

# TEACHER RETENTION IN NEW YORK STATE

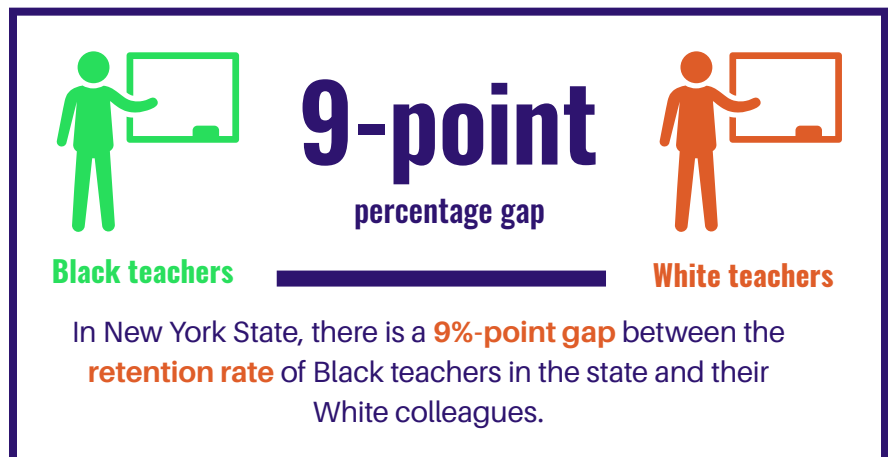
An analysis of educator retention data in New York State (NYS) from SY 2018-19 to 2021-22 shows that New York State public schools are challenged to retain teachers of color, in particular Black, American Indian, and Latinx teachers.

July 2023  
Equity Data Snapshot

Educator data from the last four years, including the pandemic from SY 2018-19 to 2021-22, reveal that New York State (NYS) schools have had difficulties retaining teachers of color, in particular Black, American Indian, and LatinX teachers. There is a 9%-point gap between the retention rate of Black teachers in the state and their White colleagues.

The analysis shows that over the four-year period teachers of color and students of color are disproportionately concentrated in schools with the lowest teacher retention

rates. In schools with low four-year teacher retention rates, between zero and 38%, 68% of students are students of color and of the teachers remaining, 28% are teachers of color. By contrast, in schools where between 58-100% of teachers stayed over the same period, only 12% are teachers of color and just over half of students are students of color.



Teacher retention rates are highest amongst schools in low-needs districts, while charter schools, New York City (NYC) schools and schools in Buffalo, Rochester, Yonkers, and Syracuse have some of the lowest retention rates in the state.

- There is a 7% gap in retention rates between schools in the Big 4 (Buffalo, Rochester, Yonkers and Syracuse), (76%) and those in low-needs districts (83%).
- Districts with fewer students from low-income backgrounds, also known as low-needs districts, have some of the highest retention rates for teachers of color, while schools in rural high-needs districts have the highest discrepancies in retention rates of Black teachers, 10 percentage points lower than the retention rate of all teachers.
- Across all districts, White teachers have the highest retention rates, at or above the retention rate for all teachers.

Charter schools, schools in NYC and schools in the Big 4 serve the largest shares of students and teachers of color in the state and have some of the highest teacher turnover. High teacher turnover in schools can negatively impact student achievement. More experienced teachers who remain in the same school are familiar with their students' needs and community challenges are better positioned to help students thrive.



## Teachers Transitioning to Leadership

Data about educator retention also show that a small number of teachers in the state became school leaders, either principals or assistant principals, over the course of the four-year period. Over this time less than half a percent of teachers in the workforce transitioned into leadership positions each year. Moreover, of that small sample of teachers, White teachers were far more likely to become school leaders, and much more likely to become principals, than teachers of color. It is encouraging that some teacher attrition can be contributed to movement within the school system, however the numbers of teachers becoming school leaders is so small over the last four years that it is likely not a major driver in teacher attrition.

Retaining teachers of color, and in particular Black teachers, is a challenge that is not unique to New York State but is one that policymakers should prioritize as part of a larger strategy to increase teacher diversity to better represent students in NYS public schools. There is a large body of research on the challenge of teacher retention and [the experiences of teachers of color](#) that push them out of the workforce. A diverse teacher workforce has a positive impact on academic outcomes, as well as reduces suspensions and supports high school completion. Increased teacher diversity also supports [the development of inclusive school cultures and culturally proficient students](#) of all backgrounds, which can help promote equitable social change. Students from all racial and ethnic backgrounds need to be taught by a diverse teacher workforce, and investing in retaining the teachers of color already in the workforce is fundamental to making that a reality in New York.

New York public schools are struggling to retain teachers of color, and students of color, as well as teachers of color, are more likely to be concentrated in schools with the lowest retention rates in the state, as compared to their White peers and colleagues.

Statewide 4-Year Retention Rate by Race/Ethnicity					
All Teachers	American Indian/Native Alaskan Teachers	Asian/Pacific Islander Teachers	Black or African American Teachers	Latinx or Hispanic Teachers	White Teachers
78%	73%	78%	70%	75%	79%

District Need/Resource Capacity Category 4-Year Retention Rate by Race/Ethnicity						
Need/Resource Capacity Category	All Teachers	American Indian or Alaska Native Teachers	Asian or Pacific Islander Teachers	Black or African American Teachers	Latinx or Hispanic Teachers	White Teachers
Average Needs	81%	75%	80%	78%	82%	81%
Buffalo, Rochester, Yonkers, Syracuse	76%	75%	75%	69%	72%	77%
Charters	46%	57%	42%	42%	44%	51%
Low-Needs	83%	90%	84%	81%	86%	83%
NYC	76%	72%	79%	72%	75%	77%
Rural High-Needs	79%	71%	66%	69%	73%	79%
Urban-Suburban High Needs	79%	73%	77%	77%	82%	79%

School 4-Year Retention Rate Quartiles, by Student and Teacher Race/Ethnicity						
Schools where the 4-year teacher retention rate is between ...	Share of Asian or Pacific Islander Students	Share of American Indian or Alaska Native Students	Share of Black or African American Students	Share of Latinx Students	Shares of White Students	Shares of Non-White Students (includes multi-racial students)
<b>1-38%</b>	6%	1%	26%	32%	32%	68%
<b>39-49%</b>	8%	1%	16%	29%	42%	58%
<b>50-58%</b>	13%	1%	12%	28%	44%	56%
<b>58-100%</b>	12%	1%	9%	27%	49%	51%
Schools where the 4-year teacher retention rate is between ...	Share of Asian or Pacific Islander Teachers	Share of American Indian or Alaska Native Teachers	Share of Black or African American Teachers	Share of Latinx Teachers	Shares of White Teachers	Shares of Non-White Teachers
<b>1-38%</b>	4%	<1%	14%	10%	70%	28%
<b>39-49%</b>	4%	<1%	10%	9%	76%	22%
<b>50-58%</b>	4%	<1%	6%	7%	81%	18%
<b>58-100%</b>	3%	<1%	4%	6%	87%	12%

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Teachers to School Leaders Year over Year, by Race/Ethnicity						
Time Frame	New Role	Total	American Indian or Alaska Native Teachers	Asian or Pacific Islander Teachers	Black or African American Teachers	Latinx Teachers
2018-19 to 2019-20	Principals	138	1%	4%	25%	9%
2018-19 to 2019-20	Assistant Principals	428	<1%	4%	19%	11%
2019-20 to 2020-21	Principals	154	0%	1%	23%	12%
2019-20 to 2020-21	Assistant Principals	479	<1%	5%	18%	15%
2020-21 to 21-2022	Principals	114	0%	3%	18%	13%
2020-21 to 2021-22	Assistant Principals	441	<1%	4%	20%	17%

## DATA NOTE

Findings about teacher diversity, retention, and attrition are from a public data records request from the New York State Education Department (NYSED). These data are extracted from an anonymized database of full-time and part-time K-12 teachers from the 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22 school years. It does not include substitute teachers, paraprofessionals, or after-school educators. These data may include a small

fraction of the state’s pre-kindergarten teachers. Need/Resource Capacity Categories (NRCs) are designated by the state and used to categorize districts by their ability to meet the needs of their students with local resources. More information on NRCs and how they are designated is available [here](#). Public school enrollment files for the 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22 school years are available [here](#).

