



K12 TEACHER WORKFORCE DEMOGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT

August 2020

In the following report, Hanover Research presents the results of an analysis of K12 teacher workforce demographics in Mississippi and the United States, as well as a survey of best practices for recruiting and supporting educators of color.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RECOMMENDATIONS

Implement a strategic recruitment campaign to boost enrollment from K12 teacher candidates of color.

Given frequent disparities between the proportions of K12 minority teachers and minority students, and the benefits that greater diversity could bring to education, a campaign towards these applicants may be needed. In addition, the rising share of students from backgrounds of color in future years will present a challenge for institutions if they are unable to develop sustainable recruitment pathways for these groups.

Build an inclusive campus environment along the lines of TFA and BTR to reinforce recruitment efforts.

Minority-specific support features are a feature of highly-diverse teacher preparation programs such as Teach for America and the Boston Teacher Residency (see right) and help to build word-of-mouth recruitment efforts.

Mississippi	FAST FACTS	National
22.8%	Share of K12 teachers reporting minority/non-White backgrounds	20.7%
80.0%	Share of K12 teachers reporting female status	76.2%
49.8%	Share of K12 teachers in rural school/school district settings	27.0%
39.8%	Share of teachers in elementary school settings	47.5%

KEY FINDINGS

Mississippi has a higher share of non-white K12 teachers than most other US states, but this figure is not proportionate to its number of students of color. According to a national teacher survey, just nine of the 49 US states that report reliable K12 teacher data have higher proportions of minority educators than Mississippi. Indeed, the survey indicates that the state's proportion of minority educators is 2.1 percentage points above the national aggregate, and state-specific data indicate that it may be as much as 7.9 percentage points higher.

Despite this, African Americans make up just 26.8 percent of the K12 teacher workforce, 21.3 percentage points below the proportion of African Americans in the student population, indicating a considerable relative disparity.

Mississippi has higher-than-average shares of rural-based and female K12 teachers. The state has nearly twice the average share of teachers operating in rural schools, and its share of female teachers is 3.8 percentage points larger than the country as a whole (though this figure has fallen by 0.6 percentage points over the last five years).

Diverse K12 teacher preparation programs model the importance of strategic recruitment campaigns and welcoming environments for minority teacher candidates. Effective recruitment campaigns can include specific diversity targets and data tracking, an emphasis on face-to-face meetings to highlight the benefits of being teachers, sending student ambassadors to groups and organizations that serve minority communities, and relying on alumni of color to reach out to their professional contacts. Welcoming campus environments can include specialized financial aid and scholarships, sensitivity training, student surveys to monitor satisfaction, and ensuring fieldwork and mentoring opportunities.

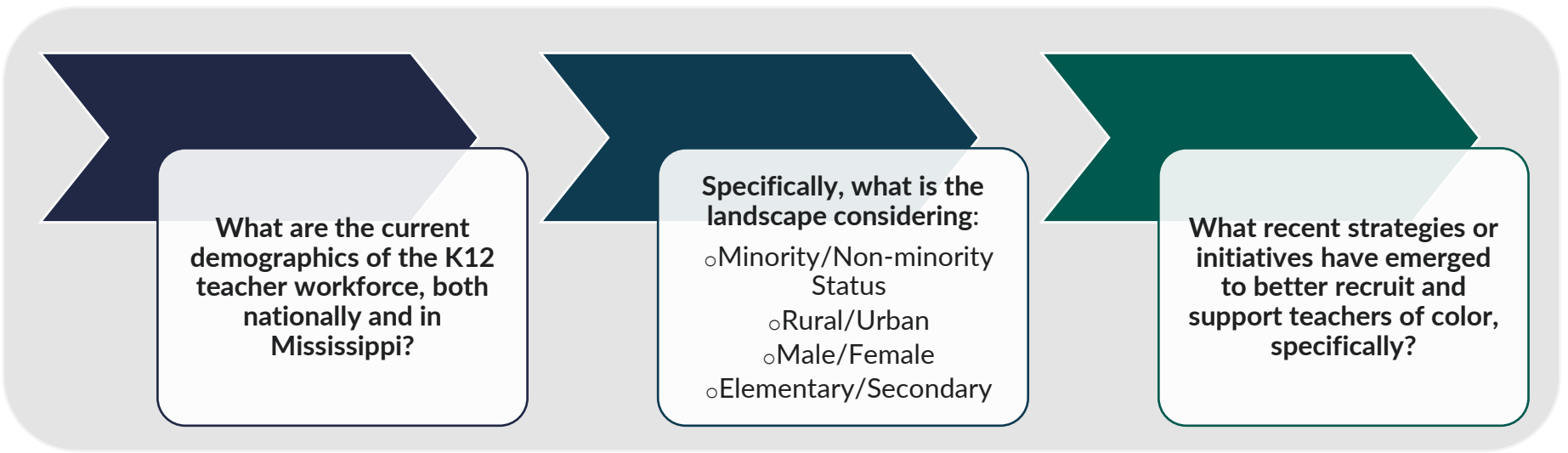
RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

University X is interested in better understanding the landscape among the national and state K12 teacher workforce as it relates to diversity.

This analysis reviewed publicly available data on the K12 teacher workforce to identify demographic breakdowns. The information is derived from a variety of sources, in particular the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the Mississippi Department of Education. The report also includes a review of recent practices and initiatives that have emerged to better recruit, support, and retain teachers of color.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS



What are the current demographics of the K12 teacher workforce, both nationally and in Mississippi?

Specifically, what is the landscape considering:

- Minority/Non-minority Status
 - Rural/Urban
 - Male/Female
- Elementary/Secondary

What recent strategies or initiatives have emerged to better recruit and support teachers of color, specifically?

GENERAL TRENDS

- Minority/Non-minority
- Rural/Urban
- Male/Female
- Elementary/Secondary

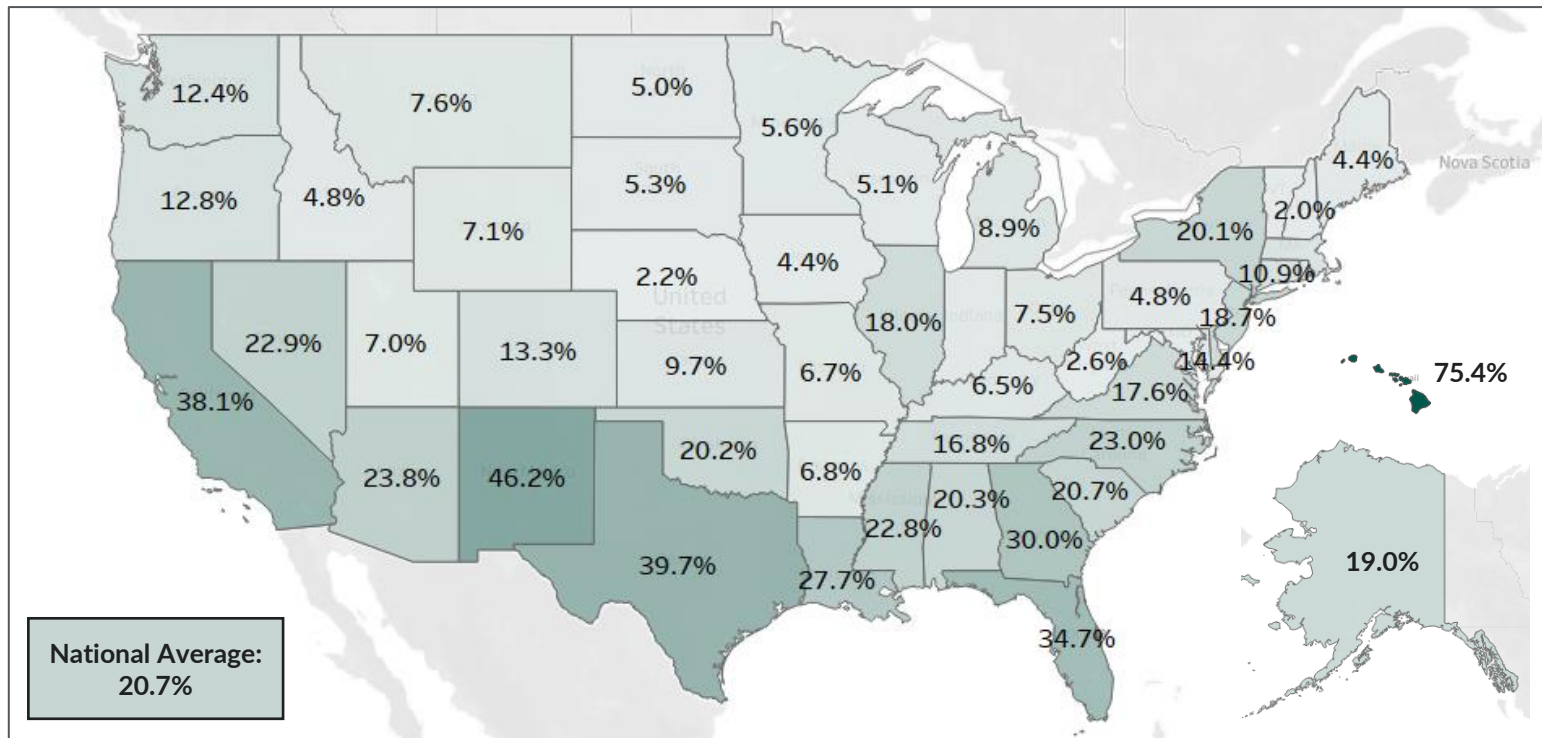
MINORITY/NON-MINORITY

Mississippi has a higher share of non-white teachers than most other US states. Taken as a whole, 20.7 percent of US public school teachers report their background in fields other than White, non-Hispanic, just below the Mississippi proportion of 22.8 percent. Of the 49 states that report reliable data, just nine have higher proportions of minority educators than Mississippi.

Data solicited from the Mississippi Department of Education indicate that its proportion of non-White teachers in 2019 was 28.1 percent for public and charter schools and 27.9 percent for public schools alone.

PERCENTAGE OF MINORITY TEACHERS

Percentage of public school teachers by minority status and state (2017–18)



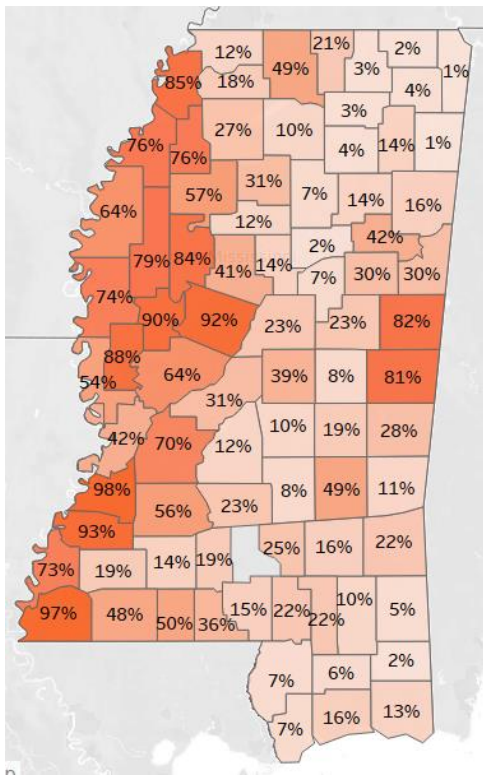
Source: National Teacher and Principal Survey (NCES)

MINORITY/NON-MINORITY

Educators with minority backgrounds are concentrated in Mississippi's western and central counties. Based on [data](#) from the Mississippi Department of Education, teacher demographics tend to be correlated with the demographic makeup of their students. This trait is tempered by a general underrepresentation of educators of color (compared to the makeup of K-12 students) throughout Mississippi.

MINORITY TEACHERS BY COUNTY

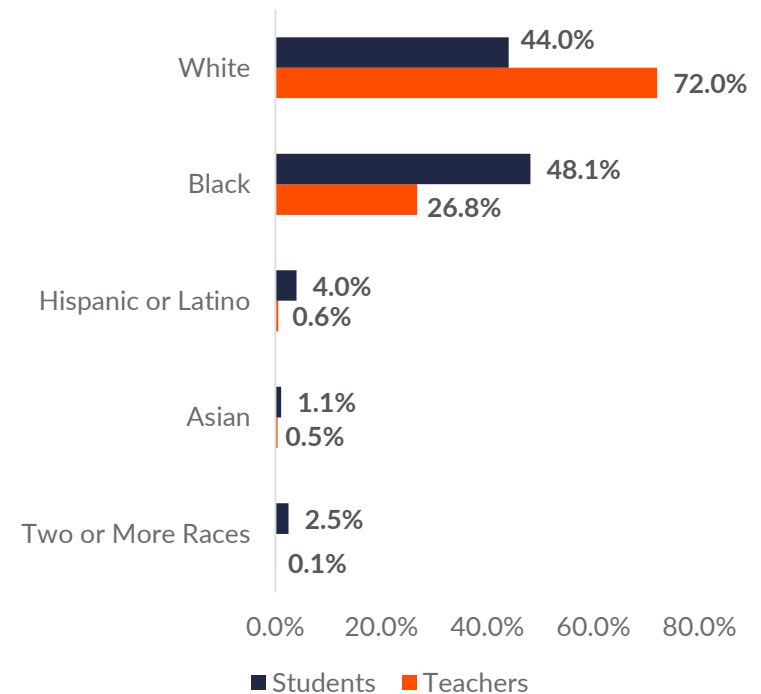
Proportion of non-white teachers by county (2019-20)



Source: Mississippi Department of Education (Public Data Request); [US Census Bureau](#)
Note: For school districts that serve two counties, teacher data are spread evenly over both.

STATE TEACHER AND ENROLLMENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Proportion of teachers and students by race/ethnicity (2018-19)



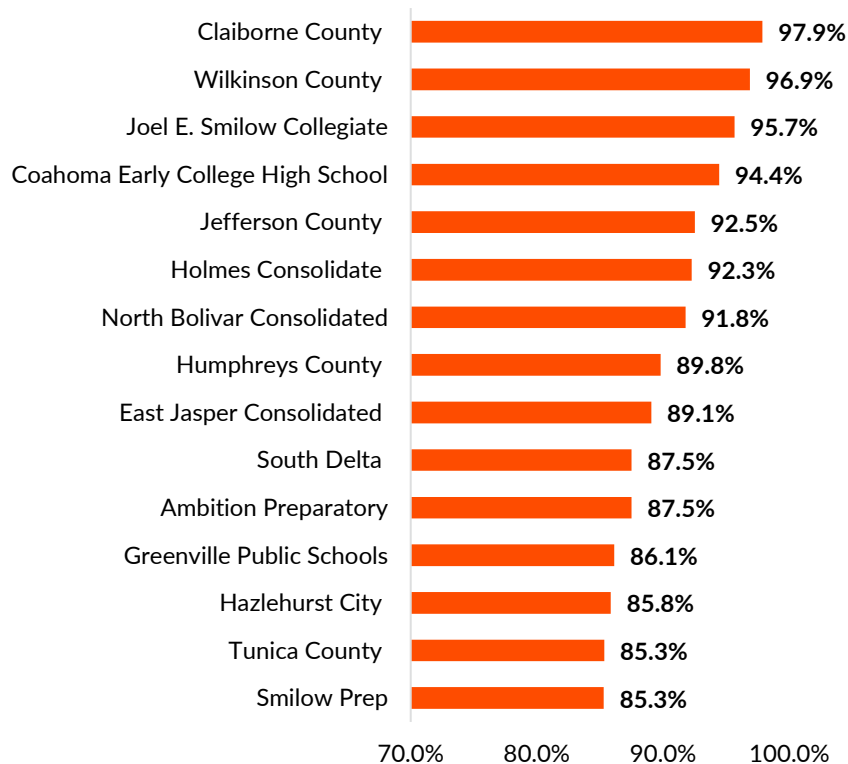
Source: Mississippi Department of Education ([Mississippi Today](#))
Note: Data for the state's Native American, American Indian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander populations are not included in this graphic because they were not categorized consistently.

MINORITY/NON-MINORITY

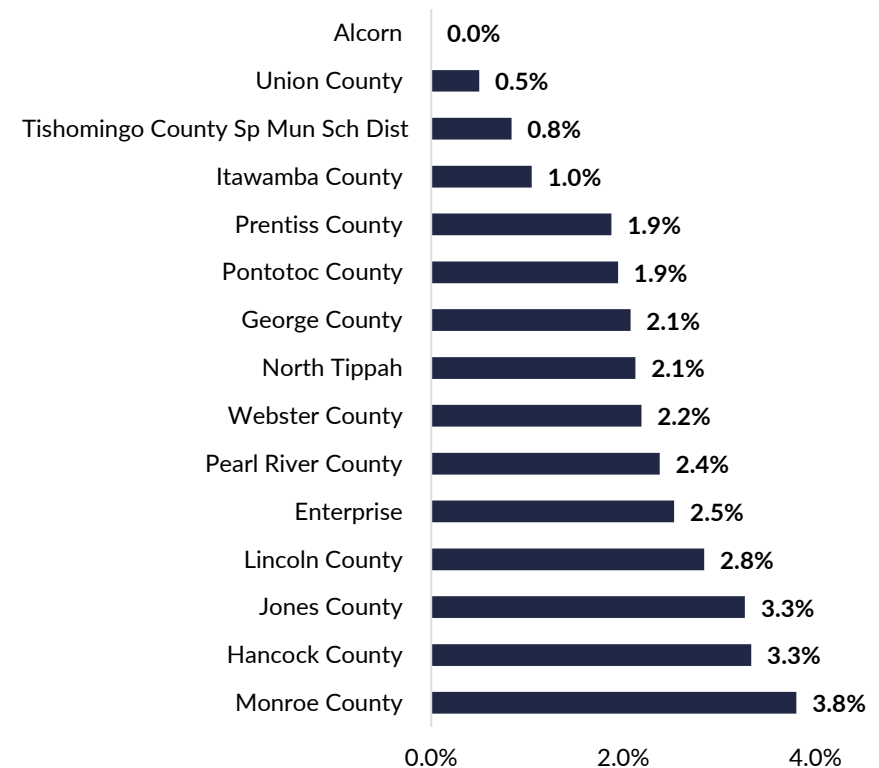
MINORITY TEACHERS BY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Proportion of non-white teachers by school district and charter schools (2019-20)

DISTRICTS WITH LARGEST PROPORTIONS OF NON-WHITE TEACHERS



DISTRICTS WITH SMALLEST PROPORTIONS OF NON-WHITE TEACHERS



Source: Mississippi Department of Education (Public Data Request); [US Census Bureau](#)
Note: For school districts that serve two counties, teacher data are spread evenly over both.

RURAL/NON-RURAL

Mississippi has a substantially higher-than-average share of rural-based teachers than most other US states. Taken as a whole, 27.0 percent of US teachers serve in rural schools, compared to nearly half of teachers in Mississippi. Additionally, the Rural School and Community Trust, a [national, non-profit organization](#), designated Mississippi as the number one highest priority state in rural education. With nearly 235,000 students in rural districts, Mississippi is one of only 12 states where at least half of public schools are rural.

PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS IN RURAL SETTINGS

Percentage distribution of national/state public school teachers by school/school district setting (2015-16/2019-20)



Source: National Teacher and Principal Survey, 2015-16 Public Schools ([NCES](#)); Common Core of Data ([NCES](#))

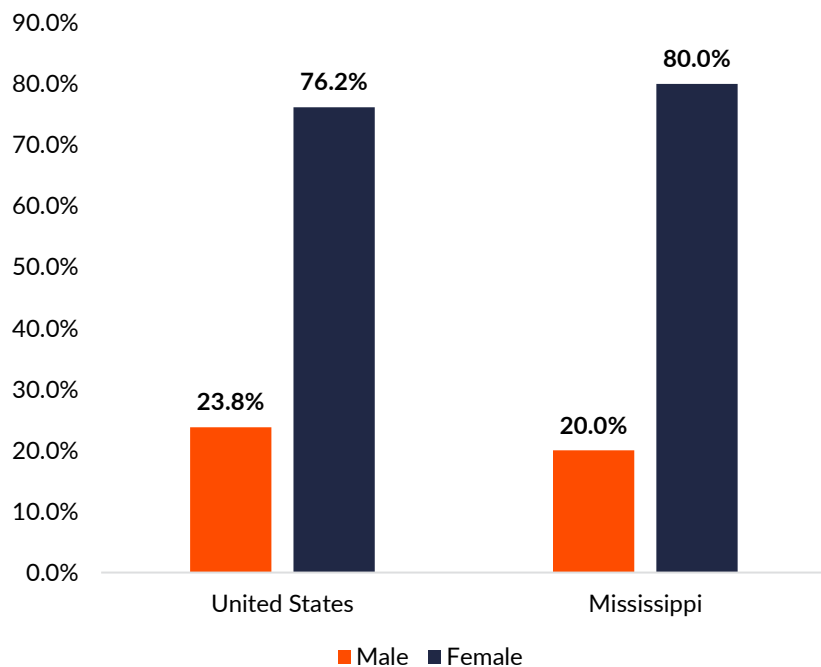
Note: National data reflect the number of **all teachers** by **school** locale code. Mississippi data reflect **full-time equivalent teachers** by **school district** locale code.

MALE/FEMALE

Mississippi has a higher-than-average proportion of female educators compared to the country at large. Compared to the national aggregate, Mississippi reports that female teachers make up 3.8 percentage points more of its total educator pool (though this figure has fallen by 0.6 percentage points from over the past five years). Moreover, the percent of female educators has held steady at 80 percent over the last five years.

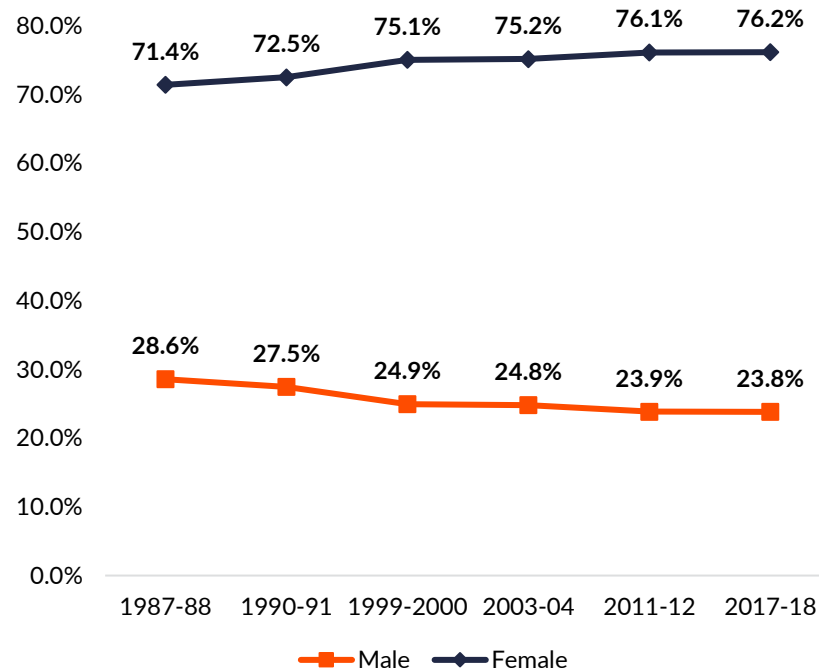
PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS BY MALE/FEMALE STATUS

Percentage of national/state teachers by male/female status (2017-18)



NATIONAL PERCENTAGE OVER TIME

Percentage of national teachers by male/female status (1987-88 through 2017-18)



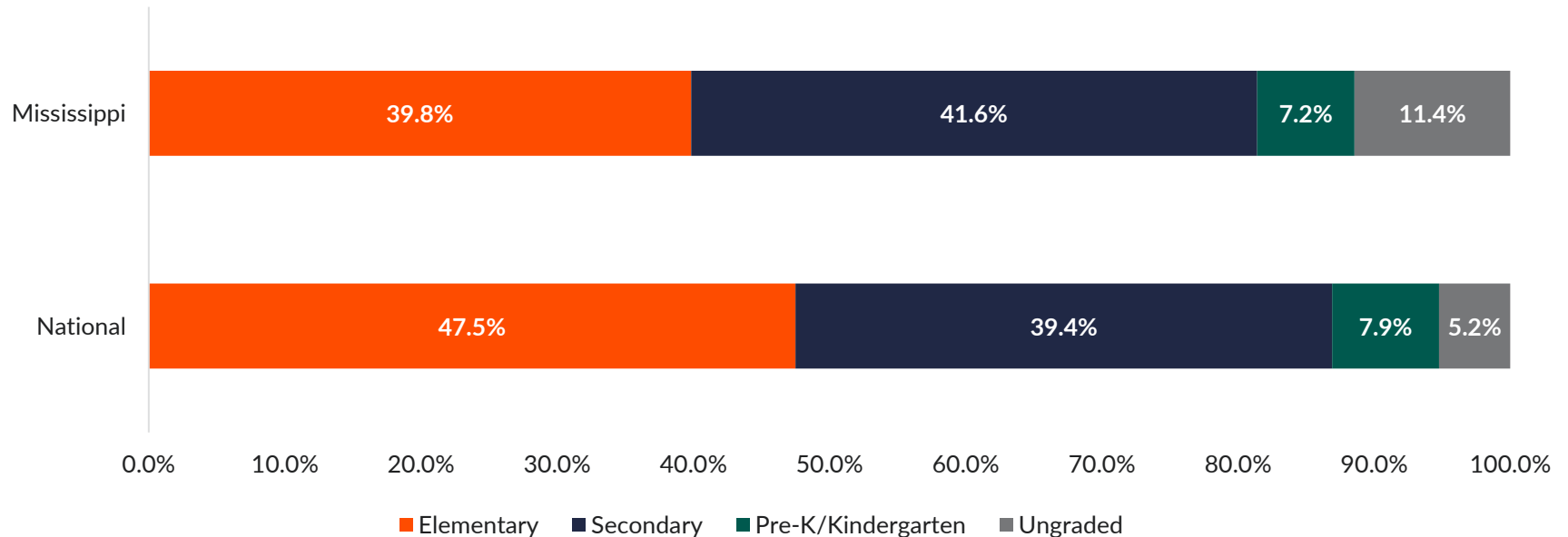
Source: National Teacher and Principal Survey ([NCES](#)); Mississippi Department of Education ([Mississippi Today](#))

ELEMENTARY/SECONDARY

Mississippi has relatively fewer elementary school teachers compared to the country at large. Compared to the national aggregate, Mississippi reports nearly 12 percentage points fewer FTE teachers working in elementary settings. However, it is interesting to note, Mississippi's student to teacher ratio for elementary and secondary schools is equal to the national average of 16 to 1.

PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

Percentage distribution of national/state full-time equivalent public school teachers by level (2018-19)



Source: Elementary and Secondary Information System ([NCES](#))

Note: For districts with missing datapoints, relevant figures are taken to be "0."

NATIONAL CROSS SECTIONS

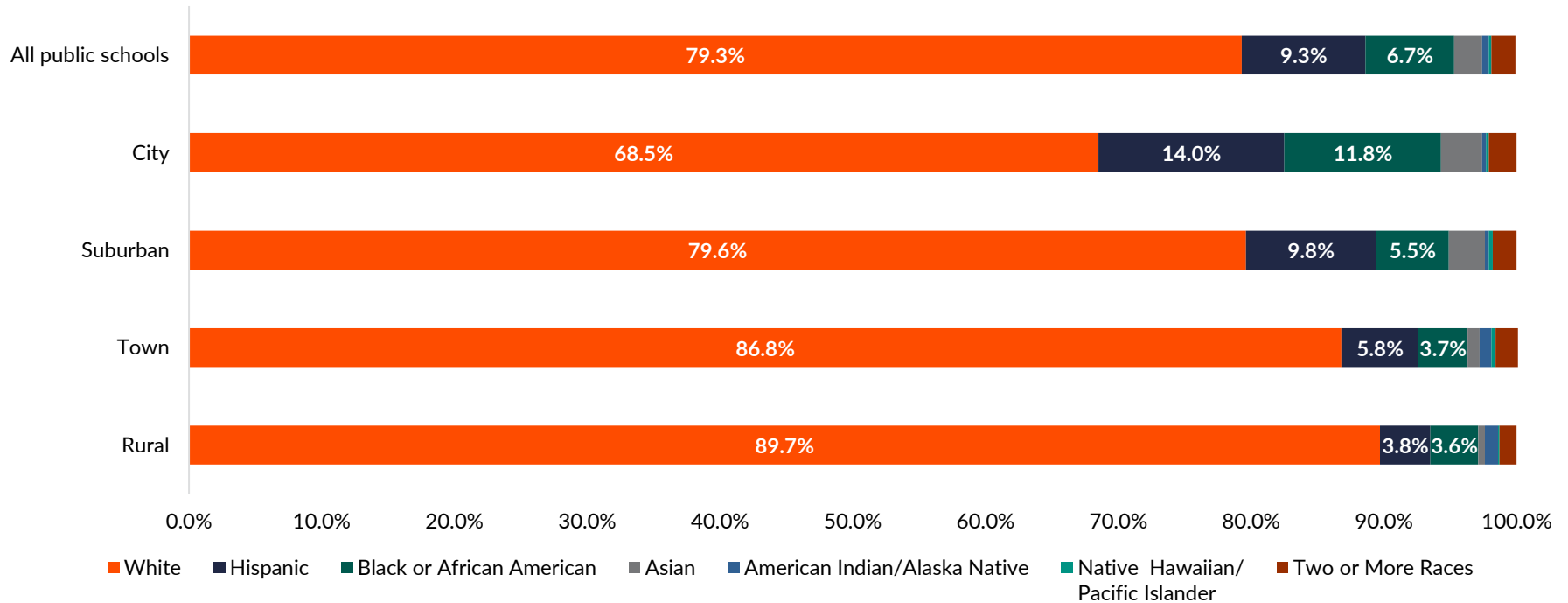
- Community by Race/Ethnicity
- School Level by Race/Ethnicity
- Male/Female Status by Race/Ethnicity

COMMUNITY BY RACE

Rural schools tend to be less diverse than their urban-, suburban-, and town-based competitors. The share of non-minority educators at these schools is nearly 20 percentage points higher than the corresponding share at city-based schools and is more than 10 percentage points higher than the national public school aggregate.

TEACHER CROSS SECTIONS: COMMUNITY AND RACE

Percentage distribution of national public school teachers by race/ethnicity and school locale (2017–18)



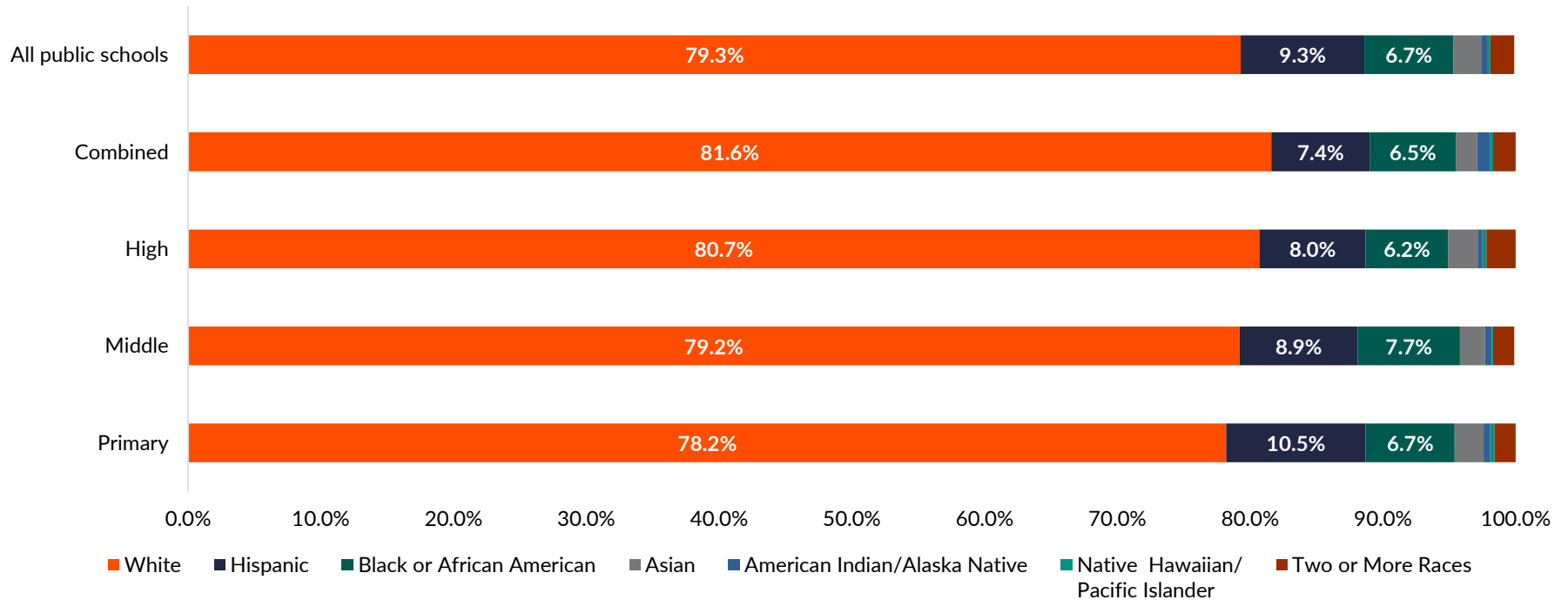
Source: National Teacher and Principal Survey (NCES)

SCHOOL LEVEL BY RACE

Primary schools are slightly more diverse than those hosting the higher grades. The share of non-minority educators at these schools is 1.0 percentage point lower than the corresponding share at middle schools, which is itself 1.5 percentage points lower than that at high schools. Combined schools are a further 0.9 percentage points less diverse.

TEACHER CROSS SECTIONS: COMMUNITY AND RACE

Percentage distribution of national public school teachers by race/ethnicity and school level: 2017–18



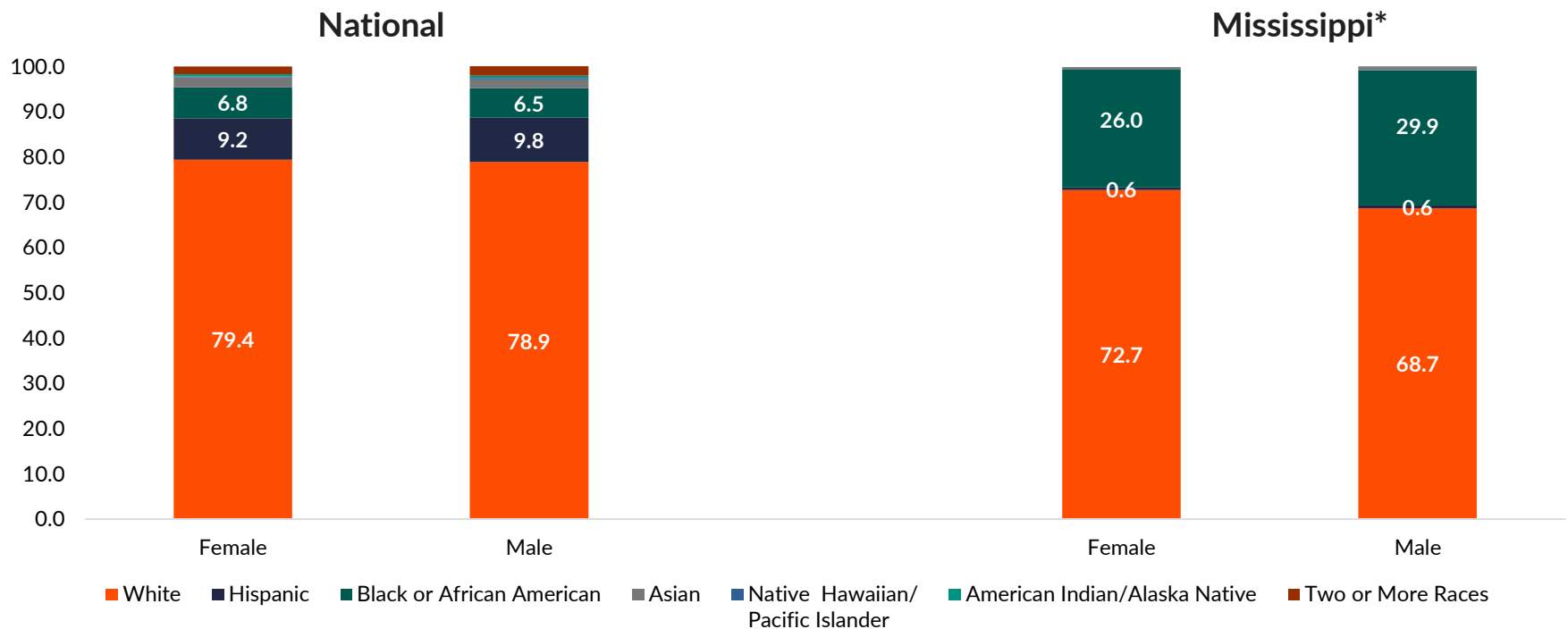
Source: National Teacher and Principal Survey (NCES)

MALE/FEMALE STATUS BY RACE/ETHNICITY

Mississippi's male teacher workforce is slightly more diverse than its female equivalent. The state's proportion of non-minority male teachers is 4.0 percentage points higher than the rate among female teachers, which diverges from the national trend of a slightly less diverse male teacher population.

TEACHER CROSS SECTIONS: MALE/FEMALE STATUS AND RACE

Percentage distribution of national/state public school teachers by race/ethnicity and sex (2017–18/2019)



Source: National Teacher and Principal Survey (NCES: [Female](#); [Male](#)); Mississippi Department of Education

*Data reflect exact figures for public and charter schools in Mississippi. NTPS data generated somewhat different estimates (F, M) for the state, namely: White (76.3%, 81.3%), Black (21.4%, 13.4%). Reporting standards were not met for the other race/ethnicity categories.

BEST PRACTICES

- Overview
- Recruitment Strategies
- Building an Inclusive Environment

BENEFITS OF TEACHER DIVERSITY

As the student body of national and Mississippi K-12 schools becomes more diverse, the disparity between the proportion of students of color and the proportion of teachers of the same backgrounds has become more acute.

Teachers of color are associated with improved academic performance among the students of color they teach. These [benefits](#) include higher graduation rates, increasing aspirations to attend college, and improved standardized test scores. For example, a seven-year Florida study of 3 million students and 92,000 teachers [identified](#) a positive effect on reading and math scores of black students who were taught by black educators – an effect that was even larger among the worst-performing students. What is more, both students of color and White students report positive perceptions of these teachers, such as feeling cared-for and academically-challenged.

Teachers of color can improve integration of minority-background students. Compared to other teachers, [these educators](#) often report more positive perceptions of students of color. African American teachers, for example, are less likely to see their Black students as disruptive and tend to have a higher estimation of their academic abilities than non-Black colleagues. This is in-line with [research](#) that shows teachers of color tend to have higher expectations of minority students and are associated with improved rates of absenteeism and fewer suspensions for these learners.

As teacher preparation programs consider how to improve their recruitment of minority students, they will have to consider which barriers can be directly addressed (see right) as well as what best practices they can proactively adopt (see next pages).

KEY CHALLENGES

Students of color are [underrepresented](#) among graduates with education majors, and teachers from these backgrounds are [more likely](#) to enter the teacher pipeline through nontraditional and alternative teaching routes. This disparity is related to a number of challenges, among them:



Negative experiences with the public education system during their own education.



Additional costs and time required to earn a teacher credential. [Research](#) suggests that college students of color perceive student loans as a greater burden than do their non-minority peers.



Pressure to seek higher-earning and higher-status jobs from their families. This challenge has been [exacerbated](#) by the efforts of other industries to diversify their workforces; potential teachers of color now face intensive recruitment efforts from industries that often offer greater compensation than a teaching career.

Even once students of color gain an education degree and enter the teacher workforce, many continue to face particular challenges. For example, these teachers have lower retention rates in the profession, resulting in part from being more likely to feel isolated or misunderstood in schools where they are one of the few teachers of color.

RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

STRATEGIC RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN

Schools of education should develop a strategic recruitment campaign to improve minority student pathways. According to [American Progress](#), this strategy should include:



Targets and goals for expanding the selection pool of applicants of color.



Face-to-face meetings with potential candidates of color to discuss the benefits of being a teacher and the opportunities to give back to the community.



Student Ambassadors to groups and organizations such as: Hispanic-serving institutions, high schools with high percentages of high-achieving students of color, and community or faith-based groups.



Contact with Alumni of Color to ask them to reach out to their professional networks



Data Tracking of first contact and follow-ups, used to hold recruiting staff accountable for meeting with a target number of students of color.



Word-of-Mouth Recruitment from making the campus a welcoming place for students of color (see next page).

DIVERSITY-FOCUSED SCHOLARSHIPS

University of Indiana South Bend: Minority-Focused Scholarships



IU South Bend offers several [scholarships](#) aimed at education majors from minority racial/ethnic backgrounds; these include:

- ❑ **Underrepresented Teacher Scholarship** for students with a 2.5+ HS GPA, a demonstrate commitment to teaching in public schools in the local area, and a demonstrate favorable disposition towards teaching through prior activities (as attested to by their teachers and community leaders). Preference is given to **African American, Hispanic, or Native American** students who are **male**.
- ❑ **Clark Equipment Minority Scholarship** for undergraduate or graduate students with financial need. Preference is given to **qualified minority students** enrolled full time.
- ❑ **Opportunity Scholarship** for undergraduate or graduate students with financial need who are enrolled in at least half time. Preference is given to **qualified minority students** (African American first, Hispanic second).

New York University: Diversity -Focused Service Scholarships



Dean Mary Brabek at New York University previously [established](#) **six tuition-free scholarships** for WW-RBF Fellows to attend the Steinhardt School (though the fellowship program [awarded](#) its final fellowships in 2015).

BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT

OVERVIEW

Leaders from highly-diverse programs such as Teach for America and the Boston Teacher Residency stress that teacher preparation programs should make their [campus climates](#) more welcoming for students of color, encouraging current participants of color to tell their friends about the program. Together they have successfully piloted several approaches to more systematically facilitate recruitment and retention of diverse future educators in this way (see right).

SPOTLIGHT: TEACH FOR AMERICA



Teach For America is one of the most diverse teacher preparation programs in the country, drawing about half of its participants from minority backgrounds. To this end, the program's recruitment team receives **specialized training** to help them relate to all types of applicants and emphasizes **meeting with candidates individually** or in small groups to build relationships (rather than waiting for potential candidates to approach TFA). Using a **data dashboard**, recruiters set targets for the number of face-to-face contacts they will have with minority students, and track metrics of progress towards these goals. The team also researches **campuses with the highest percentages of students of color**, where they speak to classes and student organizations about the benefits of TFA.

For its current teachers, TFA seeks **frequent input from members of color** to ensure they feel “comfortable and welcome,” and has ensured cultural competence in its staff with an organization-wide, multisession diversity series.

STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT



Fieldwork/Mentoring

- Ensuring that all students have meaningful field work and effective teacher mentors.



Funding for Student Groups

- Offering financial and other forms of support to student organizations and school-sponsored support groups for first-generation teacher preparation candidates.



Scholarships

- Offering highly competitive scholarships, including living expenses, to an elite cohort of students of color



Student Surveys

- Administering surveys, organizing roundtables, or collecting data in other ways to gather feedback on student satisfaction, and then taking steps and publicizing changes made based on feedback



Sensitivity Training

- Developing effective cultural and racial sensitivity training programs for teachers and faculty

Source: [American Progress](#)

Note: Strategies are taken verbatim from American Progress.

