



# Miles To Go

The State of Black Education in America



# A Preview of Miles To Go: The State of Black Education in America

The Southern Education Foundation's forthcoming report, *Miles to Go: The State of Black Education in America*, will present an overview of education data on Black students in the United States, including some of the key challenges, opportunities, and the path forward. Through this data, and our analysis and recommendations, the report will examine the state of Black education within a broader historical narrative of where we have been, where we are, and where we can go.

## The report will include:

- Current population and enrollment statistics for Black students in early childhood, K-12, and postsecondary education.
- Support and challenges for Black students in areas such as school discipline, special education, and school resources. Current outcomes across the P-20 spectrum, and guidance and recommendations for increasing opportunity, access, and success. Data on Black teachers, including their numbers, their impact, and the challenges facing Black teachers today. Narrative around opportunity gaps and their impact on Black students' experiences and outcomes. Discussion of the historical timeline that led us to the current moment, and what this means for the future.

## Some numbers to know as a preview to this forthcoming report:

### Black students underrepresented in postsecondary education:

The proportion of Black students in early childhood, K-12, and postsecondary education in the South is consistently about 50% larger than the proportion nationally. **However, although Black students make up about 22% of the South's population<sup>1</sup> and 21.9% of its K-12 students<sup>2</sup>, they make up only 18.3% of its postsecondary population<sup>3</sup>: a clear underrepresentation.**

### Disproportionately few Black teachers, and even fewer Black male teachers:

Research consistently shows that all students – and particularly students of color – benefit from having access to a diverse set of teachers. Despite this, while about **15% of public school students nationally are Black, only 6.1% of teachers are Black**, and less than a quarter of those – **1.3% - are Black males<sup>4</sup>**.

1 Source: U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). State population by characteristics: 2020-2022. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/popest/2020s-state-detail.html>.

2 Source: National Center for Education Statistics. (2022). Enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools, by region, state, and jurisdiction: Selected years, fall 1990 through fall 2031. [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d22/tables/dt22\\_203.20.asp?current=yes](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d22/tables/dt22_203.20.asp?current=yes) and National Center for Education Statistics. (2022). Percentage distribution of enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools, by race/ethnicity and state or jurisdiction: Fall 2010, fall 2020, and fall 2021. [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d22/tables/dt22\\_203.70.asp?current=yes](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d22/tables/dt22_203.70.asp?current=yes)

3 Source: National Center for Education Statistics. (2022). Total fall enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by race/ethnicity or nonresident alien status of student and state or jurisdiction: 2020. [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d21/tables/dt21\\_306.60.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d21/tables/dt21_306.60.asp)

4 Source: National Center for Education Statistics. (2022). Characteristics of 2020–21 public and private K–12 school teachers in the United States: Results from the National Teacher and Principal Survey. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2022113>

### Black student suspensions in the South:

A recent study of every school district across 13 southern states (3,022 districts) found that in 346 districts – more than 10% of all districts in these states – at least 75% of suspended students were Black. In 86 of these districts, all suspended students that year were Black.<sup>5</sup>

### Expulsion rates for Black students extremely high:

**Black students nationwide were expelled at more than three times the rate of Hispanic and White students in 2018**, the most recent year with available data.<sup>6</sup>

### Even unconscious racial bias among teachers hurts students:

A study from researchers at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and the University of Southern California found a **correlation between level of teacher bias and student academic achievement**, even when controlling for contextual and academic factors.<sup>7</sup>

### The greatest disparity in suspensions from school is for Black girls:

**Far more Black female students were suspended (322,000) than White female students (192,000)**,<sup>8</sup> data from the most recent available school year shows – even though there were nearly three times as many White females as Black females enrolled in public schools (24.3% of all students, compared to 8.9%).<sup>9</sup>

### Growing body of research shows community schools' promise:

**An increasing set of studies at the national level and focused on specific locations are finding that community schools have benefits for students on a range of academic outcomes** – and potentially specific benefits for students of color – along with family engagement,<sup>12</sup> attendance,<sup>13</sup> and other efforts.



- 5 Source: Smith, E. J., & Harper, S. R. (2015). Disproportionate impact of K-12 school suspension and expulsion on Black students in southern states. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education.
- 6 Source: National Center for Education Statistics. (2022). Percentage of students suspended and expelled from public elementary and secondary schools, by sex, race/ethnicity, and state: 2017-18 [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d21/tables/dt21\\_233.40.asp?current=yes](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d21/tables/dt21_233.40.asp?current=yes)
- 7 Source: Chin, M. J., Quinn, D. M., Dhaliwal, T. K., & Lovison, V. S. (2020). Bias in the air: A nationwide exploration of teachers' implicit racial attitudes, aggregate bias, and student outcomes. *Educational Researcher*, 49(8), 566-578. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X20937240>
- 8 Source: National Center for Education Statistics. (2022). Number of students receiving selected disciplinary actions in public elementary and secondary schools, by type of disciplinary action, disability status, sex, and race/ethnicity: 2017-18. [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d21/tables/dt21\\_233.27.asp?current=yes](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d21/tables/dt21_233.27.asp?current=yes)
- 9 Source: U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). School Enrollment in the United States: October 2020 - Detailed Tables. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2020/demo/school-enrollment/2020-cps.html>.
- 10 Source: Sanders, M. G., & Galindo, C. L. (2020). Reviewing the success of full-service community schools in the US. Routledge.
- 11 Source: Maier, A., Daniel, J., Oakes, J., & Lam, L. (2017). Community schools as an effective school improvement strategy: A review of the evidence. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.
- 12 Source: Anderson, J. A., Chen, M. E., Min, M., & Watkins, L. L. (2019). Successes, challenges, and future directions for an urban full-service community schools initiative. *Education and Urban Society*, 51(7), 894-921.
- 13 Source: Covelli, L., Engberg, J., and Isaac M. Opper. (2022). Leading Indicators of Long-Term Success in Community Schools: Evidence from New York City. (EdWorkingPaper: 22-669). Retrieved from Annenberg Institute at Brown University: <https://doi.org/10.26300/59q2-ek65>.