

A NATURAL FIT:

Placing After-School Staff of Color
in Teacher Pipelines

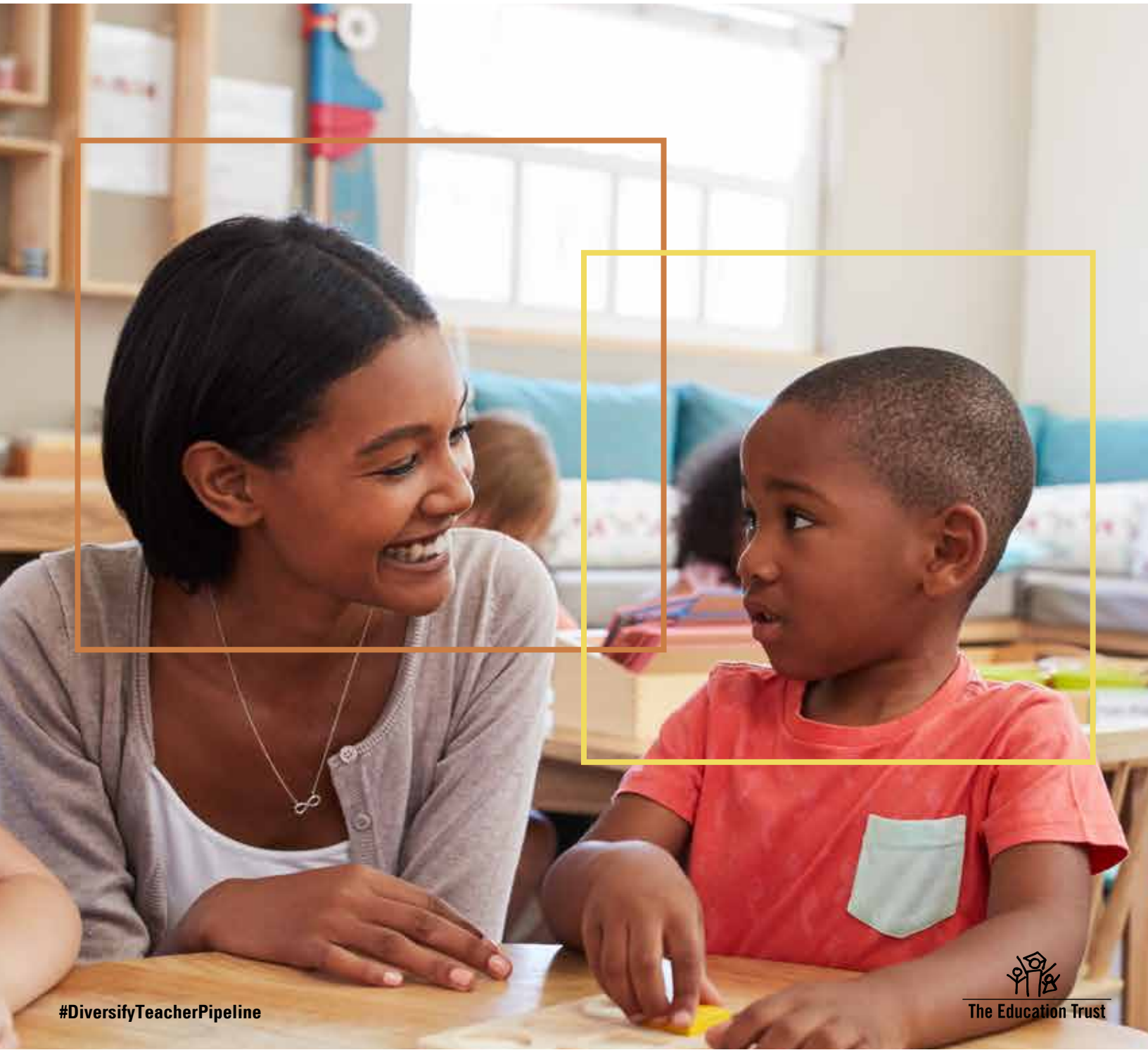




TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	7
INTRODUCTION.....	8
FINDINGS.....	10
CONCLUSION	20
APPENDIX.....	22
METHODOLOGY.....	26
REFERENCES.....	31

A NATURAL FIT:

Supporting After-School Staff of Color in Teacher Pipelines

BY LINA CHERFAS, Evaluation & Planning Consultant at A Good Question; ERIC DUNCAN, Senior P-12 Data and Policy Analyst – Educator Diversity; and WING YI CHAN Ph.D., Director of P-12 Research

THERE IS AN INCREASING NUMBER OF NONTRADITIONAL TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS THAT ARE DESIGNED TO DIVERSIFY THE TEACHER WORKFORCE AND ADDRESS TEACHER SHORTAGES. MANY CURRENT AND FORMER AFTER-SCHOOL/OUT-OF-SCHOOL-TIME (OST) WORKERS WHO ARE SEEKING TO BECOME TEACHERS ENROLL IN THESE PROGRAMS. HOWEVER, VERY FEW PROGRAMS FOCUS EXPLICITLY ON THIS POPULATION IN THEIR RECRUITMENT AND LITTLE DATA EXISTS ON HOW THEY FARE ONCE ENROLLED. THIS IS A MISSED OPPORTUNITY, AS AFTER-SCHOOL/OST EMPLOYEES ARE A RACIALLY AND ETHNICALLY DIVERSE WORKFORCE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCE LEADING GROUPS OF YOUNG PEOPLE. WE STUDIED THE EXPERIENCES OF AFTER-SCHOOL/OST WORKERS OF COLOR IN SEVEN NONTRADITIONAL TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS TO LEARN WHAT WORKS TO PREPARE THIS UNDEREXPLORED POTENTIAL SOURCE OF DIVERSE TEACHERS. HERE IS WHAT WE FOUND:

REASONS FOR BECOMING TEACHERS

These teacher candidates see their after-school/OST experience as a steppingstone to teaching that gave them a concrete idea of what it would entail. Through both their after-school/OST work and in teacher preparation, they develop a strong commitment to teaching in the communities where they grew up, and to working with students of color.

EXPERIENCES DURING TEACHER PREPARATION

After-school/OST workers, particularly those with longer tenure in those settings, bring essential skills in building relationships with students and families, fostering positive classroom communities, and managing instruction. As teachers of color, they also bring an understanding of the varied strengths and needs of students of color and find a great deal of meaning and commitment in working with students of color. Yet these essential skills are not sufficiently recognized and viewed as assets in the teacher preparation experience.

While most participants feel supported in their programs as teacher candidates of color, some Black teacher candidates describe conversations about race and teaching students of color as focused heavily on educating White teacher candidates about how to work with students of color, while ignoring or generalizing the perspectives of teacher candidates of color.

As other scholars and advocates have documented in the past, among the structural barriers to becoming teachers, earning passing scores on standardized tests required for entry to the profession presents an obstacle for these teacher candidates, and more test preparation is needed to better prepare teacher candidates of color.^{1,2} The programs are designed for maximal affordability to be as inclusive as possible of teacher candidates from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Nonetheless, some participants, particularly those with significant financial obligations, struggle with the financial aspects of continuing with their training.

Once they complete training, participants have no trouble securing employment. In fact, schools and districts actively seek out these new teachers, particularly if they have already worked in their schools and know the local communities. Most participants see themselves as educators for the long haul. Working in after-school/OST settings prior to starting their training helps cement their commitment to teaching.

SUPPORTING AFTER-SCHOOL/OST WORKERS IN BECOMING TEACHERS

In our study, we identified several promising practices that the programs employ to support teacher candidates with after-school/OST experience. To reduce structural barriers to teacher credentialing, they provide test preparation and align customized financial supports. They also partner with schools, districts, and universities to deliver instruction and connect participants with future jobs, and offer mentorship and coaching. Conversely, we found that the programs frequently miss opportunities to highlight after-school/OST workers' experiences in classroom and coaching discussions, as well as to establish more recruitment relationships with after-school/OST providers. The programs do not routinely track who among their teacher candidates has after-school/OST experience; as such, they are not able to design targeted supports for this population.

States oversee teacher credentialing, including through nontraditional teacher preparation programs, and as such are key actors in setting policy and standards. We identified the following ways in which states can support after-school/OST workers of color in their journeys toward becoming teachers:

1. Allocate resources to establish and strengthen recruitment relationships between non-traditional teacher preparation pathways and after-school/OST service providers.
2. Increase investments in scholarships, loan forgiveness opportunities, and tuition reimbursements for teacher candidates with after-school/OST experience, with a particular focus on candidates of color and participants in Grow Your Own programs.
3. Adopt statewide guidelines and invest in support for nontraditional teacher preparation pathways to include teacher licensure test preparation, and at least one year of mentor teacher support and coaching before participants enter the classroom as teachers of record.
4. Develop guidance on effective programming and practices, based on non-traditional teacher preparation programs that successfully attract and support after-school/OST staff of color.
5. Include after-school/OST candidates in the "paraprofessional" category when defining participants who are eligible for state-led support to obtain teaching certification.
6. Fund retention supports for alumni of nontraditional teacher preparation pathways, including efforts to create and sustain affinity groups and professional learning opportunities.
7. Require nontraditional teacher preparation programs to track and report on individuals with after-school/OST work experience as a differentiated group to begin developing an evidence base on this underexplored population of teacher trainees, and thereby learning how else they can be supported in their journey to become teachers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to Irmay Garcia Maisonet for her research assistance on this project. We value the support of The Education Trust's staff and partners in identifying potential programs to participate in the study, including Jessica Heard and Jill Pitner at the National Center for Teacher Residencies, Dr. Leah van Belle at the Michigan Department of Education, and Jillian Luchner, Chris Neitzey, and Dan Gilbert at the Afterschool Alliance.

We appreciate the thought partnership of Dr. Margarita Bianco at the University of Colorado-Denver and her external review of the study.

We are grateful to the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation for their generous support of this research.

Most of all, thank you to the leaders, participants, and partners of the seven nontraditional teacher preparation programs that are profiled in this report. We appreciate the time that they devoted to this study and their willingness to contribute to the knowledge base on this underexplored topic.

A NATURAL FIT:

Supporting After-School Staff of Color in Teacher Pipelines

BY LINA CHERFAS, Evaluation & Planning Consultant at A Good Question; ERIC DUNCAN, Senior P-12 Data and Policy Analyst – Educator Diversity; and WING YI CHAN Ph.D., Director of P-12 Research

"I know a lot of after-school staff love kids, love teaching and all this stuff.

So, the drive is there. It's just a matter of having the tools for it." – INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT

THE NEED TO PROVIDE A STRONG AND DIVERSE TEACHER WORKFORCE FOR ALL STUDENTS IS AS PREVALENT AS EVER, particularly as school and district leaders are developing plans to address unfinished learning and help students catch up after the disruptions due to COVID-19. A growing body of research shows that having access to teachers of color benefits all students — and can be particularly transformative for students of color. Yet, only 20% of teachers in the U.S. are teachers of color. Moreover, the lack of diversity of the teacher workforce relative to the student population (more than half of all students in the national public school population identify as a person of color) is one of the key drivers of inequity in education, even as states and districts continue to invest in strategies to increase the racial diversity of their workforces.

One underutilized strategy for increasing the racial diversity of the teacher workforce is to recruit and prepare those who have experience working in after-school or out-of-school time (OST) programs to enter the teaching profession. The after-school/OST staff population is racially and ethnically diverse and has the meaningful experiences, *e.g.*, leading groups of young people, and the commitment to support students and families in local communities across the country. However, very few states and districts invest in specific programming dedicated to recruiting and preparing this population to become full-time teachers, and few teacher preparation programs focus directly on this population to leverage their experiences to create a strong and diverse workforce. This is a missed opportunity.

This report examines the experiences of current and former teacher candidates of color with after-school or OST experience to provide insights into how teacher preparation programs and state policymakers can create the right programmatic experiences and conditions to recruit after-school/OST staff into the teaching profession and prepare them for success. The report specifically focuses on the experiences of candidates in what are considered non-traditional preparation pathways, such as teacher residencies and Grow Your Own programs. These programs tend to attract and retain a more diverse pool of teachers, with deeper connections to local school communities than traditional teacher education pathways.^{3,4,5} We conducted a total of 64 interviews with key program stakeholders: the program leaders (*e.g.*, senior directors), partners (*e.g.*, school districts, universities), and participants (*e.g.*, teacher candidates, graduates who went on to become teachers, and former participants who did not become teachers). The programs were a sample recruited via Ed Trust's existing partners. We intentionally selected programs to represent regional diversity. Current and former teacher candidates of color were recruited for interviews from lists of candidates who fit the study criteria (had after-school/OST experience and identified as people of color) provided by the participating programs.



Not surprisingly, many of the report's findings align with those in previous [reports](#) by The Education Trust on the experiences of teachers of color. For instance, candidates of color have a deep passion for the communities in which they teach and live, particularly for serving as role models and developing nurturing relationships with students of color. At the same time, while candidates of color with rich experiences as after-school/OST staff are well-positioned to enter the classroom with the necessary skills to succeed in the profession, some of them report a lack of support and experiences that were not culturally affirming, which led them to leave their programs. [Black teacher](#) candidates report more negative experiences in their preparation programs.

Other findings center on the unique value of these participants' skills and promising practices programs can employ to support them. Experiences in after-school/OST settings provided candidates of color opportunities to learn and develop important skills, such as building relationships with families and parents, that set them apart from their colleagues who did not have similar experiences as support staff in their communities. And test preparation, mentoring, and coaching were mentioned as important and well-regarded practices for preparation programs to better recruit and support candidates of color with after-school/OST experience.

State policymakers, as well as those leading teacher preparation programs, have an opportunity to invest in strategies and adopt policies to build this potentially high-leverage pipeline of teachers of color into the profession. To do so effectively, they must not only increase targeted recruitment of after-school/OST staff but also structure programming to draw upon this group's experiences while they're enrolled in preparation programs. Using Ed Trust's 50-state [Educator Diversity Data and Policy Scans](#) as a foundation, *A Natural Fit* concludes with a list of recommendations to help recruit, prepare, hire, and retain after-school/OST staff in the teaching profession.

FINDINGS

FOR THIS STUDY, WE SOUGHT TO ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO AFTER-SCHOOL/OST WORKERS' EXPERIENCES AS TEACHER CANDIDATES. WE LOOKED AT WHAT INFLUENCED THE PARTICIPANTS' INTEREST AND COMMITMENT TO ENTER TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS; THEIR TEACHER PREPARATION EXPERIENCES; AND THE PROGRAMS' EFFORTS TO SUPPORT THESE TEACHER CANDIDATES. HERE, WE ALSO SHARE SOME OF THE PARTICIPANTS' AND PROGRAM LEADERS' ANSWERS IN THEIR OWN WORDS:

1. HOW DID THEIR AFTER-SCHOOL/OST EXPERIENCES INFLUENCE THEIR DECISION TO BECOME TEACHERS?

AFTER-SCHOOL/OST AS A STEPPINGSTONE TO BECOMING A TEACHER

Most participants we interviewed became interested in teaching long before they entered the teacher preparation programs. Others developed a teaching interest while working as paraprofessionals or other classified staff in schools, or after becoming involved in their own children's schooling. Some participants pivoted away from education majors during their undergraduate years, only to be drawn back into the profession later on, because they saw it as an opportunity to make a positive impact on young people in their communities.

"Since I was little, I wanted to be a teacher, but I ended up getting an English degree. I joined [after-school/OST program] last year, and I was a tutor at a school. I absolutely just loved the environment. I loved being that influence for my students. I loved allowing the students to see someone that looked like them in a different light."

"Even though we were an after-school program, part of the staff was there during the school day, too. So, we did things similar to what a student teacher would do to support daytime teachers in their classrooms. Seeing what teachers did, and taking that knowledge and experience and trying to implement it in the after-school portion of it, made me feel like I could be a teacher, too."

Less than one-third of the participants were aware of recruitment ties between their after-school/OST programs and teacher preparation programs. Most participants said their after-school/OST experience deepened their interest in teaching, but they were headed in that direction regardless. While this question has not been routinely examined in the literature, it is unlikely that entering a teacher preparation program is a major factor in high staff turnover in the after-school/OST field.⁶

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: CENTERING AFTER-SCHOOL/OST EXPERIENCES IN TEACHER PREPARATION

ExpandedED Schools' Pathways Fellowship offers promising practices to connect aspiring teachers to their future careers via after-school/OST experiences. The fellowship is situated within an organization dedicated to extended learning that has a broad network of affiliated community-based after-school/OST providers. The fellows spend most of their time at the after-school/OST practicum site working with young people, in paid positions and under the supervision of experienced after-school/OST staff. With career planning support, fellows work with a mentor teacher who provides feedback on lesson planning, classroom management, and exposure to teaching careers.

The Pathways Fellowship both places participants in after-school/OST practicums and recruits from those same organizations. The organizations nominate staff to apply for the fellowship as an advancement opportunity for their employees. They support and share the Pathways Fellowship's commitment to diversifying the teacher workforce. The fellowship recently altered its recruitment strategy to focus on college juniors and seniors in good academic standing, some of whom were nominated by the after-school/OST providers.

The Pathways Fellowship introduces participants to various options through which they can continue training and earn their teacher certification. By centering the participants' training experiences in the after-school/OST practicum, the Pathways Fellowship sustains and highlights the connection between high-quality youth work in after-school/OST settings and effective teaching.

AFTER-SCHOOL/OST AMPLIFIES COMMITMENT TO SERVING STUDENTS OF COLOR

Consistent with the broader literature about what motivates teachers of color to become educators, we found that study participants have a deep commitment to serving students of color and their communities. Importantly, for many, their passion and commitment arose from their after-school/OST experiences and were reinforced by them. Working largely in communities of color — some in the very communities in which they had grown up — they aimed to continue to do so as teachers. They see themselves as potential role models for the students and want to support students of color through nurturing relationships.

"The after-school program let me exert all kinds of my potential. It also brought out my true character of wanting to serve and help people — especially kids and people of the community."

"[The after-school/OST experience] just made [becoming a teacher] more concrete for me that I wanted to work in my own community, or communities of color."

Many participants also spoke about giving back to their communities, and creating more diverse and inclusive educational environments than the ones they experienced growing up:

"I saw a lot of myself in [the youth served in after-school]. I grew up that same way. When I was their age, I wasn't really allowed to speak Spanish [in school], so I was the quiet kid. Now, it's more acceptable, and now we're able to provide just a lot more resources. So, I feel like we can really, really make an impact."

Just over half of the participants are teaching or planning to teach in the communities where they grew up, and a quarter more are interested in doing so in the future, because they view teaching in their home communities as part of becoming educators. Consistent with the mission of these programs, Grow Your Own program participants were the most likely to want to teach in their own communities.

I really want to stay in the area where I grew up, just because I know the area and I feel like I want to give back to the community that made me the person I am today."

2. HOW DID HAVING AFTER-SCHOOL/OST EXPERIENCE HELP TEACHER CANDIDATES AS THEY WENT THROUGH PREPARATION PROGRAMS?

AFTER-SCHOOL/OST EXPERIENCE AS AN ASSET

Almost all the participants we interviewed agreed that their after-school/OST work made their time in the teacher preparation programs easier — honing important skills in relationship-building with students and families, classroom community building, and instructional management. They also shared a deep understanding of the varied strengths and needs of students of color.

Building relationships with students and families

Participants agreed that the key skill that they acquired in their after-school/OST roles was an ability to build relationships with young people and noted that this skill facilitated their entry into teaching. Even before enrolling in the programs, they understood the centrality of relationship building to classroom management and supporting students' learning. This set them apart from participants who entered the programs without first having worked in after-school/OST settings:

"It was different because I had that experience of connecting with students, especially students from different backgrounds. My other colleagues who didn't really have experience had a harder time being able to teach the students because they couldn't make that connection."

Many of the participants also spoke about building relationships with families in their after-school/OST roles.

"It prepared me to work with parents, because as an after-school counselor, we had to connect with families and speak to and communicate with them very often."

Many program leaders and partners agreed that after-school/OST workers' previous experiences make them more adept at relationship building. Some observed that former after-school/OST workers seem more comfortable in front of students and have a knack for processing challenging moments in the classroom:

"There's typically less fear with people who have engaged with young people before. They go in more comfortable just saying hello and more comfortable striking up a conversation, or just saying, well, that didn't work. They also are more open to failure."

Instruction skills – classroom management, lesson planning

Despite the inconsistencies in professional development practices in the after-school/OST field,⁶ about two-thirds of the participants in our sample received professional development in their after-school/OST settings and felt that it laid the groundwork for their next steps as teacher candidates. As one participant summarized:

"We had groups of students, we had lesson plans, unit plans, curricula, we had to internalize it. There was professional development on teacher voice, teacher presence, warm-strict, classroom management. We weren't trained as though we were after-school babysitters. We were trained like we were teachers."

For many participants, teacher preparation was a process of formalizing one's existing skills in working with young people while developing knowledge of pedagogical structures such as curriculum design and scaffolding. They felt confident in their skills and looked on their time in the programs as an opportunity to build on what they had learned from their after-school/OST experiences.

“Working in those after-school programs helped me from the personal and social-emotional aspect of relating with students, and then [the preparation program] gave me a lot of the skills for the technical, like, this is what it actually means to make a curriculum, make it rigorous.”

A deeper understanding of the varied strengths and needs of students of color

In their after-school/OST settings, participants largely worked with students of color and grew to understand the resources and challenges that students and their families have. Such understanding was particularly helpful as participants thought about how best to support students of color in their future classrooms.

“It’s made me think about struggles that the students might face. In the after-school program, I’ve noticed a lot of students who are always hungry, or stuff like that. It’s influenced me to have snacks inside my classroom or to be more understanding of why a certain child is acting a certain way, because there are other outside factors that might be involved.”

“I absolutely loved building those relationships [in after-school/OST work], having those moments when students came to me to talk about things that were college-related or things that didn’t relate to school at all. Just having someone to relate to because I was someone like them.”

Some participants feel that this understanding has led them to become more effective advocates for their students.

“So, my experience with after-school influenced me even more to work with Latinx and Black children... It let me know that sometimes students need people to speak up for them.”

High demand for teachers with after-school/OST experience

Participants largely did not have trouble finding employment. Those who sought job placement support in their programs appreciated that it was available; others worked directly with principals and school districts to secure positions. Partnering school districts shared that they gladly hire the program participants. In some cases, school districts had identified participants as potential teachers in their time as after-school/OST staff, before they began teacher preparation. Though potential employers seek out graduates of the preparation pathways in general, some especially value after-school/OST workers' prior knowledge of their respective schools and local communities.

“[The after-school/OST workers] know the students because they grew up in the same neighborhoods. They know the same police officers. They know the corner stores, they know the supermarkets, they know the libraries, they know what students have access to and what they don’t. So as far as connecting with the actual students, the families, the parents, they thrive. Because it’s one thing to know the school, but to also know your community.” – PROGRAM PARTNER

3. HOW DO TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS SUPPORT PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE AFTER-SCHOOL/OST EXPERIENCE?

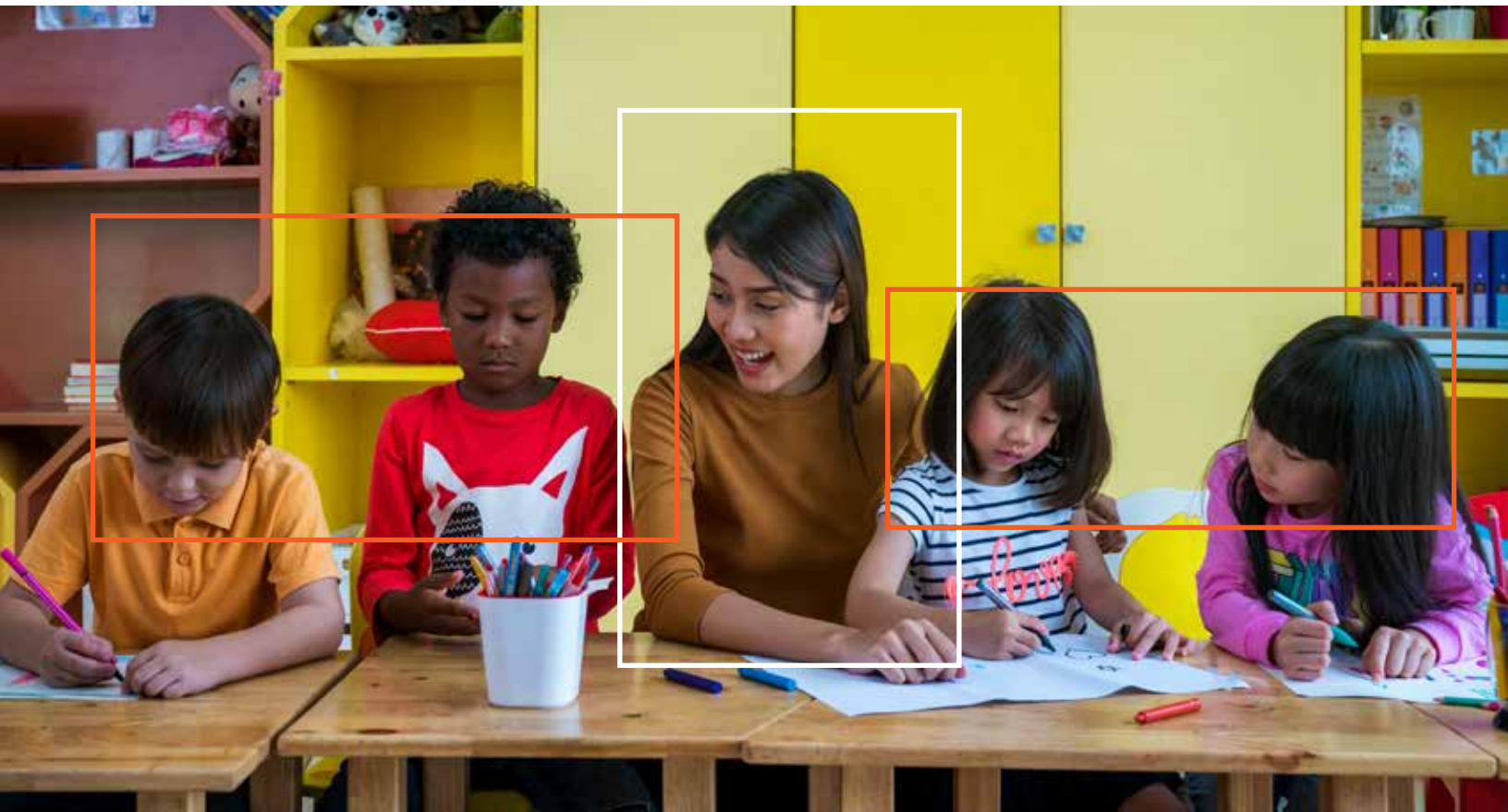
THESE PROGRAMS CENTER CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE AND ANTI-RACIST PRACTICES

Most participants felt comfortable and welcome in the programs as people of color. In addition, they recalled conversations about the need for more teachers of color, which they largely found supportive and encouraging. They also appreciated the honest conversations about challenges they might face as educators of color in the school system.

"The backbone of the program has always been trying to make sure that one, we are really prepared as teachers of color going into the classrooms with kids of color and that we're emotionally ready and nurtured enough to take on what can be a really challenging job for a lot of people."

Participants shared that their programs' culturally responsive or anti-racist pedagogy and focus on anti-racist teaching and learning practices were particularly helpful. This emphasis helped many participants shape their understanding of their role in the classroom.

"They talked to us a lot about knowing that there's a lot of children in disadvantaged communities that have certain needs, and it's really important for them to be able to have a teacher who can really support them with those needs and be relatable to them."



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: AN EMPHASIS ON ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION

The East Harlem Teaching Residency (EHTR) has actively worked to infuse anti-racist teaching throughout teacher preparation. It begins with pre-readings such as *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* by Ibram X. Kendi. Anti-racist and culturally responsive pedagogy frameworks are built into formal and informal program spaces throughout. EHTR challenges participants to identify white supremacist culture and values in educational institutions, and prepares their students to navigate them. The program aims to prepare teacher activists who think critically about what the education system delivers to students of color. Participants learn how to facilitate restorative circles. They examine statistics and literature about educational disparities. They design curricula and activities through an anti-racist lens, from the books they choose for interactive read-alouds to the discussion questions that they pose to students. They have affinity spaces, where students can engage with each other and process what they have learned.

EHTR's parent organization, East Harlem Tutorial Program, has implemented the same orientation throughout their schools' curricula and professional development. Participants complete their daytime teaching practicums alongside mentor teachers in EHTP-run charter schools. In this sense, EHTR participants' experiences are fairly unique: While other programs send participants to train in school districts that do not necessarily embody their same principles, EHTR participants have the advantage of seeing anti-racist teaching implemented throughout their training.

Leading an academically focused after-school class is a core part of EHTR's teacher training. Program leaders see the after-school/OST space as an opportunity for participants to design lesson plans — under the supervision of coaches — while also practicing classroom-community building skills and establishing relationships with families.

BLACK TEACHER CANDIDATES HAD MORE NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES

Participants who identify as Black did not feel as welcome as non-Black participants. Several Black participants struggled with conversations about race in their programs, describing them as predominantly “white facing.” Some felt their programs focused heavily on educating White participants about how to work with students of color, while ignoring or generalizing the perspectives of people of color. Although few participants in our sample felt this way, the lack of support they experienced as Black teacher candidates was so significant that it led some of them to resign from their respective programs.

“The program is doing a very good job of making White people feel comfortable in urban environments, but it’s not doing a good enough job of making us feel comfortable. I guess they feel like, because our students are people of color and this is kind of our environment, that we should be okay already.”

Some program leaders are aware of these tensions and spoke about the efforts they have made to offer more support to participants of color as part of their continuous improvement processes. However, several participants noted that these efforts were insufficient and uncomfortable for them.

“As we become more targeted in not just bringing in people of color but increasing the percentage of Black teachers we bring in, we understand that we have to modify our program so that we are meeting the needs of those groups of teachers as well. And so, it is a work in progress, but there is progress.” – PROGRAM LEADER

PROGRAMS PROVIDE SUPPORT TO REDUCE STRUCTURAL BARRIERS

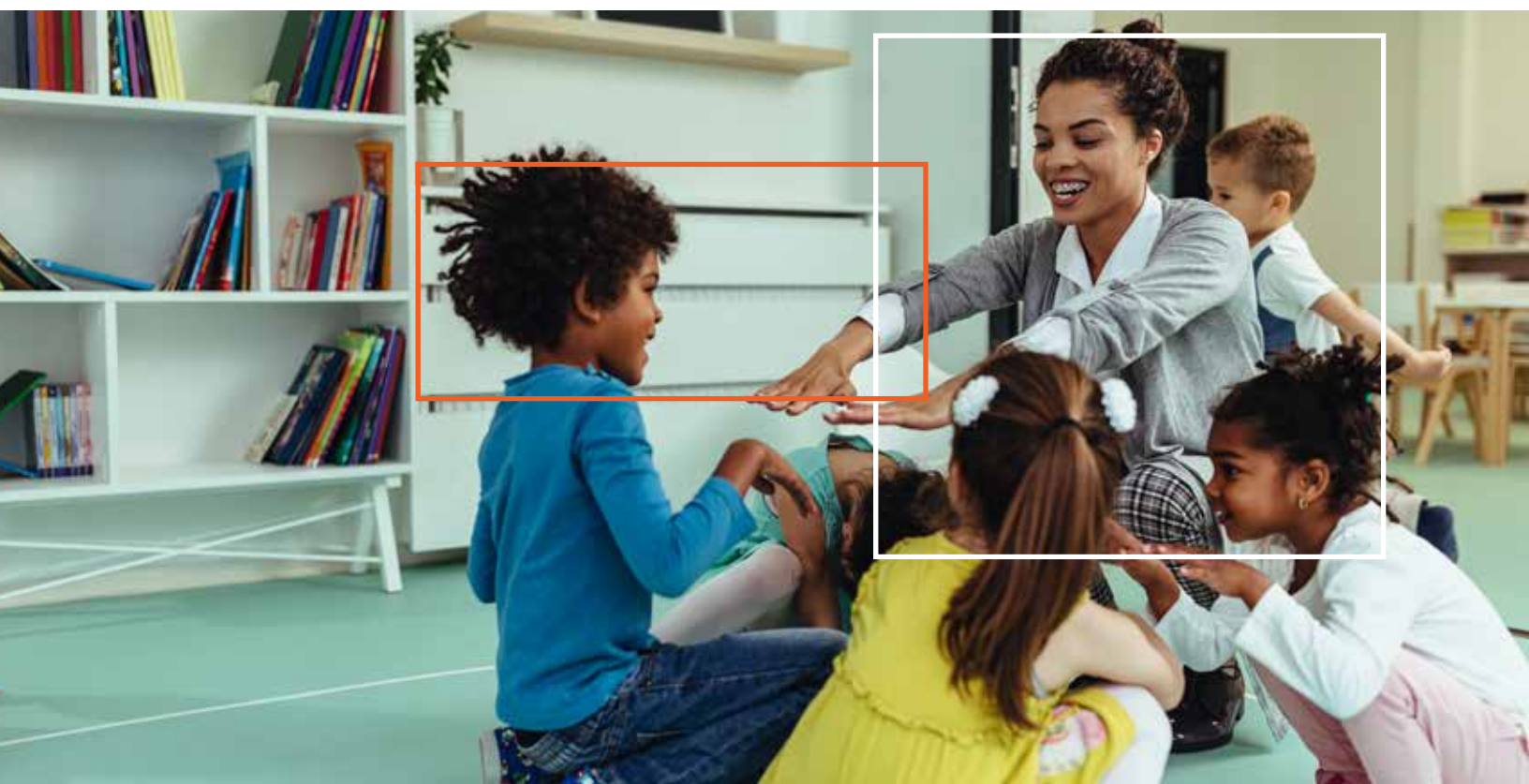
Achieving passing scores on standardized tests required for certification is a well-documented barrier to diversifying the teacher workforce.^{1,2} This barrier is by no means specific to the after-school/OST worker population; nonetheless, it came up for many of the participants with whom we spoke. Almost all the pathways in the study provide test preparation support to participants struggling with the exams, including group review, individual tutoring, edTPA coaching, which is a national, subject-specific assessment used in many states that requires teacher trainees to submit a portfolio of work. Many participants reflected that test preparation removed a major obstacle in their journey to becoming teachers. Some participants considered test preparation the single most important support that their programs provided.

"The tutoring thing was a huge help. Sometimes, that's what after-school staff needs—not just a workshop, but more like a class...Because you can want it and everything, but if you're not able to pass those tests, then you're just simply not going to become a teacher...I know a lot of after-school staff loves kids, loves teaching, and all this stuff. So, the drive is there. It's just a matter of having the tools for it."

Among the programs we examined, the participants' costs varied considerably — some programs offered stipends and living expenses while others charged tuition, usually through their partner universities. In the latter case, tuition is deferred until program completion and can be substantially reduced through loan forgiveness programs and district sponsorship. In some programs, participants work and train concurrently in after-school/OST settings, and receive salaries through that employment. And in other cases, program leaders can go above and beyond.

"In terms of responsibilities, you're already living on your own and it's a financial cut because you don't get a salary working here and it was just difficult. But I'll say, [the program leaders] were very hands-on with being supportive with anything you need, like financially. If they could help...they would."

"In one person's case, we were able to cover the cost of his last three classes because he was going through some crises that needed to be handled." – PROGRAM LEADER



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: REDUCING STRUCTURAL BARRIERS

Davenport University's Alternative Route to Teacher Certification has evolved to serve a target population of aspiring teachers who have financial restrictions. The program moved online and allowed its adjunct instructors to choose synchronous facilitation software, depending on the bandwidth restrictions in participants' home areas. In this way, the program now serves participants throughout Michigan who otherwise would not have the opportunity to commute to campus. Through a combination of grants and other funding arrangements, the program reduced tuition from more than \$10,000 to under \$4,000 (at the time of this study), a major benefit to both participants and under-resourced school districts, since districts cover their tuition and many participants work as classified staff. Participants concurred that more affordable tuition and accessibility to the university's financial aid office have facilitated their progress through the required classes. The program recently added test preparation to its offerings, resulting in higher scores thus far. Finally, program staff walk participants through the requirements for attaining a Michigan Standard Teaching Certificate, including three years of teaching under an interim certificate.

Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) has an After School to Teacher Pipeline that engages participants in detailed individual goal-setting as they navigate testing, applications to credentialing programs, and teaching positions. The program offers tutoring and preparation materials for the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST) and the multiple-section California Subject Examinations for Teachers (CSET), the two California exams required by credentialing programs, providing small stipends and assistance in paying for participants' testing fees—which are crucial for those who do not pass on the first try. While the staff introduce participants to various credentialing programs, they are encouraged to apply to the Reach Institute, a key partner institution that is aligned pedagogically with OUSD and is the most financially affordable of the area programs.

Recent participants who entered the Reach Institute agreed that continuing with their cohort members was beneficial. Though participants are not required to move through the After School to Teacher Pipeline simultaneously, they, nonetheless, enjoyed the opportunity to build community as a cohort of teacher candidates who have all worked in Oakland's after-school/OST provider organizations. Several participants were able to transition this cohort to teaching positions—relying on each other's advice as peer teachers going through their first years of a new career.

PROGRAMS PROVIDE MENTORSHIP AND COACHING

All the programs in our study provide mentorship and coaching to participants, often in the form of in-class observation and coaching during instructional periods with students. They also offer less-formal opportunities to address questions on everything from curriculum design to career planning. Overall, participants appreciated learning from high-quality instructors and coaches, receiving individualized support and feedback, and working with supportive mentor teachers in host schools.

"I had a mentor teacher who came to my classroom on a weekly basis to observe me... She helped me with classroom materials, lesson planning, ways to carry out lessons, ways to engage kids more into the learning. This individual was very helpful; we still talk to this day. "

A few participants added that coaching from instructors and mentor teachers who also identify as people of color helped them feel welcome and prepared.

“My Black host teacher ... she was just kind of pointing out the things that they wouldn't tell you, but just noting that the kids are going to relate to me differently than they're going to relate to our non-Black fellow worker.”

Almost all the program leaders stated that they would like to offer post-program mentorship and coaching to help boost participants' retention rates in teaching, but currently lack the capacity to do so. Some offer informal coaching to program graduates who reach out to them, and/or invite graduates to connect with each other via an alumni listserv. Program leaders identified the need for more formal retention supports and better alumni tracking as potential areas of growth.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS: RECRUITMENT & EMPLOYMENT ECOSYSTEM

As a long-established Grow Your Own program, California Teaching Fellows and Fresno Unified School District (Fresno Unified) have developed a strong recruitment, employment, and retention ecosystem. It starts early: Many Fresno Unified high school students who spend a summer interning as paraprofessionals are recruited by California Teaching Fellows to work in after-school/OST programs during their college years. With the after-school/OST experience under their belts, along with test preparation support and exposure to teaching careers, California Teaching Fellows become sought-after teacher candidates.

Fresno Unified often recruits from California Teaching Fellows for its teacher pipeline programs, typically the Fresno Teacher Residency Program or Transition to Teaching. Once these educators complete training and credentialing, Fresno Unified places them directly into jobs in the district. Principals actively seek out new hires from these pipelines. In the Teaching Fellow Academy, a professional development session meets one Saturday a month, and often invites former fellows to return as trainers, allowing current participants to learn from their experiences on the road to becoming teachers.

This cycle produces a community of racially and ethnically diverse teachers who have a common set of preparation experiences and ties to the local community. To support retention, Fresno Unified has intentionally grouped alumni of pipeline programs together in the same schools, where they support each other through the challenges of their initial years as teachers. Some graduates of the Fresno Teacher Residency Program have participated in professional learning communities (PLCs) with their cohort members and have transitioned smoothly from training to full-time teaching in the same school. Fresno Unified has noted a lower teacher turnover rate at some of the district's most difficult to staff schools since the groups of pipeline alumni have begun to teach there. California Teaching Fellows and Fresno Unified leaders continue to find ways to make this recruitment and retention partnership stronger.

MISSED OPPORTUNITY TO ELEVATE THE EXPERIENCES OF AFTER-SCHOOL/OST TEACHER CANDIDATES

Few programs specifically recruit after-school staff, with OUSD's After School to Teacher Pipeline being the only one in our sample to do so exclusively. And few recruitment relationships exist between after-school/OST providers and non-traditional teacher preparation programs; fewer than half of the programs in our study have recruitment relationships with after-school/OST providers. Still, several program leaders mentioned that they value the skills, experiences, and community connections that after-school/OST workers bring and would like to recruit more after-school/OST workers.

“Because teaching is a commitment to young people, right? They’re not just like shooting in the dark. [They’ve] worked with young people and liked it. That makes me think that [they] will like it.” – PROGRAM LEADER

Despite the lack of an intentional and targeted recruitment strategy aimed at after-school/OST workers, many after-school/OST workers are already enrolled in these programs. However, the programs do little to highlight or draw upon after-school/OST workers' experiences while they undergo teacher preparation. Several program leaders and partners stated that they have not examined how after-school/OST experiences are reflected in participants' teaching, nor are they aware of whom among the participants has after-school/OST work history.

“I don’t know who specifically comes from after-school...and so it’d be hard for me to draw a really clear line between after-school and teacher practice.” – PROGRAM LEADER

This is consistent with some participants' observations that they did not have conversations or formal opportunities to build on their previous after-school/OST experiences in their programs, and in some cases did not know if their fellow cohort members had previously worked in after-school/OST settings. They saw this as a missed opportunity to learn from colleagues who had also worked with young people before.

“It didn’t matter what your level of experience was with youth, after-school programs, or anything. If anything could change, it would probably be tailored to level of experience.”

In our observations of program activities, we encountered almost no references to participants' previous work experiences. In many cases, participants' after-school/OST experience was not elevated or referenced during teacher preparation at all. Additionally, the ways that programs support teacher candidates — by offering test preparation, aligning financial supports, and ensuring high-quality mentorship and coaching — are not specific to after-school/OST workers. Though after-school/OST workers undoubtedly have experienced some of the same barriers to becoming teachers as other candidates in these pathways, program leaders have not yet examined how they might tailor support to this group. In the absence of data that would document their experience in after-school/OST settings, it is difficult for the programs to design targeted solutions or to systematically assess how after-school/OST workers fare in terms of program completion and teacher credentialing.

CONCLUSION

Despite the lack of attention on after-school/OST workers of color as a focus population for teacher preparation efforts, they frequently enroll in nontraditional teacher preparation programs. Through this study, we have learned that they bring essential relationship-building skills and community knowledge from their previous experiences working with young people, along with a commitment to teaching and supporting students of color. We have identified ways in which the programs already support this group of potential teachers, and ways in which they can elevate after-school/OST experiences during teacher preparation. We have also pointed out some of the pitfalls they often encounter on the way to becoming teachers, such as standardized testing requirements and financial obstacles, which affect this population as well as other program participants.

IMPLICATIONS FOR STATE POLICY

After-school/OST workers are a promising source of effective, diverse teachers with strong ties to their school communities and a clear commitment to students. While more research is needed, we recommend that states do the following to support and promote the recruitment, preparation, hiring, and retention of after-school/OST staff as teachers.

1. Allocate resources to establish and strengthen recruitment relationships between nontraditional teacher preparation programs and after-school/OST service providers.
 - For example, states can invest in competitive grant opportunities to fund pipeline partnerships between non-traditional teacher preparation programs and after-school/OST programs. States can also create guidance on practices to strengthen these recruitment relationships, including Grow Your Own programming practices that are effective in creating a strong pipeline of after-school/OST staff into the profession.
2. Increase investments in scholarships, loan forgiveness opportunities, and tuition reimbursements for teacher candidates with after-school/OST experience, with a particular focus on candidates of color and participants in Grow Your Own programs.
 - Loan forgiveness and reimbursement programs should be tied to teaching for several years and/or in high-needs schools. Loan forgiveness, reimbursement, and scholarship opportunities should be intentionally advertised in after-school/OST settings.
3. Adopt statewide guidelines and invest in supports for nontraditional teacher preparation pathways that include teacher licensure test preparation, and at least one year of mentor teacher support and coaching before participants enter the classroom as teachers of record.
 - This practice is sought out by prospective participants and supports the recruitment and retention of teacher candidates.

4. Develop guidance on effective programming and practices, based on nontraditional teacher preparation pathways that successfully attract and support after-school/OST staff of color.
 - This should include anti-racist pedagogy as a central approach throughout the program and meaningful supports for participants of color that address the specific issues they are likely to encounter as educators. This should also include efforts to incorporate and discuss after-school/OST workers' experiences and skills, particularly when it comes to classroom community building and establishing relationships with students.

5. Include after-school/OST candidates in the paraprofessional category when defining participants who are eligible for state-led support to obtain teaching certification.

6. Fund retention supports for alumni of nontraditional teacher preparation programs, including efforts to create and sustain affinity groups and professional learning opportunities.
 - This can be done by making retention support for alumni a requirement for competitive grant funding to strengthen partnerships between districts and non-traditional teacher preparation pathways. This can also be achieved by increasing funding to current preparation pathways to develop robust alumni programming.

7. Require nontraditional teacher preparation pathways to track and report on individuals with after-school/OST work experience as a differentiated group to begin developing an evidence base on this underexplored population of teacher trainees and learning how else they can be supported in their journeys to become teachers.

APPENDIX: PARTICIPATING PROGRAMS

Given the variety of approaches in the nontraditional teacher preparation sector, we intentionally recruited programs of different sizes and programmatic and institutional setups. The three teacher residency programs, while different in size and structure, have the most similarities in the types of supports they provide to participants. While a study of this scope cannot capture the many configurations of Grow Your Own programs, the three GYO programs we studied offer a glimpse. We did not include GYO programs that solely provide financial assistance to teacher candidates to undertake training, but selected those that provide multi-pronged supports, such as mentorship, test preparation, and onward placement. We also excluded programs that primarily work with middle school or high school students. We included one program based at an institution of higher education that functions similarly to a GYO program in that it attracts primarily local teacher candidates who are already employed in and referred by local school districts. All seven programs included substantial populations of current or former after-school/OST workers among their participants.

CALIFORNIA TEACHING FELLOWS / FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

The oldest program among the ones we studied, California Teaching Fellows and Fresno Unified School District have partnered for over a decade to recruit and train after-school/OST workers to become teachers. California Teaching Fellows is the largest after-school/OST provider in California's Central Valley. The program spun off in 2006 from California State University-Fresno Kremen School of Education; the original university initiative offered scholarships and hands-on experience to teacher trainees. California Teaching Fellows hires local college students, many of whom are first-generation college attendees, and places them in part-time positions within its broad network of school districts, as after-school workers as well as daytime tutors and youth workers outside the school setting. They attend Saturday professional development sessions and receive support on planning their next career steps, with a heavy emphasis on careers in education. For participants in need, the program's Dream Initiative offers additional supports and wrap-around services. Since many participants remain with California Teaching Fellows as long as they are in college, the program does not function as a cohort model.

Since the mid-2000s, Fresno Unified School District (Fresno Unified) has expanded its GYO teacher development pipeline programs to the current total of 18. The district partners closely with California Teaching Fellows as one of its main recruitment partners. The California Teaching Fellows participants typically enter three of the district's pipelines: Transition to Teaching, Para Academy, and the Fresno Teacher Residency Program. Of the three, the residency program offers the most intensive model, a combination of master's degree coursework and teaching alongside a mentor teacher. The Para Academy supports individuals who have not yet completed a BA degree, and who work concurrently as classified staff or in California Teaching Fellows, receiving professional learning and a small stipend from the district. Transition to Teaching supports career changers and classified staff who have previously earned a BA as they enroll in a credentialing program; it offers professional learning, a stipend, test preparation, and a cohort learning model. All three programs offer direct placement in district teaching positions upon credentialing.

We enrolled California Teaching Fellows and Fresno Unified's teacher pipelines in the study as one program to examine California Teaching Fellows participants' journeys from after-school/OST work through to teacher training, certification, and employment within Fresno Unified. We also examined data from the programs separately, understanding that these are distinct initiatives.

DAVENPORT UNIVERSITY'S ALTERNATIVE ROUTE TO TEACHER CERTIFICATION

The newest program among those we studied, Davenport University's Alternative Route to Teacher Certification evolved in 2018 into a certificate program in the College of Urban Education, from an earlier iteration as a post-baccalaureate program. The program was designed to support participants who have previously experienced barriers to becoming teachers, by offering reduced tuition and online learning. Via partnerships with several school districts throughout Michigan, the program attracts classified staff who are already working in schools as paraprofessionals, school aides, and long-term substitutes; many of these individuals have also worked in after-school/OST settings.

The certificate program consists of seven graduate level courses; six are taught synchronously online and the seventh offers classroom support from an experienced observer. Participants take the courses at their own pace, as time and funding allow. Upon passing the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC), they earn an interim teacher certificate to begin working as teachers of record, typically in the schools where they already serve as classified staff. The MTTC presents a significant barrier for participants, so the program offers MTTC tutoring to those who need it. The program is part of a network of alternative route programs created in Michigan during the last decade, since the state passed its interim teaching certificate law.

EAST HARLEM TEACHING RESIDENCY

The East Harlem Tutorial Program (EHTP), a community-based after-school program in existence since the 1950s, founded the East Harlem Teaching Residency (EHTR) in 2014 to respond to a need both for more community-based teachers in East Harlem and for steadier staffing in the EHTP after-school programs. The residency consists of a daytime practicum in which participants work alongside mentor teachers¹ in EHTP-run charter schools, master's degree courses through the Hunter College School of Education, an after-school component in which they lead after-school groups, professional development workshops, and individual supervision. As of the 2020 cohort, the residency focuses on training special education teachers, extending its duration from 14 to 28 months. Like many residency programs, EHTR offers a structured curriculum of gradual release, in which participants take on increasingly more classroom responsibilities during daytime teaching as the residency progresses, and as they learn more high-leverage teaching practices. Participants follow the program as a cohort on the same schedule.

The program draws mainly from residents who attended the City University of New York (CUNY) as undergraduates. Many of the participants are first-generation college students. EHTR looks for candidates who demographically match the student population of East Harlem, which is predominantly Black and Latino. Many participants have been hired directly by the EHTP charter schools where they completed their training. The rest have gone on to teach primarily at Title I public or charter schools in New York City.

EXPANDED SCHOOLS' PATHWAYS FELLOWSHIP

The Pathways Fellowship, a program of ExpandedED Schools, started in 2016 as a pipeline partner of NYC Men Teach, a citywide effort to recruit and train men of color to teach in New York City schools. The Pathways Fellowship engages participants in a year of part-time work at partnering after-school/OST programs under the guidance of mentor teachers, while providing professional development workshops, introductions to careers in teaching, and extensive guidance in applying for teacher certification programs. Participants go through the program as a cohort. The program recently divided into a general track and a STEM track.

Starting with the 2020 cohort, the Pathways Fellowship pivoted its recruitment strategy to focus exclusively on college juniors and seniors in good academic standing who demonstrate interest in teaching. In the past, many participants did not go on to pursue teacher certification. Some who did not pursue teaching continued in after-school/OST positions, while others entered entirely different fields. The shift came about to focus the program more intensively on its mission to serve as a teacher pipeline. Pathways Fellowship participants who do pursue teaching typically enter New York City Teaching Fellows, residency programs, or other preparation programs, often with advising support from NYC Men Teach.

NASHVILLE TEACHER RESIDENCY

The Nashville Teacher Residency (NTR) has operated since 2015 with the objective of training diverse, highly effective teachers to fill local teacher shortages in Tennessee. NTR collaborates with Nashville and nearby Clarksville school districts, primarily drawing local participants, many of whom already work in the districts as classified staff. The program has grown each year and plans to grow to approximately 55 participants in the years to come.

In the spring of each academic year, NTR holds a probationary internship period, which involves taking classes and conducting observations in schools. Once fully accepted into the residency, NTR participants work alongside mentor teachers, following a gradual release model while taking classes as a cohort that are led by NTR staff. Somewhat unusual among residencies, NTR is a state-authorized Educator Preparation Program (EPP) in Tennessee that sets its own curriculum and endorses teachers for licensure. While NTR does not confer degrees or certificates, two local university partners recognize credits from NTR toward degree programs. Participants study for and take the Tennessee Praxis exams during the residency, so NTR offers test preparation. At the end of the residency year, many participants are hired on to teach in their practicum schools, and the rest are hired within their districts.

OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT'S AFTER SCHOOL TO TEACHER PIPELINE

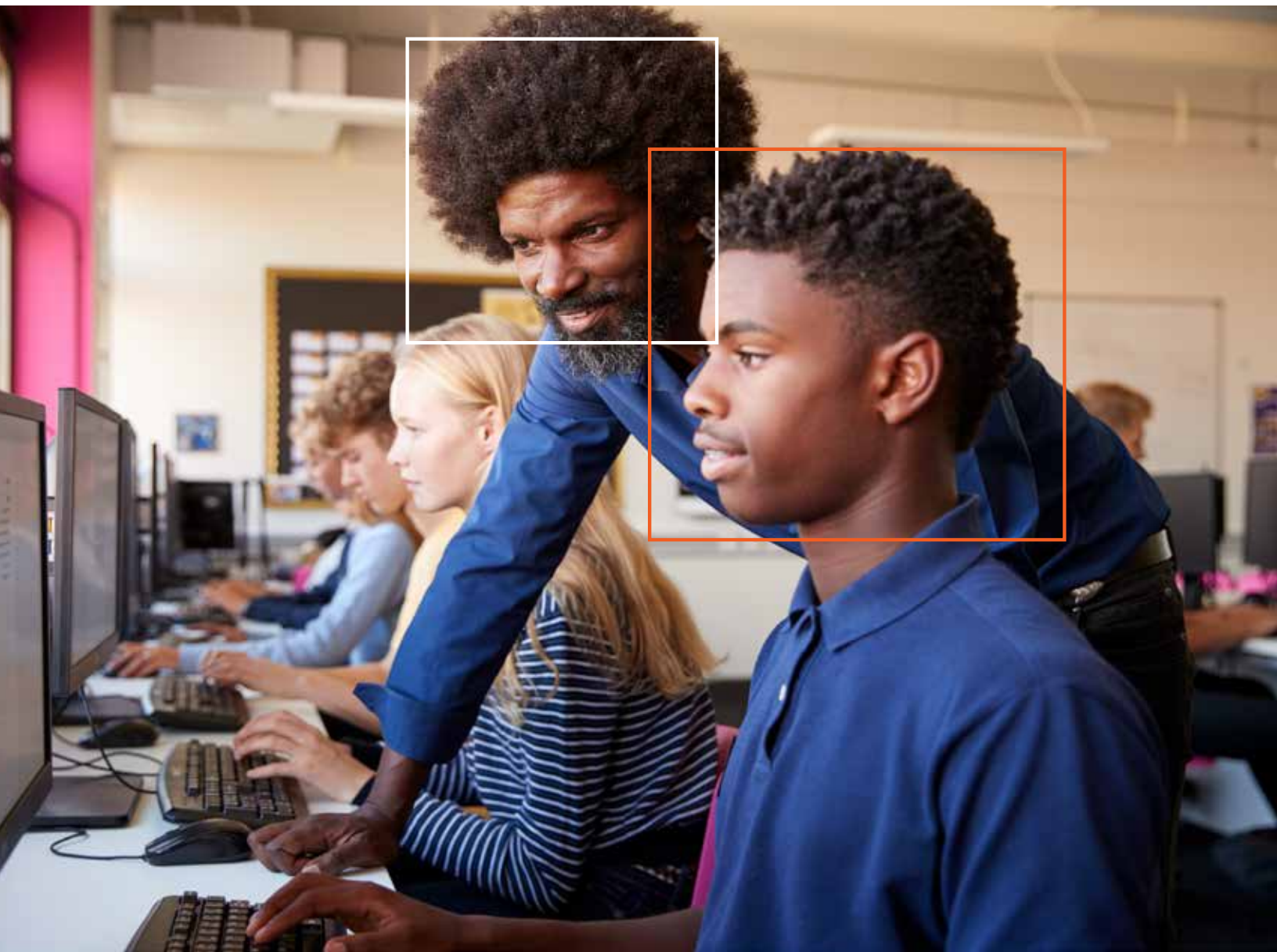
Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) supports teacher recruitment and training through several Grow Your Own programs targeted at different pipelines of potential teachers. OUSD's After School to Teacher Pipeline began in 2016 in recognition of the benefits that after-school/OST workers can bring to the teaching profession. The only program in our study that focuses specifically on after-school/OST workers, the After School to Teacher Pipeline recruits employees of organizations that provide after-school services in the district, who have at least three years of after-school/OST experience and a BA degree. While there, they work toward passing the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST) and the multiple-section California Subject Examinations for Teachers (CSET) and gaining entrance to a California credentialing program. The program provides a variety of supports, including test preparation and payment of test fees, planning seminars to chart each participant's course through complex credentialing requirements and hiring procedures, opportunities to observe and substitute teach in classrooms, and support on identifying and applying to credentialing programs once participants pass the tests. As such, the pipeline functions as an intermediary to put participants on course for full teacher credentialing.

The program is envisioned as a two-year process, though participants have completed it on varying individual schedules. During the first year, participants continue to work in their after-school/OST positions, though some have been hired early by principals via a temporary emergency permit. The After School to Teacher Pipeline discourages this kind of hiring because prior participants have had tremendous difficulties passing the CBEST and CSET while also teaching full time for their first year. Once they obtain an intern credential, participants can work in OUSD as teachers of record while completing the credentialing program requirements.

URBAN TEACHERS – BALTIMORE

Urban Teachers is a residency program that operates in Baltimore, Dallas, and Washington, DC. We focused on the Baltimore site in the study, though the program runs similarly across all three cities. Urban Teachers – Baltimore was founded in 2010 and has steadily increased enrollment. Urban Teachers is a four-year commitment that begins with a 14-month residency, following which participants continue to teach in Baltimore public schools for three years as coaching support from the program slowly tapers off.

During the residency year, participants concurrently take master's degree courses through the Johns Hopkins University School of Education. As in other residency models, they gradually take on more responsibility in the classroom, while receiving coaching and support from the host schools and teachers and Urban Teachers faculty. Coursework continues into the second program year and culminates in a non-licensure master's degree at year's end. Coaching continues into the third program year, following which participants are endorsed for full state teaching licensure. The fourth year is a commitment year in which they teach in their district. Uniquely among the programs in the study, Urban Teachers recruits participants from across the U.S., as well as locally. Due to state requirements, the program primarily admits participants who have already passed the Maryland Praxis Core exams and offers a limited number of places to conditionally accepted candidates, who must retake and pass the Praxis Core exams as well as passing their Praxis Content exams during their residency year.



METHODOLOGY

Using a qualitative case study approach, we recruited seven study sites that enroll after-school/OST workers of color among the teacher candidates they serve. In the absence of a comprehensive database of non-traditional teacher preparation programs, we recruited a convenience sample, intentionally including programs of different sizes and structures to reflect at least some of the variety of program types in existence today.

Three of the programs in the study were teacher residencies, one was an alternative route program based at an institution of higher education (IHE), and three were Grow Your Own (GYO) programs, one of which included two programs that partner with each other. Typical to GYO models, the three included different programs to teacher certification, described in more detail in the next section. The list of programs appears in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1. PARTICIPATING TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Program Name	Type	Location
California Teaching Fellows / Fresno Unified School District	Grow Your Own	CA
Davenport University's Alternative Route to Teacher Certification	Institution of Higher Education	MI
East Harlem Teaching Residency	Teacher Residency	NY
ExpandED Schools' Pathways Fellowship	Grow Your Own	NY
Nashville Teacher Residency	Teacher Residency	TN
Oakland Unified School District's After School to Teacher Pipeline	Grow Your Own	CA
Urban Teachers – Baltimore	Teacher Residency	MD

We conducted interviews with key stakeholders of each program: the program leaders (e.g., senior directors), partners (e.g., school districts, universities), and participants. All the program participants whom we interviewed had worked in after-school/OST settings and identify as people of color. They were either still enrolled, had graduated and gone on to teaching, or had resigned from the programs and were not teaching. We wanted to learn from participants in all three situations to understand both the successes of their teacher preparation and the challenges.

Table 2 summarizes some basic data points across the programs, including their size and demographic characteristics. When we asked the programs what percentage of participants had worked in after-school/OST settings previously, we found that most do not track that information. The programs track a variety of outcomes as their measures of success; here we report the most commonly available and relevant metric: the percentage of participants who continue teaching after their training is complete.

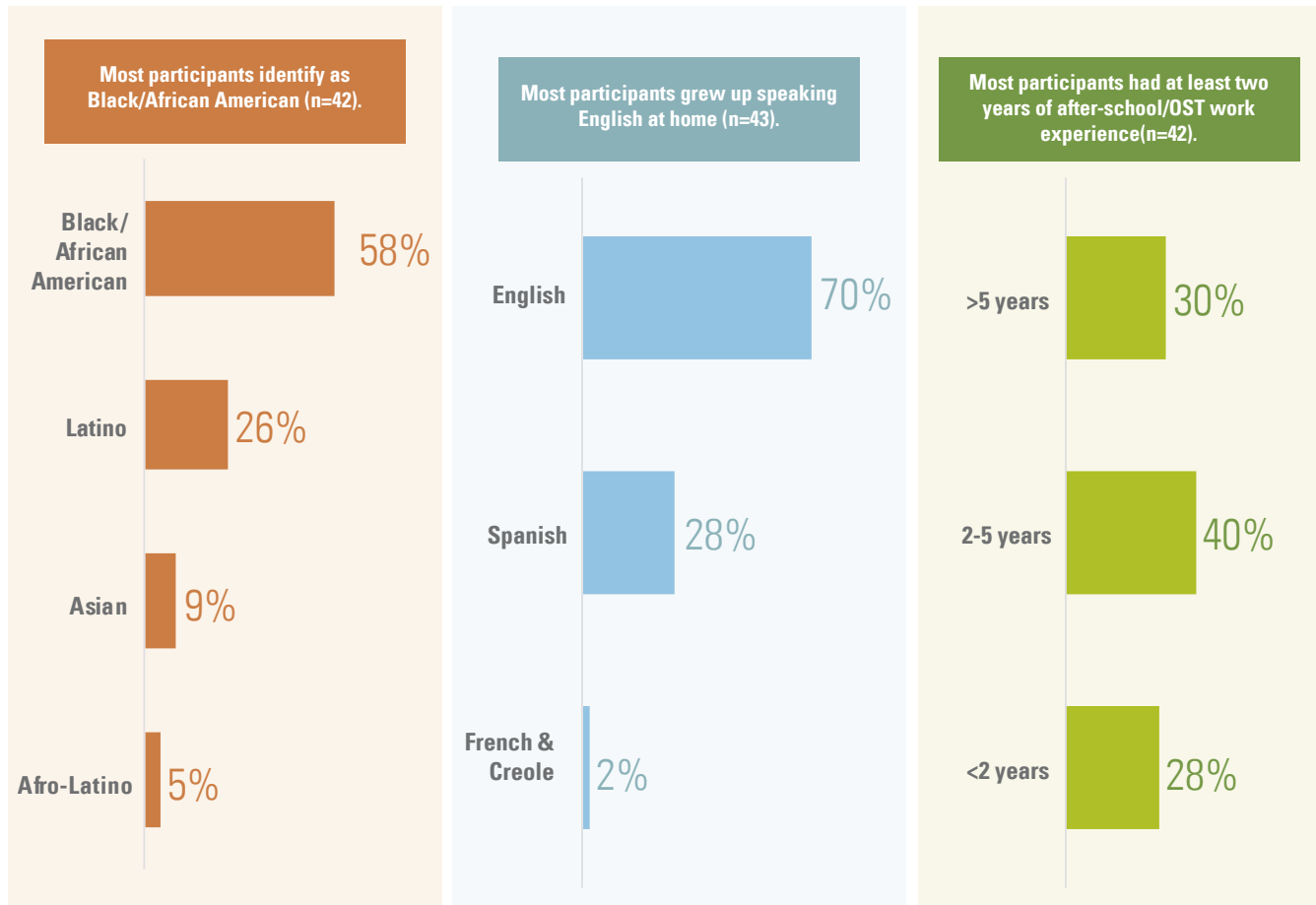
TABLE 2. SIZE, DEMOGRAPHIC MAKEUP, AND OUTCOMES OF PARTICIPATING TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Program Name	# Participants (2019-20)	% Participants of color	% Cisgender women	Average age	% Worked in after-school/OST	% Teaching
California Teaching Fellows	1,536	92%	78%	20	100%	N/A
Fresno Unified: Residency Para Academy Transition to Teaching	254 23 277	69% 71% 73%	Not tracked	Not tracked	Not tracked	76% N/A 55%
Davenport University's Alternative Route to Teacher Certification	31	53%	60%	40	20%	80%
East Harlem Teaching Residency	11	100%	82%	25	Not tracked	100%
Expanded Schools' Pathways Fellowship	38	100%	18%	32	Not tracked	N/A
Nashville Teacher Residency	31	61%	Not tracked	Not tracked	Not tracked	97%
Oakland Unified School District's After School to Teacher Pipeline	5	80%	60%	Not tracked	100%	60%
Urban Teachers – Baltimore	94	55%	65%	24	Not tracked	85%

Due to COVID-19 social distancing protocols, all data collection occurred remotely via videoconferencing. We conducted a total of 64 semi-structured interviews. We also observed nine group sessions across six of the programs to gain a deeper sense of how they operate. The sessions included classes and supplemental seminars. One program could not be observed because it was not operating during the period of data collection (May-August 2020). Solutions IRB reviewed and approved the study protocol prior to the start of data collection.

Most of the interviews (43) were with current (17), graduate (18), or former (8) participants of the programs. Former participants were understandably more difficult to recruit for interviews. Participants had started in the programs when they were between 18 and 48 years old, with an average age of 27. The majority (86%) held at least a BA degree when they started in the programs. They had worked in a variety of after-school/OST settings, including community-based organizations, City Year programs, camps, and school-based before- and after-care services. Figure 1 below presents the participants' additional demographic characteristics and experiences in after-school/OST work.

FIGURE 1. DEMOGRAPHICS AND AFTER-SCHOOL/OST WORK EXPERIENCES OF INTERVIEWED PARTICIPANTS



We held 13 interviews with the programs' partner organizations. Eight of these interviewees are leaders in schools or districts that host the participants as trainees and later tend to hire them as teachers, two work at after-school practicum sites, and three work at universities.

All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. We took notes during the observations using a structured observation protocol. We analyzed the interview data using Dedoose qualitative analysis software, following the general inductive approach to identify and code themes.⁷ Two researchers coded all the interviews to ensure consistency in analysis. In summarizing the data, we examined the themes across interviewees and divided by the programmatic and demographic characteristics described above.

LIMITATIONS

While this study was conceived in 2019 and designed in early 2020, the majority took place after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our initial plans to conduct site visits to each program were scrapped as social-distancing protocols went into effect, and as the programs switched to online instruction. Data collection occurred remotely, which may have limited its more experiential nature. We chose not to delay the study because it is unclear when education settings will return to pre-COVID-19 functioning. Also, the largest portion of the data collection — interviewing the participants — was planned from the beginning to take place remotely to provide as much scheduling flexibility as possible. In summary, while the study was certainly affected by the pandemic, we were able to carry out most of it as planned.

Semi-structured interviewing runs the risk of elevating interviewees' tendencies to say what they believe the interviewer wants to hear, a phenomenon known as "demand characteristics." We tried to minimize this effect by emphasizing the confidential and voluntary nature of the interviews. Encouragingly, none of the interviewees declined permission for audio-recording or expressed reservations about the confidentiality of the process. As such, we hope that they felt comfortable expressing their full and honest opinions.

Lastly, we selected a qualitative case study approach because the question of after-school/OST workers' experiences in nontraditional teacher preparation programs has not been explored in previous literature, to our knowledge. While this methodology is appropriate for an exploratory study, our findings are not generalizable to other teacher preparation programs or to the experiences of other after-school/OST workers of color who are preparing to be teachers. The findings and recommendations presented here should be considered a starting point for further investigation with larger sample sizes and comparison groups.



REFERENCES

1. Desiree Carver-Thomas, "Diversifying the Teaching Profession: How to Recruit and Retain Teachers of Color" (Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute, 2018), <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/diversifying-teaching-profession-report>.
2. Emery Petchauer, Anica G. Bowe, and Julene Wilson, "Winter Is Coming: Forecasting the Impact of edTPA on Black Teachers and Teachers of Color," *The Urban Review* 50 (March 2018): 323-343.
3. Conra Gist, Margarite Bianco, and Marvin Lynn, "Examining Grow Your Own Programs Across the Teacher Development Continuum: Mining Research on Teachers of Color and Nontraditional Educator Pipelines," *Journal of Teacher Education* 70, no. 1 (August 2019): 13-25.
4. Roneeta Guha, Maria E. Hyler, and Linda Darling-Hammond, "The Teacher Residency: An Innovative Model for Preparing Teachers" (Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute, 2016), <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/teacher-residency>.
5. Amanda Rodriguez Morales and M. Gail Shroyer, "Personal Agency Inspired by Hardship: Bilingual Latinas as Liberatory Educators," *International Journal of Multicultural Education* 18, no. 3 (2016): 1-21.
6. Deborah Lowe Vandell, and Jenel Lao, "Building and Retaining High Quality Professional Staff for Extended Education Programs," *International Journal for Research on Extended Education* 4, no. 1 (2016): 52-64.
7. David R. Thomas, "A General Inductive Approach for Analyzing Qualitative Evaluation Data," *American Journal of Evaluation* 27, no. 2 (June 2006): 237-246.

ABOUT THE EDUCATION TRUST

The Education Trust is a national nonprofit that works to close opportunity gaps that disproportionately affect students of color and students from low-income families. Through our research and advocacy, Ed Trust supports efforts that expand excellence and equity in education from preschool through college; increase college access and completion, particularly for historically underserved students; engage diverse communities dedicated to education equity; and increase political and public will to act on equity issues.



The Education Trust



EdTrust.org



[/EdTrust](https://www.instagram.com/EdTrust)



[/EdTrust](https://www.facebook.com/EdTrust)



[/EdTrust](https://www.linkedin.com/company/EdTrust)



[@EdTrust](https://twitter.com/EdTrust)