

## Investing in adult learners: Recruiting, supporting, and retaining educators of color in a virtual world

October 8, 2020

### Panelists and contact information:

- Jessica Heard, Chief of Equity and Inclusion, National Center for Teacher Residencies [jheard@nctresidencies.org](mailto:jheard@nctresidencies.org)
- Jevelyn Bonner-Reed, Chief Human Resources Officer, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools [jdbonnerreed@wsfcs.k12.nc.us](mailto:jdbonnerreed@wsfcs.k12.nc.us)
- Cicely Woodard, Mathematics Teacher, Kickapoo High School, Springfield Public Schools, MO [cawoodard@spsmail.org](mailto:cawoodard@spsmail.org)
- Diarese George, Executive Director, Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance [diarese.george@tneca.org](mailto:diarese.george@tneca.org)

### Link to slides:

- <https://learningforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Webinar-10-08-20.pdf>

### Link to webinar recording:

- [https://zoom.us/rec/play/XGTKSfVmqblyHMTRvYELQI5chdtTe0rAGK5JoSSOTdjqUlnzGxJ3iYbllwwvhaLHp7cfFc\\_kxqjBrw.XXjmlPHxZ29iSEsU?continueMode=true](https://zoom.us/rec/play/XGTKSfVmqblyHMTRvYELQI5chdtTe0rAGK5JoSSOTdjqUlnzGxJ3iYbllwwvhaLHp7cfFc_kxqjBrw.XXjmlPHxZ29iSEsU?continueMode=true)

### Chatbox questions and answers:

Question: Do you feel the mentors need to also be educators or color? If so, how do we make that happen?

A: (from Jessica Heard) In my organization we believe it is important for teachers of color to have access to teacher leadership through mentor roles. AND, it is essential that mentors of all backgrounds are able to model and enact culturally responsive practices in both their mentoring interactions with residents and their pedagogy with PK12 students.

Question: Could you provide one example of the resources for professional learning around diversity and inclusion?

A: (from Jessica Heard) A few examples for resources for educator PL for DEI include: *Courageous Conversations about Race, Facing History and Ourselves, National Equity*



*Project, Teaching Tolerance*, Beverly Daniel Tatum's Books - e.g., *Why Are All the Black Students Sitting Together in the Cafeteria*. All offer foundational DEI content with specific application to the education sector.

A: (From Cicely Woodard) My district's office of equity and diversity is currently leading two trainings: SEL from an Equity Lens and Cultural Consciousness. One example of a resource in the module on Cultural Consciousness is this video on Systemic Racism: [https://youtu.be/YrHIQIO\\_bdQ](https://youtu.be/YrHIQIO_bdQ)

Question: (1.) Should some PD, especially that which addresses racism, white privilege and supremacy, cultural competence, etc. be differentiated for teachers of color because most are at different levels of understanding from predominantly white teachers? (2.) What state-level policies/investments have been implemented and are needed in your states? (3.) Many neo-liberal reformers think it's only about increasing Black and Brown bodies in schools/classrooms with limited preparation or regardless of commitment to equity. Please comment on this observation/assertion.

A: (From Jessica Heard) 1) Affinity spaces as Diarese George is currently describing are a great way to offer differentiated experiences for teachers of color and white teachers. 3) Really important question - I think the key is distinguishing between tokenism and culturally and linguistically sustaining practices. It is possible for both TOC and White Teachers to be culturally responsive. Often focusing just on teacher demographics but not on anti-bias / anti-racist pedagogy and organizational culture of equity leads to both attrition for teachers of color and perpetuation of assimilationist practices in school context.

A: (From Cicely Woodard) Paul, I agree that people have different understandings about these topics, but I think the power in this training is bringing together people who have different experiences so that they can all learn from each other.

Question: How do you determine where a school is at on that continuum?

A: (From Jessica Heard) This is one of various continuums that could be used to ground such conversations:

[https://www.aesa.us/conferences/2013\\_ac\\_presentations/Continuum\\_AntiRacist.pdf](https://www.aesa.us/conferences/2013_ac_presentations/Continuum_AntiRacist.pdf)

This is a different resource for reviewing a school's stage of equity:

[http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/117031/chapters/Introduction.aspx#smith2017\\_figi.2](http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/117031/chapters/Introduction.aspx#smith2017_figi.2)

How White Students Benefit from Teachers of Color:

<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/08/teachers-of-color-white-students/400553/>

### Other resources suggested by attendees:

- These touch on a great deal of what's been shared by the panel: *For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood...* and the *Rest of Y'all Too* by Christopher Emdin
- More needs to be done to recruit and maintain black males in the field of education, especially talented black males.
- Create a safe space and have a common language, including definitions of words/terms with emotional connections (racist, entitlement, privilege...) allowing for SEL "breaks" to leave the setting, but with the expectation that after a few minutes the person can be ready to return and participate.
- It is my belief and has been my experience that groups -- no matter where they are on the spectrum -- need to address and explore systemic racism, biases (which we all have), and the need for cultural responsiveness together. It will take all of us to effect a change...and it will take time.

### Learning Forward resources:

- (New!) Use the [Professional Learning State and District Planner](#)
- Latest issue of *The Learning Professional* <https://learningforward.org/journal/turning-to-technology/>
- Learning Forward blog <https://learningforward.org/blog/>
- Upcoming webinars <https://learningforward.org/webinars/>