZE. PROGRAM AS A DRAG AND DROP. REQUIRE 3.)**

a. A work schedule that includes summers off

b. The opportunity to collaborate with colleagues

c. Health and retirement benefits

d. Helping students

e. Interesting and engaging work

f. Job security

g. Making a positive difference in our world today

h. Opportunities for growth or leadership

i. Prestige and respect

j. The salary

k. The opportunity to teach a subject you are interested in or care about

l. Having family members who are/were teachers

m. Some other reason (specify: _____) **[PROGRAM AS REQUIRED]**

___ #1 reason

___ #2 reason

___ #3 reason

**(ASK ONLY OF BLACK TEACHERS [P2] IN QSRACEAUTO.)**

Q26 In your school, do you almost always feel comfortable expressing yourself as a Black person, or are there times when you feel uncomfortable expressing yourself as a Black person?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Almost always feel comfortable expressing myself as a Black person | 1 | **SKIP TO Q9a** |
| Sometimes feel uncomfortable expressing myself as a Black person | 2 | **CONTINUE** |

**(ASK ONLY OF BLACK TEACHERS WHO SAY THEY SOMETIMES FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE IN Q26.)**

Q27 Please tell us what you can about the times or situations in your school when you have felt uncomfortable expressing yourself as a Black person.

**(ASK ONLY OF HISPANIC TEACHERS [P3] IN QSRACEAUTO.)**

Q28 In your school, do you almost always feel comfortable expressing yourself as a Hispanic, Latino, or Latinx person, or are there times when you feel uncomfortable expressing yourself as a Hispanic, Latino, or Latinx person?

Almost always feel comfortable expressing myself as a Hispanic, Latino, or Latinx person 1 **SKIP TO Q9a**

Sometimes feel uncomfortable expressing myself as a Hispanic, Latino, or Latinx person 2 **CONTINUE**

**(ASK ONLY OF HISPANIC TEACHERS WHO SAY THEY SOMETIMES FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE IN Q28.)**

Q29 Please tell us what you can about the times or situations in your school when you have felt uncomfortable expressing yourself as a Hispanic, Latino, or Latinx person.

**(ASK ONLY OF ASIAN, NATIVE HAWAIIAN, PACIFIC ISLANDER TEACHERS [P1 AND 5] IN QSRACEAUTO.)**

Q30 In your school, do you almost always feel comfortable expressing yourself as an Asian person or a Pacific Islander, or are there times when you feel uncomfortable expressing yourself as an Asian person or a Pacific Islander?

Almost always feel comfortable expressing myself as an Asian person or a Pacific Islander 1 **SKIP TO Q9a**

Sometimes feel uncomfortable expressing myself as an Asian person or a Pacific Islander 2 **CONTINUE**

**(ASK ONLY OF ASIAN, NATIVE HAWAIIAN, PACIFIC ISLANDER TEACHERS WHO SAY THEY SOMETIMES FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE IN Q30.)**

Q31 Please tell us what you can about the times or situations in your school when you have felt uncomfortable expressing yourself as an Asian person or Pacific Islander.

**(ASK ONLY OF AMERICAN INDIAN/NATIVE AMERICAN TEACHERS [P4] IN QSRACEAUTO.)**

Q32 In your school, do you almost always feel comfortable expressing yourself as an American Indian or Native American person, or are there times when you feel uncomfortable expressing yourself as an American Indian or Native American person?

Almost always feel comfortable expressing myself as an American Indian or Native American person 1 **SKIP TO Q9a**

Sometimes feel uncomfortable expressing myself as an American Indian or Native American person 2 **CONTINUE**

**(ASK ONLY OF AMERICAN INDIAN/NATIVE AMERICAN TEACHERS WHO SAY THEY SOMETIMES FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE IN Q32.)**

Q33 Please tell us what you can about the times or situations in your school when you have felt uncomfortable expressing yourself as an American Indian or Native American person.

**(ASK ONLY OF ONLY OF HISPANIC TEACHERS [P1] IN QSHISP OR TEACHERS OF COLOR [P1/5] IN QSRACE)**

Q34 Do you ever experience racial discrimination at your current teaching position?

Yes, very often 1

Yes, occasionally 2

Yes, a few times 3

No, have not experienced 4

**(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ+ [P1, 2, 4] IN Qlgb OR TRANSGENDER [P1] IN Qtransgen.)**

Q35 Do you ever experience discrimination based on your sexual orientation at your current teaching position?

Yes, very often 1

Yes, occasionally 2

Yes, a few times 3

No, have not experienced 4

**(ASK EVERYONE.)**

Q36 Do you ever experience gender discrimination at your current teaching position?

Yes, very often 1

Yes, occasionally 2

Yes, a few times 3

No, have not experienced 4

Q37 Please indicate how often you feel that each of the following happens at your current teaching position. **(RANDOMIZE LIST. PROGRAM ON ONE SCREEN WITH A SEPARATE SCALE UNDER EACH.)**

a. You receive meaningful recognition for doing good work.

b. You are respected for the work you do.

c. Your professional development is supported by the leadership at your school.

d. You are able to reach out to your colleagues for support.

e. You are able to exercise professional autonomy in what and how you teach.

All the time 1

Most of the time 2

Just some of the time 3

Rarely 4

Never 5

Q38 Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. **(RANDOMIZE LIST. PROGRAM ON ONE SCREEN WITH A SEPARATE SCALE UNDER EACH.)**

a. The leadership at your school demonstrates a genuine commitment to cultivating diversity.

b. Your fellow teachers demonstrate a genuine commitment to cultivating diversity.

c. The environment at your school is supportive of different cultures.

d. The environment at your school is supportive of different identities.

e. Your school makes a genuine effort to involve a diverse group of employees in decisions and policies.

f. You feel comfortable being your authentic self at your school.

g. You feel a sense of belonging at your school.

| | |
|---|---|
| Strongly agree | 1 |
| Somewhat agree | 2 |
| Somewhat disagree | 3 |
| Strongly disagree | 4 |

Q39 Looking ahead three years or so, would you prefer to still be working in the teaching profession, or would you prefer NOT to be working in the teaching profession?

| | |
|---|---|
| Prefer to still be working in the teaching profession | 1 |
| Prefer NOT to be working in the teaching profession | 2 |
| Completely undecided/not sure | 3 |

Q40 Have you ever thought about leaving your current position teaching for…? **(DO NOT RANDOMIZE. PROGRAM ON ONE SCREEN WITH A SEPARATE SCALE UNDER EACH.)**

a. A job teaching at a different school

b. A job in education, but not as a teacher

c. A job outside of education altogether

| | |
|---|---|
| I have definitely considered it and have looked into it | 1 |
| I have definitely considered it but have not taken any action | 2 |
| I have thought about it | 3 |
| I have not considered it | 4 |

Q41 Realistically speaking, what are the chances you will leave the teaching profession within the next three years?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I definitely will leave the teaching profession within the next three years | 1 | **CONTINUE** |
| I probably will leave the teaching profession within the next three years | 2 | **CONTINUE** |
| There's a 50-50 chance that I will leave the teaching profession within the next three years | 3 | **CONTINUE** |
| I am unlikely to leave the teaching profession within the next three years | 4 | **SKIP TO Q13** |
| I definitely will not leave the teaching profession within the next three years | 5 | **SKIP TO Q13** |

**(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO SAY DEFINITELY, PROBABLY, OR 50-50 IN Q41.)**

Q42 What are the main reasons you would consider leaving the teaching profession within the next three years? What specific aspects of teaching make you feel that you might not want to continue doing it? *Please answer as thoroughly and honestly as possible. Thank you!* **(REQUIRE RESPONSE TO PROCEED.)**

**(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO SAY DEFINITELY, PROBABLY, OR 50-50 IN Q41.)**

Q43 Below are some reasons someone might consider leaving the teaching profession. Please rank the top three or four reasons why you would consider leaving the teaching profession. **(RANDOMIZE. PROGRAM AS A DRAG AND DROP, RANK AT LEAST 1 AND UP TO 4.)**

a. Staff shortages have resulted in teachers being expected to take on too many responsibilities outside of teaching
b. I do not feel physically safe
c. I do not have enough time to provide struggling students the academic support they need
d. I am not able to give students the social and emotional support they need
e. The salary is too low
f. I am burned out by the stress of the job
g. I have too many students and/or my class size is too big
h. I am not able to have a decent work-life balance
i. The professional development opportunities are not relevant or meaningful
j. I do not feel that the leadership at my school respects me or values the work I do
k. I do not feel the parents of my students respect me or value the work I do
l. I do not feel a sense of belonging or welcomed at work
m. The job is different from what I expected or hoped it would be when I decided to become a teacher
n. Teachers are becoming targets of political and ideological attacks that make it harder for them to do their jobs

___ #1 reason

___ #2 reason

___ #3 reason

___ #4 reason

**(ASK EVERYONE)**

Q44 If you were in charge of taking steps to improve teacher retention, what are the most important steps you would take to retain teachers who are considering leaving the profession? **(REQUIRED RESPONSE.)**

Q45 Below are some changes that state and local officials might make to improve teacher retention and encourage more teachers to stay in the profession. Please rate how high a priority you consider each one to be. **(RANDOMIZE LIST. PROGRAM ON ONE SCREEN WITH A SEPARATE SCALE UNDER EACH.)**

a. Better pay

b. More prep time during the workday

c. More time to collaborate with colleagues

d. More supportive services for students (e.g., counselors, social workers, nurses)

e. More funding for classroom resources and technology

f. Smaller class sizes

g. Better staffing and a more manageable workload

h. Better and more realistic preparation for teachers coming into the field

i. Greater focus on fostering diverse and inclusive workplaces for teachers and staff

j. Strengthen discipline policies for students who behave disruptively

k. State student loan forgiveness

l. Allowing greater professional autonomy for teachers in what and how they teach

m. **[FORM A]** More professional development opportunities for teachers

n. **[FORM B]** More professional development opportunities for teachers led by fellow educators

| | |
|---|---|
| One of the top priorities | 1 |
| A very high priority | 2 |
| A fairly high priority | 3 |
| Just somewhat of a priority | 4 |
| Not a priority | 4 |

Q46 Please rank the top four changes that state and local officials should prioritize in order to improve teacher retention and encourage more teachers to stay in the profession. **(RANDOMIZE. SET UP AS DRAG AND DROP. REQUIRE 4.)**

a. Better pay

b. More prep time during the workday

c. More time to collaborate with colleagues

d. More supportive services for students (e.g., counselors, social workers, nurses)

e. More funding for classroom resources and technology

f. Smaller class sizes

g. Better staffing and a more manageable workload

h. Better and more realistic preparation for teachers coming into the field

i. Greater focus on fostering diverse and inclusive workplaces for teachers and staff

j. Strengthen discipline policies for students who behave disruptively

k. State student loan forgiveness

l. Allowing greater professional autonomy for teachers in what and how they teach

m. **[FORM A]** More professional development opportunities for teachers

n. **[FORM B]** More professional development opportunities for teachers led by fellow educators

___ #1 priority

___ #2 priority

___ #3 priority

___#4 priority

**(SHOW ON SEPARATE SCREEN ONLY TO RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE WORKED AS A TEACHER FOR 5 YEARS OR LESS [P1/4] IN Q5.)**

**The following questions are about some of the different components of your teacher preparation program.**

**(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE WORKED AS A TEACHER FOR 5 YEARS OR LESS [P1/4] IN Q5.)**

Q48 Please indicate whether each of the following components of your teacher preparation program have had a positive or negative impact on your preparation for the demands of your teaching assignment? **RANDOMIZE LIST. PROGRAM ON ONE SCREEN WITH A SEPARATE SCALE UNDER EACH.)**

1. Teacher preparation courses
2. Clinical practice/student teaching, internship, or teacher residency
3. Mentor teacher support
4. Teacher induction/process for clearing credential

| | |
|---|---|
| Very positive impact | 1 |
| Somewhat positive impact | 2 |
| Neutral – no impact either way | 3 |
| Somewhat negative impact | 4 |
| Very negative impact | 5 |
| Does not apply | 6 |

**(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE WORKED AS A TEACHER FOR 5 YEARS OR LESS [P1/4] IN Q5.)**

Q49 What <u>in your preparation program</u> could have helped better prepare you for your teaching assignment? **(RESPONSE REQUIRED.)**

**(SHOW Q17a and Q17b ON THE SAME SCREEN.)**

**(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE WORKED AS A TEACHER FOR 5 YEARS OR LESS [P1/4] IN Q5.)**

Q50 Please indicate whether each of the following teacher candidate assessments has had a positive or negative impact on your preparation for teaching. **(RANDOMIZE LIST. PROGRAM ON ONE SCREEN WITH A SEPARATE SCALE UNDER EACH.)**

1. California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST)
2. California Subject Examination for Teachers (CSET)
3. Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA)
4. Teacher Performance Assessment (CalTPA, EdTPA, or FAST)

| | |
|---|---|
| Very positive impact | 1 |
| Somewhat positive impact | 2 |
| Neutral – no impact either way | 3 |
| Somewhat negative impact | 4 |
| Very negative impact | 5 |
| Does not apply | 6 |

**(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE WORKED AS A TEACHER FOR 5 YEARS OR LESS [P1/4] IN Q5.)**

Q51 Which assessment had the most impact on your preparation for teaching and why do you feel that way? **(RESPONSE REQUIRED.)**

**(SHOW TO EVERYONE ON A SEPARATE SCREEN.)**

These next few questions are about the school at which you teach.

Q52 Approximately how many students are enrolled in your school?

| | |
|---|---|
| Fewer than 100 students | 1 |
| 100 to 249 students | 2 |
| 250 to 499 students | 3 |
| 500 to 749 students | 4 |
| 750 to 999 students | 5 |
| 1,000 to 1,999 students | 6 |
| 2,000 to 2,999 students | 7 |
| More than 3,000 students | 8 |

Q53 Which of the following best describes the economic background of most of the students in your school?

| | |
|---|---|
| Low income | 1 |
| Working class or lower-middle class | 2 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Middle class | 3 |
| | Upper-middle class | 4 |
| | High income | 5 |
| | Even mix of all economic backgrounds | 6 |

Q54 In your best estimate, what percentage of students at your school receives free or reduced lunch?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Less than 10% | 1 |
| | 10% to 25% | 2 |
| | 26% to 50% | 3 |
| | 51% to 75% | 4 |
| | More than 75% | 5 |
| | Not sure | 6 |

Q55 Roughly how many students in your school are students of color?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | All or almost all | 1 |
| | More than half | 2 |
| | About half | 3 |
| | Less than half | 4 |
| | Very few | 5 |
| | None | 6 |

Q56 Roughly how many teachers in your school are people of color?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | All or almost all | 1 |
| | More than half | 2 |
| | About half | 3 |
| | Less than half | 4 |
| | Very few | 5 |
| | None | 6 |

Q57 Which of the following best describes the area where your school is located?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Urban | 1 |
| | Suburban | 2 |
| | Small town | 3 |
| | Rural | 4 |

**(SHOW ON A SEPARATE SCREEN.)**

These final questions are for statistical purposes only.

Q58 What is the last grade of school or level of education you completed?

| | |
|---|---|
| Did not graduate high school | 1 |
| High school graduate | 2 |
| Attended technical or vocational school | 3 |
| Attended some college, but no degree | 4 |
| Graduated 2-year college with an associate's degree | 5 |
| Graduated 4-years college with a bachelor's degree | 6 |
| Obtained a master's, PhD, or professional degree | 7 |

Q59 Are you...?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Now married or living with a partner | 1 | **CONTINUE** |
| Widowed | 2 | |
| Divorced | 3 | **SKIP TO Qcare** |
| Separated | 4 | |
| Never married | 5 | |

**(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO SAY NOW MARRIED OR LIVING WITH A PARTNER IN Qmarital.)**

Q60 Are you the sole income earner in your household or does your spouse or partner earn an income too?

| | |
|---|---|
| Sole income earner | 1 |
| Spouse/partner earns income too | 2 |

**(ASK EVERYONE.)**

Q61 Are you caring for or financially supporting someone other than your immediate family, such as a parent, grandparent, sibling or another individual?

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |

Q62 For statistical purposes only, what is your yearly salary from teaching?

| | |
|---|---|
| Less than $25,000 | 1 |
| $25,000 to $49,999 | 2 |
| $50,000 to $74,999 | 3 |
| $75,000 to $99,999 | 4 |
| $100,000 to $124,999 | 8 |
| $125,000 to $149,999 | 8 |
| $150,000 or more | 9 |

Q63 And if you added together the yearly income of all the members of your family who were living at home last year, what would the total be?

| | |
|---|---|
| Less than $25,000 | 1 |
| $25,000 to $49,999 | 2 |
| $50,000 to $74,999 | 3 |
| $75,000 to $99,999 | 4 |
| $100,000 to $124,999 | 5 |
| $125,000 to $149,999 | 6 |
| $150,000 or more | 7 |

Q64 That concludes our survey. If you have any comments you'd like to add about this topic or this survey, please enter them in the space below. **(RESPONSE NOT REQUIRED.)**

**Appendix E: Former Teachers Interview Protocol**

Intro and explanation of ground rules. (Explain that we are talking to individuals who recently left the teaching profession.)

1. What grade levels and subjects did you teach, and how long did you work as a teacher?

2. What aspects of teaching did you find most fulfilling?

3. And on the flip side of the coin, what were the greatest challenges? And beyond challenges, were there things about teaching that you found frustrating?

4. Why did you stick with teaching as long as you did? What kept you in the classroom?

5. Who or what did you find most supportive in helping you in your teaching position – whether that be individuals, groups, programs, or tools? How were they helpful?

6. What were the primary reasons that you decided to stop teaching? Please explain in detail.

7. Was there a particular event or situation that crystallized your decision to leave teaching?

8. If you were making a movie to help people outside of education understand why you decided to leave the teaching profession, what scenes or events would you include in your movie?

9. What changes would have caused you to reconsider your decision to leave your teaching position and decide to keep teaching? Please be as specific and detailed as possible in explaining the changes that would have caused you to stay.

10. If you were in charge of improving teacher retention in California, what are the changes you would make? What would you do differently than what is done today?

11. In your most recent teaching position, did you feel accepted for who you are, in terms of your race, ethnicity, gender, and/or sexual orientation, or did you not feel accepted for who you are? Please explain why you felt that way.

**(ASK OF BLACK, HISPANIC, AAPI, AND AMERICAN INDIAN/NATIVE AMERICAN TEACHERS)**

12. In your most recent teaching position, how comfortable did you feel expressing yourself as (a Black person/an Hispanic, Latino, or Latinx person/an Asian person or a Pacific Islander/an American Indian or Native American person)? Please explain why you did or did not feel comfortable expressing yourself.

13. Is there anything that your school or district could have done to make you feel more accepted for who you are and/or more comfortable expressing yourself?

14. Based on your experience as a teacher, what advice or guidance would you give for how to design teacher training programs so they are as effective as possible in preparing teachers today? Please indicate any things that you think teacher training programs should do differently – either things they should start doing or should stop doing – to help better prepare teachers for the classroom.

15. And what about professional development – do you have any suggestions for improvements to professional development that would improve teacher retention?

16. What are you doing now that you are no longer teaching? And why did you decide to move into that position instead of staying in teaching? What do you get from your current position that you did not get from your teaching position that is important to you?

17. Lastly, if you have any other thoughts to share about your experiences as a teacher and how to retain teachers that we have not already covered, please feel free to share. Thank you.